

**TOWN OF MONTVILLE**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes – July 15, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**Montville Town Hall – Room 203**

1. Call to Order  
Chairman Hewitt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance  
All stood and pledged the flag.
3. Roll Call  
Commissioners present were Mickey Gillette, Heather Harris, Sheelagh Lapinski, Christopher Napierski, Jim Toner, and Chairman Walter Hewitt. Town Councilor Rogers was absent. A quorum was present.
4. Alterations to the Agenda  
Motion by Commissioner Toner; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to add to Item 8.b *Business Survey* drafted by Commissioner Harris under 8.a, New Business. Voice vote, 6-0; all in favor. Motion carried.
5. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3-minute limit)  
Chairman Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.
6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve:
  - a. The Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 17, 2019.  
Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Toner to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 17 2019, as written. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
7. Unfinished Business
  - a. 2019 Small Business Forum Event Planning  
Chairman Hewitt reported that he distributed the final draft of the Forum agenda and said it should match the Forum registration agenda and could now be marketed. He also said the EDC brochure was updated and once he receives them from Planning & Zoning he will hand them out at the next Commission meeting. Additional commissioner business cards will be obtained for use and distribution at the Forum; Town Councilor Rogers will be notified of the same. Commissioner Napierski said he would update the EDC website about the Forum and Chairman Hewitt will do the same on the blog and Facebook. Chairman Hewitt also commented on the rolling Forum ad on the Town website and said the Commission would forego mailings for the event this year. He did say the email list from last year's Forum would be used to send invites.
  - b. EDC Website
    - i. Town of Montville  
Chairman Hewitt asked the Commission if it saw the email from Mayor McDaniel regarding the updating of the Town website. He stated he had made comments and suggested that any suggestions for the website be sent to the Mayor and Commissioners as

well. Chairman Hewitt also said he would offer to Mayor McDaniel to spend time with IT regarding EDC input.

ii. Facebook

Chairman Hewitt said earlier he would post information about the upcoming Forum.

iii. seCTer

Chairman Hewitt asked about touching base with seCTer as to the upcoming Forum and Commissioner Toner agreed.

iv. Blog for EDC (Currently at <http://whewitt.com>) – *No report*

Chairman Hewitt commented on *The Day* article about Smiler's Wharf, a proposed marina in Mystic, and said he would post information to the blog about it. He also asked whether a letter be sent from the EDC about a potential Montville property for the same with the response being, "it can't hurt."

c. New Business Report.

Chairman Hewitt stated he mailed letters to new businesses and included the EDC brochure and his business card. He then asked a question about zoning codes to which Commissioner Toner responded.

8. New Business

a. Identification and Marketing of short list of Montville real-estate properties for development.

i. Desire to be informed and directed based on Feasibility Study/Development Plan. It was discussed that Commissioner Toner and Commissioner Harris would confer about possible dates for them to meet about businesses leaving the casino. Chairman Hewitt and Commission Toner spoke to the need for the Commission to develop concrete plans and ideas for Town development. They talked about the businesses suggested previously by the Commission such as an Aldi's and the information a business would need to consider the Town as a potential location as well as contact information for said business. Commissioner Toner spoke of the available information on the State, CERC, and seCTer websites and information concerning traffic counts through the CT DOT including high traffic areas such as Routes 32 and 163. He said the seCTer study done two years ago had information concerning tourism and centering businesses on employers like the Sub Base and Electric Boat with its inherent expansion. Commissioner Toner also responded to Commissioner Napierski that Montville Commons had lowered its rental cost per square foot. He also addressed again businesses the Commission "wants" not just needs for growth purposes.

Chairman Hewitt spoke about the perspective of what the Commission wants versus a business approach to 1) gather information from businesses and 2) goals for the tax base or another mecca. He said the Commission needs to figure out how to make these things

happen to get a business to agree per their preconceived goals to meet and as he said, “Let’s talk.” Commissioner Napierski spoke to the desire a few years ago for indoor sports in Town. He said no one has an idea how to get a business to move to Montville and no one on the Commission has a realtor license stating that potential businesses do their own research. Commissioner Toner suggested to Chairman Hewitt that he contact Aldi’s and include the EDC brochure. He also spoke of the new data center as being the “Millstone” for Montville. Chairman Hewitt stated the Commission needs to work with the Town and its vision.

ii. List provided by Marcia

Chairman Hewitt commented on his receipt of the business list from Town Planner Vlaun.

b. Business Survey (*Harris*)

Commissioner Harris spoke about her research and skills from her own employment background that she used to develop the Business Survey (on her own personal time) that concerns business retention and expansion efforts. She talked about sales perspective—what do we do and what is in place—and open lines of communication with the goal to sell and retain clients. She mentioned feedback and data mining and a location in Kentucky doing something similar. Commissioner Harris asked the Commission for critique and feedback. Chairman Hewitt commented that an initial interaction should be face to face and spoke of the time needed to learn more about local business using a hands-on approach. He said a list of businesses was needed. At Commissioner Toner’s suggestion, Chairman Hewitt said he would ask Mayor McDaniel all Town businesses and then pare the list down. Commissioner Gillette suggested using the list from last year and adding the new businesses to it. Commissioner Napierski suggested dispensing the Survey at the Forum to “get the business juices going.” Commissioner Harris agreed it would be a start for later follow-up. Target areas discussed for expansion were Routes 32 and 85. Commissioner Harris said it would take a minimum of 3-4 weeks for follow-up with 20-30 businesses.

Commissioner Toner discussed his meeting with the Chief of Staff of the Mohegan Tribe, Chuck Bunnell, with Town Council Chairman McNally in attendance. He said Mr. Bunnell agreed to notify him when a business leaves or moves out of the casino. He said Mr. Bunnell spoke of individuals who come to the casino as a venue for a business and he agreed to have those individuals contact Commissioner Toner. Commissioner Toner explained that the casino rent is the 4<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation and that most stores there are chains that potentially lose money for name recognition. He also said he asked if there are businesses at the casino who are struggling and explained the skill set that SCORE and the SBA offered. Commissioner Toner spoke of a follow-up meeting with four (4) members of the casino executive board that will include discussion about how to communicate and who gets the information. He said it was a good meeting and he would follow-up tomorrow. Chairman Hewitt thanked Commissioner Toner and asked for feedback to the Commission from the follow-up meeting.

9. Townspeople and Business Feedback
  - a. Proposed Recipients for Business Recognition Award  
Chairman Hewitt said the Commission has an approved list of recipients through February 2020.
10. Report from Town Council Liaison -- *None*
11. Remarks from the Public (3-minute limit)  
Chairman Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.
12. Remarks from the Commissioners and Town Council Liaison  
Commissioner Napierski commented that this was the first meeting when all commissioners were present. Chairman Hewitt stated he would get a new list of businesses from Mayor McDaniel. Commissioner Gillette commented on a prior Town list of businesses and how it was pared down to those who lived in Montville but had businesses out of town, the elimination of duplicate entries, and the paring down of the 30-page list.
13. Adjournment  
Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Toner to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Gloria J. Gathers  
Recording Secretary, Town of Montville