

Town of Montville Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, October 22, 2014
6:30 p.m. – Town Hall – Town Council Chambers

1. Call to order

Chairman Scott LaVallie called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. after establishing a quorum.

2. Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Joseph Berardy, Eileen Cicchese, Nancy DelaCruz, Scott LaVallie, Kerri Lawton, Karen Perkins, Kristin Ventresca, and Derek Wainwright. Absent was Commissioner Gilbert Maffeo. Also present were Parks & Recreation Director Peter Bushway and Town Council Liaison Laura Tanner.

3. Adjustments to the agenda

Chairman LaVallie proposed moving item 8(c) up to Item 4.

Motion made by Commissioner Cicchese, seconded by Commissioner DelaCruz. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 8-0, all in favor. Motion passed.

4. Dog Park

Chris Lawton thanked the Commission for the opportunity to speak with them regarding the Dog Park. He reported that the Dog Park recently received the support of the Town Council and recommended/requested the Commission form a Sub-committee, appointing him as one of the members, so that they may begin fundraising.

Commissioners Ventresca and Wainwright, who were not on the Commission at the time the proposal was made, requested a copy of the proposal. In response to Commissioner Ventresca's question, Mr. Lawton stated that the property for the dog park is Town-owned and part of the contiguous land of Camp Oakdale off of Route 163, across the street from the Pavilion. The property was previously used by the Public Works Department as an area for storing fill material. They will be grading the property using mulch and other fill material, creating a field, and installing fencing while maintaining the contours of the land.

Commissioner Cicchese noted that a nice article was recently printed in *The Norwich Bulletin*. Mr. Lawton added that it was also announced on 97.7 WCTY FM. In response to her question regarding the number of Commissioners who would be required to serve on the subcommittee, its rules, and the reasoning behind recommending a subcommittee over a community committee, Commissioner Berardy felt that two Commissioners would be sufficient and Mr. Lawton stated that a community committee would require them to apply for a 501(c), which would delay the process and not allow the group to benefit from the municipal blanket. Councilor Tanner recommended forming a committee with one (1) P&R liaison. Commissioner Cicchese noted that individuals might be less apt to donate funds to the Town rather than an independent foundation/organization. Councilor Tanner will check with the Finance Director regarding the possibility of forming a fundraising/donation account. Funds will be raised through donations received by citizens and businesses as well as by the application of any existing grants. It is

estimated that the establishment of the dog park will cost approximately \$30,000.00, the largest expenses being for the fencing and the walkway from the parking lot to main gate.

Both Commissioners Berardy and Wainwright expressed their interest in serving on the subcommittee as the P&R liaisons.

4. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the agenda with a three-minute limit — none.
5. To consider and act on a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 17, 2014. Motion made by Commissioner Lawton, seconded by Commissioner DelaCruz. Discussion: Chairman LaVallie requested the last sentence for item 8(e) be changed to the following: “The paving re-surfacing of the tennis courts is almost complete ...” Voice vote, 6-0-2. Voting in Favor: Commissioners Berardy, DelaCruz, LaVallie, Lawton, Perkins, and Wainwright. Voting in Opposition: None. Voting in Abstention: Commissioners Cicchese and Ventresca. Motion passed.
6. To consider and act on a motion to review and approve the Director’s Report for October 2014. Motion made by Commissioner Lawton, seconded by Commissioner DelaCruz. Discussion: Commissioner Perkins noted that discrepancies continue to exist on the listing of Current Programs and reiterated her request that the information either be accurate or not presented. Commissioners Lawton and Ventresca agreed that the information presented to them should be accurate. Discussion ensued regarding the importance and necessity of the Commission having all of the information on the report. An informal vote regarding what information should remain on the report was taken:

Program:	8-0, all in favor. Item to remain on the report.
Starting & Ending Dates:	8-0, all in favor. Item to remain on the report.
Ending Date:	8-0, all in favor. Item to remain on the report.
Instructor Pay:	4-4. Item to remain on the report.
Participant Pay:	4-4. Item to remain on the report.
	Note: Should be changed to Participant <u>Fee</u> .
Participants:	4-4. Item to remain on the report.

P&R Director Bushway was tasked with ensuring that the information provided on the report is accurate. Voice vote, 8-0, all in favor. Motion passed.
7. Reports from Finance — none.
8. Unfinished Business
 - a. Town Information Sign at Public Safety Building
Due to the inability of determining an adequate location for the sign in front of Town Hall, it was decided to look into the possibility of installing a sign in front of the Public Safety Building. Discussion ensued regarding the type and location of the sign. Chairman LaVallie envisions an electronic sign whose use and costs can be shared with other departments. Commissioner DelaCruz stated that the Mohegan Sun utilizes Janus Displays for their digital

signage. Chairman LaVallie will speak with Lt. Bunnell and the Mayor regarding the possibility of installing a sign in front of the building.

b. Dog Ordinance

Director Bushway will be re-submitting the maps to the Town Administration/Rules & Procedures Committee for review. Upon approval, the Committee will send the Ordinance to the Town Council who will send it to the Town Attorney for review. Councilor Tanner reported that, because the Dog Park was approved, she encouraged the Council to pass the Dog Ordinance as well, as they go hand-in-hand.

c. Dog Park — previously discussed

d. Camp Oakdale projects

Taken aback by the estimates of converting the softball field into a regulation field, Chairman LaVallie reported his plans to touch base with Public Works Director Don Bourdeau regarding breaking down the tasks and costs of the project so that they can, possibly, take the necessary steps towards achieving that goal.

Motion made by Commissioner Perkins, seconded by Commissioner Ventresca, to de-install the backstop located on Field 4 at Camp Oakdale. Discussion: Commissioner Wainwright questioned whether the cement pieces and a possible well located in the area will play into the decision and whether there are other parts of the park with similar issues. Commissioner Perkins was tasked with contacting PW Director Bourdeau to discuss the de-installation of the backstop. Voice vote, 6-1-1. Voting in Favor: Commissioners Berardy, LaVallie, Lawton, Perkins, Ventresca, and Wainwright. Voting in Abstention: Commissioner Cicchese. Voting in Opposition: Commissioner Delacruz. Motion passed.

In response to Commissioner Wainwright, Director Bushway stated that the keys to the access road are provided to the Fire Department, Police Department, and, possibly, vendors.

In response to Commissioner Perkins, who would like to see picnic tables and/or seating areas, Chairman LaVallie stated that such items are not currently included in their budget. Director Bushway believed that such items are included in the Public Works budget as a facility need. Commissioner Perkins questioned the possibility of utilizing income derived from their programs for such purposes. Commissioner Berardy introduced the possibility of offering dedication benches/picnic tables and announcing it in their monthly newsletter. Commissioner Ventresca disagreed with Commissioner Cicchese who reported that the current trend in the State is to charge leagues to help fund field maintenance, as, in Southeastern CT, Stonington is the only town that is currently charging a fee. Other options include an Eagle Scout project or having the inmates build the benches. Commissioner Perkins introduced the idea of creating a wish list of items for inclusion in the Public Works budget. Commissioner Perkins was tasked with discussing the possibility of installing picnic tables/benches, at least to replace those that have been removed, with PW Director Bourdeau. She will also discuss the possibility of installing a playground.

e. P&R Newsletter

Chairman LaVallie reported that the first two newsletters were sent with the help of Director Bushway, Commissioners Lawton and DelaCruz, and himself, i.e., the Executive Board, and did not go through the Commission due to time constraints. Due to some issues, the last issue was sent out before it was finalized.

Commissioner Perkins stated her dismay with the newsletters being sent out without the Commission's input and did not agree that there was a time constraint with the last issue, the book having been distributed just prior to the mailing of the newsletter. Chairman LaVallie stated that the newsletter will be sent the first week of November, is being targeted to those who have participated in P&R programs in the past, and a draft was included in their agenda packet for review and discussion. Commissioner Ventresca requested the deletion of duplicate e-mails as she received four (4) copies of the newsletter. Director Bushway stated that he would meet with the IT Director and look into the remedying the situation. Chairman LaVallie requested the inclusion of a photo of the re-surfaced tennis courts and Scarecrow Village in the newsletter. In response to Commissioner Ventresca's suggestion to include an announcement for the Dog Park Committee, Chairman LaVallie responded that he would check to see if that would be appropriate for inclusion.

f. Future Community Center

Commissioner Perkins expressed her concern regarding the potential for a cluster or cluttering of signage at Camp Oakdale and Fair Oaks and referred to their rules and regulations requiring the Commission authorize all signs. She also introduced the idea of installing a P&R sign at Fair Oaks. Director Bushway confirmed that he has not received any such requests in the past. It was decided that, should the signage become an issue, the Commission would address it at that time.

g. A pavilion for Camp Oakdale with picnic tables —see item 8(d)

h. Alternative place for a small playground between the soccer fields — see item 8(d)

i. New Camp Oakdale entrance

Commissioner Ventresca read a letter she received from Chris & Cassie Curry into the record regarding the congestion, blockage of lanes, lack of a safe drop-off area, and overall safety of the Camp Oakdale parking lot. Commissioner Ventresca also noted that people are parking against the emergency access gate posing an additional danger. Chairman LaVallie requested the letter be forwarded to the Public Works Director for his attention. Commissioner Cicchese agreed that, due to liability issues, PW Director Bourdeau should be made aware of the situation for immediate action. In response to Commissioner Wainwright's question, Director Bushway believed that the lines, which will only allow for one-way traffic, are slated for painting next year. Councilor Tanner reported that she has received similar concerns. Commissioner Ventresca was tasked with preparing a request, in writing, to PW Director Bourdeau expressing the Commission and public's concern and the urgency of establishing a traffic/parking pattern. The letter will be sent to the Commissioners for their input prior to

being submitted to the PW Director Bourdeau, Lt. Bunnell, and cc'd to the Mayor.

Commissioner Cicchese also suggested the possibility of having enforcement to promote the safety of the parking lot during the interim.

j. Scarecrow Village event

Chairman LaVallie commended Commissioner DelaCruz on the event and display adding his wish that more people were involved in the event and that, perhaps, the event was scheduled too early. Commissioner DelaCruz agreed and stated that next year, the event will be pushed back by one week. They have, otherwise, received positive feedback.

9. New Business

a. Finance Department – Contractor’s Packet

Chairman LaVallie distributed copies of the Contractor’s Packet to the Commission. Finance Director Terry Hart has expressed the need for the receipt of a consistent packet of items from all contractors, including the contract, W-9, insurance requirement(s), and background check. Chairman LaVallie has requested direction regarding any existing guidelines, i.e., an approved organization, for the background checks. While, for the most part, the Department contracts individuals who are insured by their umbrella organizations, those instructors running minimal programs, e.g., a children’s music class, were not required to carry insurance. As such, Chairman LaVallie will inquire as to whether there can be any discretion with small minimal programs that do not pose any threat(s). In response to Commissioner Ventresca who questioned whether there would be a difference between those hired to conduct events vs. programs, Chairman LaVallie stated that all contractors and vendors must be insured.

Another item is the receipt of payments. While all payments are required to be paid in full prior to the beginning of the class, some discretion has been left to the Director. In addition, though they should not be receiving payments, instructors have accepted payment(s) from participants. P&R has a strict refund policy in which full refunds are given only prior to the start of class or for cancellations initiated by P&R, half is refunded after the first class, and no refunds after the second class. The Commission felt that no administration fee should be charged. Director Bushway noted the possibility of charging an administrative fee for bounced checks. Commissioner Cicchese questioned the reasoning behind her concerns, the number of refunds being given, and whether this is the type of customer service they would like to offer.

Lastly is the issue of un-received Summer Camp payments of those who were placed on a payment plan. Chairman LaVallie will request to have the unpaid fees written-off and bar these individuals from taking part in any future P&R programs until their account is paid in full. Director Bushway estimates that there is currently approximately \$400.00 - \$500.00 in unpaid accounts.

b. Trick or Trunk (Commissioner Lawton)

Commissioner Lawton invited the Commissioners to help decorate a trunk at this Saturday’s event. Forty-one (41) participants will be taking part in the event, some of which are groups. Chairman LaVallie stated that, perhaps, next year, the Commission might consider subsidizing

the participants due to the large turnout they have been experiencing. Commissioner Lawton reported that they have collected over 100 bags of candy and \$44.00 in cash and is considering establishing a minimum of 50 trunks due to the high turnout. Chairman LaVallie hopes everyone will be able to attend the event.

10. Communications

Commissioner Ventresca recited a letter received by Jeff Beckwith, former Montville Soccer Coach, current coach for Montville Youth Lacrosse and St. Bernard's Middle School Lacrosse, regarding recently published articles reporting the cancellation of the Recreational Basketball season in Norwich due to parent conduct and suggested distributing/collecting a Parent Conduct Form signed by the parents. In response to Commissioner Perkins, Director Bushway stated that, while a paid individual is present and may address an issue if they are aware of it, he/she is required to maintain their position at the door. Director Bushway stated that a letter is currently included in their packet regarding inappropriate conduct and plans to post signage at the games.

11. Remarks from the Public — none.

12. Remarks from the Commissioners

Commissioner Perkins expressed her disagreement with the need to have certain concerns be in writing. Chairman LaVallie stated that, without a personal written concern, issues couldn't be presented to the Commission as it would be considered hearsay. Should the Commissioner agree with the issue, he/she may present the issue as his/her own point of view.

Commissioner Ventresca has received suggestions regarding the creation of a gymnastics and tumbling program for older children (exact ages not specified). Currently, gymnastics and tumbling programs are available for children up to 12 years of age. She also expressed her appreciation to Councilor Tanner for bringing information to the Commission and acting as their liaison. She added that all of the members are on the Commission for the right reasons and her comments are not meant to be personal attacks.

Commissioner DelaCruz reported that upcoming events include Trick or Trunk and Pumpkin Decorating, which have 56 registrants, six (6) of who are on the waiting list. She suggested the six individuals on the waiting list be invited to bring their own pumpkins and join in the decorating. Director Bushway stated that he would be happy to donate the additional pumpkins. Participants are invited to bring donations for the Montville Animal Shelter. In addition, the Animal Control Officer may be participating in the event and her aide may bring a cat or dog available for adoption. She reported on a successful Scarecrow Village event. While number of participants was low, many positive comments were received. She clarified that she picked up a number of discarded tags at the Mohegan Sun; these tags, she emphasized, were *not* stolen.

Chairman LaVallie congratulated Commissioner Lawton on her re-appointment to the Commission. He, again, commended Commissioner DelaCruz on the Scarecrow Village event and

congratulated her on the success of the Pumpkin Decorating event. Chairman Bushway added that Uklejas Christmas Tree Farm kindly donated the pumpkins for the event.

13. Remarks from Town Council Liaison, Laura Tanner

Councilor Tanner reported that Finance Director Hart stated that the Dog Park can be added as a line item in their budget. She has also sent an e-mail to the Mayor informing him that a member of the Commission will be contacting him to discuss the parking lot at Camp Oakdale. She reported that Regional Dispatch was approved by the Town Council and will, hopefully, be in place in July 2015. She congratulated the Commission on the passage of the Dog Park, which, she felt, will be a great addition for the community. She also reported that Route 163 will be open to traffic this Friday, October 24, and the Montville Road Bridge is scheduled for completion in April 2015. In addition, she reported that a new 80,000 square foot indoor sports complex at Lombardi Business Park on Sachatello Drive will soon be breaking ground. The complex, which would not have been possible with their ability to supply fire suppression water, will have four soccer/sports fields and two concessions stands. Lastly, she requested the members of the Town Council be added to their mailing list for the newsletter.

g. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Berardy, seconded by Commissioner Lawton, to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 8-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville

**AN AUDIO RECORD OF THE MEETING IS ON FILE IN THE MONTVILLE TOWN
CLERK'S OFFICE**