

Town of Montville Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, November 18, 2015
6:30 p.m. – Montville 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 Nancy delaCruz, Ryan Hartman, Kerri Lawton, Scott LaVallie, Karen Perkins, and Kristin Ventresca. Absent were Commissioner Joseph Berardy, Eileen Cicchese, and Derek Wainwright. Also present were Parks & Recreation Director Peter Bushway, Town Council Liaison Laura Tanner, and Public Works Director Don Bourdeau.

3. Adjustments to the agenda

The following item was added to the agenda:

Item 10(c) Coach's Clinic (Commissioner Lawton)

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 Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Motion made by Commissioner Ventresca, seconded by Commissioner Lawton. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0 all in favor. Motion carried.

6. Director's Report for October 2015

The 1st and 2nd Basketball Program will be an eight (8) week program beginning on January 9. The program dates were dependent upon the availability of the St. Bernard's High School gymnasium. Having been questioned by a resident and being unaware of the establishment of the program, Commissioner Ventresca expressed her dismay regarding the lack of communication between the Commissioners and the need for transparency. Chairman LaVallie stated that, due to the timing of the program, it was not possible to confer with the entire Commission and, per their last meeting, it was stated that P&R Director Bushway would investigate the possibility of sponsoring the program and confer with the Chairman. He also added that the role of the Commission is to offer guidance to the P&R Director and Department, who is in charge of the actual creation and management of the programs. The importance of the Commission being informed was reiterated and emphasized as members of the community often approach the Commissioners and Town Council Liaison with questions regarding particular programs and/or events. In the future, e-mails stating that the information being provided is "FYI" will be sent to the Commissioners in an effort to inform the Commission of any happenings as well as to ensure that the e-mail will not be responded to by clicking "reply all", opening a conversation/meeting and violating any FOI (Freedom of Information) Rules & Regulations.

Commissioner Hartman expressed his concern regarding the program's lack of publicity. The flyer has been sent to the elementary schools for inclusion in their Digital Backpack/Paw Print Newsletter and will be posted on their Facebook page and Newsletter. P&R Director Bushway was informed that the flyer was not included in Oakdale Elementary School's Paw Print Newsletter. Additional suggestions included placing an announcement in *The Montville Times* and the Calendar page of *The Day* newspaper. Commissioner Hartman volunteered to speak with the owner of Copycats, New London, who is a Montville resident, regarding the possibility of creating signs that can be posted at key locations. Given the limited time frame, Commissioner Lawton suggested having one large sign(s) created for the program. Director Bushway will speak with the Superintendent to investigate the possibility of distributing a physical copy of the flyer to the students. Due to the tight time frame, it was agreed to concentrate their efforts in the distribution of flyers, social media postings, and the placement of a newspaper advertisement, rather than purchasing signage.

The Holiday Lighting Contest is being promoted via the Booklet, Newsletter, and the distribution of a detailed flyer, created by The Rotary Club. In addition, *The Montville Times* will be requested to publish one of the contestants' lighting display on the cover of their next issue. The placement of an announcement/advertisement in *The Montville Advertiser* was also suggested. B&D Autobody will be providing the 1st Place prize of free electricity for the month of December and The Rotary Club will be supplying the 2nd and 3rd Place prizes. B&D Autobody will also be renting a 15-passenger van to drive the judges around Town to view the homes.

To date, approximately 12 people have signed up for the parade. The parade had 25 participants last year; the most participants they have ever had is 32. Participants are permitted to hand out items to the audience if they are walking.

7. P&R Newsletter for November 2015

While the November Newsletter was not included in the Schools' Digital Backpacks, the December Newsletter will be submitted for inclusion. It was requested that the terminology be changed from "trophies" to "awards" for the Holiday Lighting Contest. Chairman LaVallie announced that there is still time to add any additional items to the Newsletter.

8. Reports from Finance

The expenditures for Scarecrow Village included the awards and supplies, including stakes and cable ties. The expenditures for Trick or Trunk included the prizes, advertisements, and signage for the event. Commissioner Lawton reported that \$78.00 and 200 bags of candy were collected over four (4) weekends at Stop and Shop Grocery Store.

9. Unfinished Business

a. 2016 Summer Concert

- 1) Build / Purchase Stage (Chairman LaVallie)

Chairman LaVallie updated the Commission on the status of the stage, reporting that he obtained pricing for two ADA-compliant ramps (\$8,000.00 each) and 48” guardrails (\$1,400.00), bringing the total to close to \$16,000.00. While he contacted the Facilities Manager regarding the type of stage they rent for their graduation event, he has not spoken with the School regarding the possibility of sharing the costs of the stage. It was agreed that there is a long-term cost benefit to purchase a stage. They will continue researching their options.

The necessity of booking the band(s) for the 2016 Summer Concert was discussed. Possibilities include: Fusion, Melaena, Sugar, Wicked Peach, No Shame, Darik and the Funbags, as well as contacting The Music Bureau, Salem, for additional possibilities. The item will be added to future agendas.

b. Future of Fair Oaks Community Center -

While the proposal for the USDA Low-Interest Loan was not presented as such, it came to the Commission’s attention that the Town submitted a preliminary application based upon the Town Planner’s determination of what the facility should include. The Community Center Building Committee has not yet been formed.

c. Camp Oakdale

In response to complaints that were received regarding the lack of toilet paper and hand towels and broken bathrooms during the recent soccer tournament, PW Director Bourdeau stated that they have been having issues with the toilet in the men’s bathroom, which has since been resolved. The toilet was replaced twice, once due to freezing and, again, due to a design flaw. Following the second replacement, the toilet started leaking and it is thought that the rim at the bottom of the toilet expanded and contracted due to weather. He added that he was not informed about the soccer tournament and, had he been informed, port-a-potties would have been placed to accommodate the players and visitors. While the Department’s Administrative Assistant does send out a monthly schedule of events, Commissioner Lawton suggested having a shared online community calendar that can be easily updated and to which related Town Departments may have access to avoid any future mis- or lack of communication issues, as schedules often change due to cancellations, inclement weather, or the like. Regarding the toilet paper, PW Bourdeau stated that, while an extra case of toilet paper is stored in the soccer shed, an additional dispenser can be installed in the bathrooms. The new bathrooms will be equipped with hand dryers.

Regarding the parking lot, PW Director Bourdeau reported that the crosshatching, signage, and additional striping as well as the re-painting of the arrows will be completed, weather permitting, by Spring 2016. The installation of speed bumps/dips continues to be under evaluation. Nevertheless, he fears that visitors will continue to cut across the parking lot when it is not full. Chairman LaVallie suggested the possibility of installing a railing or split rail fence in the center to keep visitors from cutting across the lot. Also raised was the width

of the second row, which is two-way, but, when the parking lot is full, is too narrow to accommodate even one vehicle. It was also felt that the additional spaces at the end of the row be eliminated due to the tightness of the area and lack of signage. PW Bourdeau will measure and investigate the width of the second row and noted that once the signage and bollards are installed, it is hoped that the area containing the additional spaces will be remedied. He is also investigating the possibility of widening the trail from the Camp to the tennis courts so as to provide additional parking spaces.

The power to the bathroom located at the Large Pavilion has been turned off, the water has been drained, the trees have been cut down, and the bathroom is scheduled for demolition next week. The bathroom at Camp Oakdale will be demolished after November 30 when they can be sure that all of the activities have been completed. A newly designed power station will be installed in place of the current system.

d. Carnival

PW Director Bourdeau questioned whether the Carnival would be self-sufficient in regards to power. He added that the power at Fair Oaks has been disconnected and a fee would be charged by Eversource should they wish to have the power inspected and reconnected. Commissioner Lawton stated that the vendor will require access to water from a hose and a portable generator, but was unsure regarding the power and will further investigate the matter. She also stated that she has been trying to communicate with Rockwell Amusement to reserve and confirm the dates for the event (June 23-25 or 24-26), but has been unsuccessful. The vendor has requested reviewing the proposed site prior to making a commitment; she requested either he or one of the PW employees be present at this time to answer any questions. She is planning to contact him again, but should she continue to have an issue, a different vendor will be contacted.

The Commission thanked PW Director Bourdeau and wished him a Happy Thanksgiving.

d. P&R Website

The IT Department will not be able to discuss the Commission's Website until the installation of the new town-wide phone system has been completed. The question of whether the Commission/Department can set up an independent website from the Town's website was discussed. P&R Director Bushway stated that three individuals have access to the website (IT Director and on a more limited basis, the Town Clerk and a volunteer). He was tasked with inquiring with the IT Director as to the possibility of creating a user-friendlier site, either on- or off-site.

e. Trick or Trunk Recap (Commissioner delaCruz)

Commissioner Lawton thanked Commissioners delaCruz, Ventresca, and LaVallie for their help at the event. One issue with the event derived from the deletion of the event from Montville Forum's Facebook page, which automatically sent out a notice to the public that the

event was cancelled. The issue has since been discussed with one of the administrators of the page. Discussion ensued regarding the need to monitor the social media forums from which a variety of rumors and misinformation is being communicated to the public regarding P&R events. Nevertheless, Chairman LaVallie commented on a good, smooth event that was enjoyed by all.

e. Pumpkin Decorating Recap (Commissioner delaCruz)

Commissioner delaCruz stated that, though a flyer with incorrect information regarding the location was distributed, the event was a, relatively, successful event. She also received a thank you note from the shelter for the donations that were received. It was unsure from where the incorrect flyers derived. The information was, otherwise, correct in the Booklet, Newsletter, and flyers that were distributed to the Schools.

10. New Business

a. Approval of the 2016 Meeting Dates

The 2016 Meeting Dates were approved and a revised version will be distributed to the Commission with the correct meeting year.

b. Formation of Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee will be chaired by Commissioner Cicchese and comprised of Commissioners Hartman and Perkins. Those interested in serving as either Chair, Vice-Chair, and/or Secretary may contact Commissioner Cicchese. Additional Commissioners may also be added to the slate during their December meeting.

c. 2016 Summer Movie Series (Commissioner Hartman)

Commissioner Hartman proposed hosting an evening weekend movie series on the Camp Oakdale football field with food trucks. While not opposed to the idea, Chairman LaVallie expressed his concerns regarding hosting of a Summer Movie Series, including the added workload to the Department and the cost of hosting such an event. He felt that the Commission and Department should concentrate on other programs. Commissioner Lawton loves the idea and, if one is willing to invest the time and energy required for hosting and creating a successful event, he/she should to so, adding that she is concerned with the possibility of tainting the location of their successful Concert Series should the Movie Series prove unsuccessful. That being said, she is also open to offering her help. Commissioner Perkins suggested hosting a “test” event, as they did with the Summer Concert, and continuing the event should it prove successful. The issue of obtaining a rental and movie license was also raised. With respect to staffing, the necessity of PW Director Bushway’s presence at most, if not all, of the programs/events, outside of the normal working hours, was questioned as well as the necessity of taking into account his time when deciding whether to maintain current and/or propose new events.

Motion made by Commissioner Lawton, seconded by Commissioner Ventresca, to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. Voice vote, 5-1. Voting in Favor: Commissioners delaCruz, Hartman, Lawton, Perkins, and Ventresca. Voting in Opposition: Commissioner LaVallie. Motion carried.

Discussion ensued regarding the need of having a P&R employee present to supervise programs/events and/or whether a volunteer would prove sufficient was discussed. Also discussed was the question of which programs/events a P&R employee must be present. It was hoped that the previously proposed and rejected part-time Programmer position would, not only help propose new programs, but also oversee/supervise programs. While Commissioner delaCruz does so out of enjoyment, Chairman LaVallie added that it is not the responsibility of the Commission to propose and/or run programs. Councilor Tanner will investigate as to how the Town Council would feel about having a volunteer supervise the events, rather than a Town employee. Clarification regarding the distinction between those programs/events that must be supervised by a paid employee/instructor and those that do not and who makes the decision as to what programs a supervisor/monitor must attend and how funds are allocated was requested. It was noted that there is also a police presence at their large events. Chairman LaVallie reiterated that he is not opposed to a Summer Movie Series, but felt that the Commission, when proposing a new program(s) and/or event(s), the impact it would have on the department, staffing, and budget must be considered.

Motion made by Commissioner Lawton, seconded by Commissioner delaCruz, to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. Voice vote, 3-3. Voting in Favor: Commissioners delaCruz, Lawton, and Ventresca. Voting in Opposition: Commissioners Hartman, LaVallie, and Perkins. Motion failed.

d. P&R Budget – *not discussed*

11. Communications – *not discussed*

12. Remarks from the Public – *not discussed*

13. Remarks from the Commissioners – *not discussed*

14. Remarks from Town Council Liaison, Laura Tanner – *not discussed*

15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

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