

Town of Montville Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, January 21, 2014
6:30 p.m. – Town Hall – Town Council Chambers

1. Call to order
Chairman Scott LaVallie called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. after establishing a quorum and informed the Commission of an 8:02 p.m. adjournment unless a majority vote for an extension is made.
2. Roll Call
Present were Commissioners Eileen Cicchese, Nancy Delacruz, Scott LaVallie, Kerri Lawton, Gilbert Maffeo, Karen Perkins, and Kristin Ventresca. Absent were Commissioners Joseph Berardy and Derek Wainwright. Also present were Parks & Recreation Director Peter Bushway, Public Works Director Don Bourdeau, and Town Council Liaison Laura Tanner.
3. Adjustments to the agenda — *none*
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:
 - a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of December 17, 2014
Motion made by Commissioner Lawton, seconded by Commissioner Delacruz. Discussion: In response to Commissioner Ventresca, Commissioner Cicchese responded that she stated her interest in holding the position of Vice-Chair should none of the other Commissioners express any interest in holding the position; she previously stepped down from the position of Chairman due to time restrictions. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion passed.
 - b. The Special Meeting Minutes of January 14, 2015
Motion made by Commissioner Delacruz, seconded by Commissioner Maffeo. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion passed.
6. To consider and act on a motion to review and approve the Director's Report for January 2015.
Motion made by Commissioner Lawton, seconded by Commissioner Ventresca. Discussion: Regarding the Concert, Commissioner Lawton stated that she has received suggestions for a country band to be added to the Concert and added that she will begin investigating activities for the children during the event. "New Ideas for the Concert Series" will be added the next agenda and Commissioners were encouraged to bring any suggestions and/or ideas to the next meeting. The lack of players for the grades 5 and 6 girls' basketball teams was discussed. There are currently two teams with seven players on each team. Director Bushway reported that previous commitments have fallen through. As the result, he has contacted various schools and towns, including Bozrah, Salem, Norwich, and Waterford, but to no avail. He has been able to arrange for games with the Catholic School League and games have been scheduled against St. Bernard's, St. Joseph's, and other Catholic Schools. The schedule has not yet been completed and the season may be extended into March to accommodate for the late start. The start times of the games are

scheduled to accommodate that of the working parent(s). Enrollment has been steady until this year for unknown reasons. Chairman LaVallie received a letter from Ms. Mary Hillman, one of the 5/6 girls' basketball coaches, regarding the lack of involvement in the girls' recreational basketball team while Murphy, Oakdale, and Mohegan Schools have 14, 20, and 28 girls, respectively, only three of who are playing on the recreational team. Ms. Hillman also questioned the cost of the program (\$40) to which he responded that the goal of the program is to have a revenue neutral program, adding that the cost covers the referees, monitors, etc. She also suggested the possibility of hosting a Clinic run by High School students. Possible times during which a clinic can be held includes during the summer, spring, or winter breaks or prior to the start of the season, depending upon the High School's schedule. The possibility of running a survey of the parents regarding their awareness of the program and focusing on the coaches and requesting their help in promoting the program was also discussed. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion passed.

7. Reports from Finance

In response to Commissioner Delacruz, Director Bushway stated that there appears to be no consistent reasoning regarding the high number of refunds for gymnastics, though he is aware of two unrelated injuries precluding them from participating in the program.

8. Unfinished Business

a. Town Information Sign

Chairman LaVallie reported that the Montville High School Athletic Boosters expressed their interest in partnering with the Commission on the sign. The Boosters have obtained quotes ranging from \$4,000.00 - \$5,000.00. Commissioner Ventresca has also received estimates ranging from \$5,000.00 for a simple LED sign that is approximately 2'H to an \$8,000.00 sign with legs, a glass covering, and a lifetime warranty. The most economical sign for the functionality they are seeking is a full-color sign without a stand, for \$7,300.00. The cost includes a lifetime warranty, free shipping, lifetime software upgrades, along with other warranties for specific part(s). In addition, the information can be easily uploaded to the sign via a Flash drive and runs off of a 120V plug. On the low end is a one-color U.S. Market Board sign for \$4,750.00. The product comes with no warranty, no technical support, no software upgrades, a tedious uploading process, and uses more electricity. A number of different options exist and it was noted that, perhaps, the School has a preferred or contracted vendor. Public Works Director Bourdeau informed the Commission to keep in mind that, while a \$2,500.00 - \$5,000.00 bid requires a controlled bid in which companies specializing in such products/services may be invited to submit a bid, any bids above \$5,000.00 would need to be advertised. The Finance Director should be contacted to respond to the question regarding whether the job would still need to go to bid should the Commission be contributing \$2,499.00. Chairman LaVallie will relay the information to the Boosters, who can consult with the School regarding their support of and possible participation in the project. He will also speak with the Schools' Facilities Director Steve Carroll regarding the availability of power and/or any other electrical requirements. Commissioner Lawton expressed her concern

regarding the placement of the sign at the high school as the public may ignore the sign thinking that it only promotes high school events/activities. The necessity of informing the public of the sign and the fact that school is only in session 180 days a year leaving the Commission's programs to be the primary content on the sign the remainder of the year was discussed.

b. Dog Ordinance

As far as the Committee is aware, the Dog Ordinance has been sent to the Town Attorney for review. Director Bushway will discuss the specifics of the maps with Councilor May and will contact Councilor Longton regarding the status of the Ordinance. The next Town Administration/Rules & Procedures Committee will be held next Monday, January 26, 2015.

c. Dog Park

The Dog Park Committee will be holding their first meeting next Tuesday, January 27, 2015, 2:00 p.m. at Fair Oaks.

d. Camp Oakdale Wish List

PW Director Bourdeau discussed the following items on the Commission's Wish List:

He agrees with the need for **benches** and suggested inviting local businesses and residents to sponsor a bench on which a plaque(s) can be placed upon or an engraving(s) etched into the bench with the donor's name or tribute as a way of helping fund the benches. Multiple sponsors may be required for the purchase on one bench, which is estimated to cost approximately \$800.00 - \$1,000.00. The benches will need to be steel and relatively strong to avoid any vandalism. Commissioner Cicchese stated the possibility of including an announcement in their upcoming newsletter. He will provide the Commission with an image of the bench he has in mind and suggested the Commission purchase the first bench with an engraving as a sample so that interested parties may physically view the bench.

Picnic Tables were purchased over the past year and the purchase of eight (8) additional tables are included in the budget for the upcoming season.

The purchase and installation of a **Pavilion** will need to be placed on hold for the time being and be included as part of their long-range plan.

A **gazebo** is included in his CIP budget. In response to Commissioner Maffeo's concern over the possibility of the gazebo being vandalized, he agreed, adding that, for whatever reason, the new bathrooms have not been vandalized since their installation. Commissioner DelaCruz suggested looking into a steel gazebo that may be less prone to vandalism.

PW Director Bourdeau stated his concerns regarding the lack of supervision that may occur on the proposed **small playground**, which could become a liability for the Town should an incident occur. Commissioner Perkins disagreed as, she felt, the playground would be located within their line of sight. In addition, PW Director Bourdeau added that playgrounds already exist throughout the Town and that the playground should be beneficial to most, if not all, people.

A **walking trail or track** is not included in his budget as it is, traditionally, included in the Parks & Recreation Department's budget. He is open to including the item in his budget and suggested the Commission research, apply for, and receive one of the many available grants, which may help them receive approval for the project as well as be provided with any additional necessary funds for the project, e.g. matching funds. He added that one of items in his budget is funding to help better maintain the trails making them nicer and more walkable.

He has included and spread out the **expansion of the field** to a regulation field in his CIP budget over two years in hopes that the item will receive funding and they can begin clearing out the area.

The status of the proposed painting of the Large Pavilion by an Eagle Scout is unknown. PW Director Bourdeau reported that he has provided the necessary information to the Scout and is waiting to hear back from him. He added that he did have the inmates paint the soffits, which were rotting.

He also stated that the basketball courts are scheduled for re-sealing, the back tennis courts will be dismantled, leveled, and grass installed, the bathrooms at Camp Oakdale are on schedule for being torn down and should be completed by March.

He is hoping to work on Palmertown this coming Spring. In response to Commissioner Lawton, it was stated that temporarily flooding the field to create an ice skating rink would not be possible due to liability issues.

e. P&R Newsletter

A draft of the Newsletter, which will be sent the first week of February, was distributed to the Commission for review. Images of the volleyball program will be added. In response to Commissioner Ventresca, Commissioner Lawton will take and provide basketball images for inclusion in the newsletter.

f. Future Community Center

PW Director Bourdeau stated that he has included \$50,000.00 in his CIP budget for the Fair Oaks project. The funds will be used to abandon the existing well, cut the big tree, and level the area in preparation and hopes of creating an additional field, a key-in system, and security system. The Commission agreed to have the entryway and hallways painted the same colors as Town Hall.

Commissioner Cicchese requested a list of those items included in his plan(s) over the next two years and the possibility of including those items in their upcoming newsletters in an effort to engage the community and gain their support for some, if not all, of the proposed projects.

Chairman LaVallie reported that, following their Special Meeting last week, he sent a letter to Councilor Tanner regarding the need for some directive regarding the facility. Councilor Tanner stated that she forwarded the letter to the Mayor, Town Council Chairman Joseph Jaskiewicz, and Vice-Chairman Billy Caron. Councilor Caron, in response, stated that the

Town Council controls the Town's buildings and has no plans to relinquish that control. The Commission may provide the Council with suggestions and recommendations for improvements and/or changes, but the ultimate authority belongs to the Town Council, who will determine and decide what is best for the Town.

Discussion ensued regarding the management of the building as the Department has been handling the day-to-day scheduling of the facility and handled the administration of the \$200,000.00 STEAP Grant to turn Fair Oaks School into a Community Center. The Town has made no additional efforts to this end. In addition, the question of who would be in charge of a Community Center arises and, if the Town Council is in charge of the Center, the question of what their plans are for the building also arises. Because the building is often referred to as the Community Center, it is presumed by the public to be under the auspices of the Parks & Recreation Commission/Department and, as such, poses an embarrassment to the Commission and Department, specifically, and the Town, as a whole. It was clarified that the Mayor is in charge of the personnel within Town Hall, but the buildings are under the charge of the Town Council. Councilor Tanner stated that she will request the item be added to the agenda for discussion at the February Town Council meeting. Commissioner Ventresca felt that they may be parsing words in that the day-to-day operations, maintenance, grants, etc. to improve, replace, contribute to the Community Center may be under the Parks & Recreation Commission/Department. Though this is understood, the Town Council has not provided them with any support, direction, or, even, a workable facility. It was suggested that the members of the Town Council be invited to tour the facility with them and discuss these issues and their plans for providing the Town with a Community Center that is befitting of the Town and its residents.

Motion made by Commissioner Lawton, seconded by Commissioner DelaCruz, to table any further discussion on the Community Center and extend the meeting to 8:15 p.m. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion passed and meeting extended.

g. New Camp Oakdale entrance

Commissioner Lawton stated that she received a reply from the Mayor, who stated that the traffic control design has been sketched out. The Town Engineers are currently reviewing the proposed layout of the parking lot to ensure that it meets the required rules and regulations. Due to the existing wetlands, there are no plans for creating an exit from the parking lot. Furthermore, it is felt that the addition of an exit will not deter the issues they are having in the parking lot. Should there continue to be an issue of speeding, speed bumps/dips can be added to slow down the drivers. They are also looking into adding an additional gate forcing people to drive in one direction.

h. Finance Department – Contractor's Packet – *none*

i. Renumbering of Fields at Camp Oakdale (Commissioner Perkins)

PW Director Bourdeau stated that the renumbering of the fields will be completed in-house by way of the creation of signage. In addition, kiosks containing a map of the facility noting the

field numbers as well as those areas in which dogs are/are not allowed located near the two soccer fields and the basketball courts will be installed. Commissioner Ventresca suggested including that information in their newsletters once the project is completed.

- j. Brainstorm long term goals for P&R (Commissioner Cicchese)
Partially discussed under item 8(f).

9. New Business

- a. Election of Officers for 2015

Motion made by Commissioner Lawton, seconded by Commissioner Maffeo, to accept the election of the following candidates:

Chair: Commissioner LaVallie
Vice-Chair: Commissioner Cicchese
Secretary: Commissioner DelaCruz

Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion passed and officers elected.

- b. The use of existing Parks & Recreation money for the dog park. (Commissioner Berardy) -
tabled

- c. 2015 Budget

Director Bushway reported that he will revise the budget based upon the Commissioners' comments and suggestions and will send them the revised budget for approval in February. Commissioner Lawton requested the addition of a line item for the Masters Race to ensure that adequate funds are provided for the prizes.

10. Communications — *none*

11. Remarks from the Public — *none*

12. Remarks from the Commissioners

Commissioner Perkins clarified that she was unaware that the Town Council, not the Mayor, presided over the Towns' facilities.

Commissioner Ventresca stated that she was glad to see Commissioner Cicchese back and that she is feeling better.

Commissioner DelaCruz requested the Commission provide her with tentative dates for the Community Tag Sale so that she can begin advertising for the Sale. She also spoke in favor of a walking tour of Fair Oaks with the Town Council prior to their next meeting so that they can begin to take action and formulate a plan.

Commissioners Cicchese and Maffeo also spoke in favor of a joint tour of Fair Oaks with the Town Council.

Chairman LaVallie expressed his frustration and disappointment over the Fair Oaks situation and the lack of support the Commission has received from the Town Council in their efforts to provide

the Town with a suitable facility. The facility is in a dilapidated condition and their constant request for funds to renovate the building has been denied year after year.

13. Remarks from Town Council Liaison, Laura Tanner

Councilor Tanner reported that Councilor May stated that they are waiting to hear back from the Town Attorney regarding the Dog Ordinance. They are also waiting to receive the final maps from Director Bushway. She stated that she will continue to advocate for the Commission regarding Fair Oaks and requested a list of possible dates so that she can organize a joint tour with the Town Council of the facility, adding that, she believes, most of the Councilors have visited the building. She encouraged the Commission to keep up the good work.

14. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Cicchese, seconded by Commissioner DelaCruz, to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, 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