

Town of Montville Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 8, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall – via GoToWebinar

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On March 14, 2020, Governor Ned Lamont issued an Executive Order 7B suspending in-person open meeting requirements, and to hold such meetings or proceedings remotely by conference call, videoconference or other technology.

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Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chair of the meeting. The Montville Town Council Rules of Procedure, decorum, timeliness and suitability shall be followed and enforced in the same manner as if the meeting were held in person.

1. Call to Order
Chairman May called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence in honor of our military.
3. Roll Call
Present were Councilors Leonard Bunnell, Sr., Joseph Jaskiewicz, Tim May, Kathleen Pollard, Colleen Rix, and Joseph Rogulski. Absent was Councilor Billy Caron. Also present was Mayor Ronald McDaniel.
4. Special Recognitions/Presentations – *none*
5. Alterations to the Agenda
Motion made by Councilor Rix, seconded by Councilor Pollard, to add the following item to the Agenda:
Item 16(c) To Consider and Act on a Motion to adopt and send a letter to the State Legislators supporting sports betting, online gaming, and extended liquor hours at their local casinos.
Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve:
 - a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of May 11, 2020
Motion made by Councilor Jaskiewicz, seconded by Councilor Rogulski. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
 - b. The Public Hearing Minutes of May 11, 2020 (Fire Street Sale & Conveyance)
Motion made by Councilor Rix, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
 - c. The Special Meeting Minutes of June 1, 2020 (Collective Bargaining Strategy/Negotiations)
Motion made by Councilor Jaskiewicz, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
7. Executive Session – *none*
8. Remarks from the public relating to matters on the agenda with a three-minute limit – *none*
9. Communications
 - a. Copy of the May 2020 Financial Report from Terry Hart, Finance Director
 - b. Copy of the legal bills from Halloran & Sage for the month of April 2020
 - c. Copy of the legal bills from Suisman-Shapiro for the month of April 2020
 - d. Copy of an e-mail from Grace Carlos, regarding Montville’s Black Lives Matter Rally
10. Report from the Town Attorney on Matters Referred – *none*
11. Remarks from the Mayor and/or Administrative Department Heads to include Matters Referred
Finance Director Hart stated that their agenda packet includes the May Financial Report and included on the agenda is the wage increase for the part-time employees.

Mayor McDaniel welcomed Sgt. Albert Gosselin, the town’s new Resident State Trooper, and thanked Sgt. Mark Juhola, who retired from his position, for serving as the town’s Resident State Trooper for over five years. Three offers were made to and accepted by three (3) new full-time firefighters. One of the firefighters is fully trained, having been serving the town as a part-time firefighter.

Both the town and the Uncas Health District have been busy working with the local businesses as they prepare to re-open. Because it is difficult to enforce the recommended protocols, the onus will be placed upon each of the establishments to ensure that the safety measures are being properly followed. Complaints that have been received regarding those who are not following the recommended safety protocols are being addressed to the best of the town’s ability. The most reliable and accurate coronavirus data is received from the Uncas Health District, which reports that the Town of Montville has a total of 264 confirmed COVID-19 cases (cumulative), 226 of which are inmates residing at the Corrigan-Radgowski Correctional Institute. In response to those who have expressed their concerns regarding the health of the Correctional Institute’s personnel, Councilor May stated that, similar to the protocol for the First Responders, those who are suspected of having been exposed are sequestered for a period of time.

They are waiting to receive clarifications regarding the plans for the ongoing remediation of 14 Bridge Street. The Old Colchester Road project is coming to a close.

The Fuel Cell for the Water Pollution Control Authority has been installed, the electricity and gas have been hooked up, and all the site work has been completed. They are now going through the commissioning cycle and expect to be up and running in the coming weeks. Likewise, the solar system at Montville High School should be up and running within the coming weeks. Concerns were raised regarding the system and engineering documents have been submitted to ensure its stability and avoid any liability.

Prior to the re-opening of the Mohegan Sun Casino, a special behind the scenes tour was provided regarding the steps that are being taken to ensure the safety of their team members and public. The Mayor submitted a letter to *The Day* newspaper commending the Casino for their

hard work and efforts and the importance of the re-opening of the region's casinos to help revitalize the Southeastern Connecticut area.

A total of \$50,000.00 in Honors Scholarships were presented to High School Seniors this past week.

The town plans to host its annual Summer Camp this year. The Camp will be held outdoors at 50% capacity. They are investigating the possibility of renting two tents to shelter the children from the elements. Information gathered from a Summer Camp webinar that will be held tomorrow afternoon will be utilized to help finalize their guidelines.

A meeting with the organizers of the upcoming *Black Lives Matter* Rally will be held. The Rally will be held on Sunday, June 14, 12 noon to 2:00 p.m., and will travel from Town Hall to the Police Station. There are three (3) other rallies planned on the same day, including a 1:00 p.m. rally in Norwich.

In response to Councilor Rix, due to their inability to properly sanitize the playgrounds, they will remain closed for the time being.

Councilor May requested that the Mayor touch base with Information Systems Director Bill O'Neill regarding the status of the Social Media Policies and Procedures; he is hoping that the Town Administration/Rules & Procedures Standing Committee will be able to review the document at their next meeting.

12. Reports from Standing Committees

a. Town Administration/Rules of Procedure – Councilor Jaskiewicz

The Committee will be discussing two items that were recently introduced by the Mayor and, possibly, the Social Media Policies and Procedures at their next meeting.

b. Finance – Councilor Jaskiewicz

The Committee is working on finalizing the recently passed FY2020/21 budget.

c. Public Works/Solid Waste Disposal – Councilor Caron

Mayor McDaniel reported that the road work will be going back out to bid. The mowing of the sides of the roads began today. Councilor May added that the milling has been placed and brush has been planted at the boat launch, beautifying the area. Councilor Pollard expressed her pleasure with Public Works Director Donald Bourdeau, Jr., who arranged to have Eversource cut down a dead tree located near her home gratis.

13. Reports from Special Committees and Liaison Councilors

a. Councilor Bunnell: Public Safety Commission, Youth Services Bureau

Public Safety Commission:

The Police Department received 1,090 Calls for Service for the month of April, 62 of which were Type I Calls. There were 12 arrests, none of which were juveniles. Of the 1,090 calls, 113 derived directly from Troop E, 156 from the Police Department, 8 from walk-ins, and 696 from the officers patrolling the area.

The Gardner Lake Authority has rejected the Police Department's proposal to patrol the Lake. The Authority will be working with the DEEP (Department of Energy and Environmental Protection) to patrol the Lake.

Interviews have been scheduled for 11 candidates for one available position.

The Department is making preparations for the upcoming *Black Lives Matter* demonstration.

The Fire Department received 241 Calls for Service. As noted by the Mayor, three (3) full-time firefighters have been hired, one of which was serving as a part-time firefighter for the town and all of who have their firefighter and EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) certifications. He felt that the town's offerings are now more attractive to potential employees due to the recent updates to their contract. The Fire Marshal is in the

process of reviewing and assisting with the re-opening of local businesses and restaurants, including the distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE).

A conference call was held to discuss their current issues, including Resolution No. 2019-54 regarding the background investigation for the fire service applicants' policy.

Councilor Bunnell plans to reach out to the Commission regarding the possibility of revisiting the policy.

The Animal Control Officer received 111 complaints in April for a total of 1,025 year-to-date, and (1) bite reported for the month and year in the Town of Montville. In the Town of Salem, the Officer has received four (4) complaints, totaling 59 for the year, and no bites, totaling two (2) for the year.

The Youth Service Bureau continues to deliver mental health and counseling support and work with the Juvenile Review Board clients through video chat, Zoom, and tele-health programs. Free Family Fun & Wellness Packets, filled with family activities, crafts, snacks, and the like, are available for drive-thru pick-up at the Montville Community Center on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. They have also been volunteering their time to help deliver such necessary items as food, supplies, and medication to those who are unable to leave their homes. Two blood drives were held in April and May, garnering enough donations to save approximately 200 lives. The billboard located on the corner of Route 32 and Maple Avenue has been secured for the posting of positive messages to the community. He commended the Bureau for all of their activities and efforts during these troubling times.

He also expressed his appreciation to the town's police officers, firefighters, and public works employees for all of their hard work and efforts as they continue to serve the town during these troubling times. Councilor Jaskiewicz concurred.

b. Councilor Caron: Commission on Aging, Social Services

Councilor May reported that Social Services has remained very active as they continue to collect and distribute food items to those in need. Mayor McDaniel added that the food bank continues to run out of the Senior Center while it remains closed due to the pandemic. A conference call comprised of Senior Center directors will be held this week to discuss their re-opening plans. Applications continue to be received for the rental rebate program. The old Social Services building is being cleaned out in anticipation of an influx of new items due to residents cleaning out their homes. Plexiglas dividers and half-doors are being installed at the Center and similar dividers are planned for the senior bus and Medride vans. Every possible effort is being made to protect the town's employees and residents, per the guidelines received from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), Governor, and the like. Due to the lack of clarity, businesses are following various safety protocols and guidelines.

c. Councilor Jaskiewicz: Board of Education (BOE)

The BOE discussed their plans for the summer and fall school sessions and moved around \$450,000.00 in funds, including \$250,000.00 for a lease-purchase agreement for distance learning technology items. The Board also formed a three-person Finance Sub-Committee to meet and discuss their future budgetary concerns with the Finance Standing Committee. The BOE anticipates returning approximately \$500,000.00 to the town, but may request the transfer of some of the funds into their non-lapsing account for any unknown expenses related to the re-opening of their schools. The BOE is diligently seeking the input of the parents, staff, and community as they investigate all of their possible options and plan for the upcoming school year(s) while maintaining their flexibility.

Councilor Rix commended the Superintendent and School Administrations for their constant and consistent communication with the parents.

d. Councilor May: Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA), Conservation Commission

The WPCA was within their permit levels and, as reported by the Mayor, the Fuel Cell is scheduled to come online soon.

- e. Councilor Pollard: Non-Profit Organizations – *no report*
- f. Councilor Rix: Economic Development Commission, Parks & Recreation Commission, Planning & Zoning Commission
As reported by the Mayor, the Parks & Recreation Commission is working on the summer camps.
The Economic Development Commission is working on supporting the town’s businesses as they begin to re-open.

- g. Councilor Rogulski: Library Committee, Fire Fighters Relief Fund – *no report*

14. Appointments and Resignations

- a. To Consider and Act on a Motion to re-appoint Zachary T. Sweeney-Lespier as a member of the Conservation Commission with a term to expire on June 11, 2022.
Motion made by Councilor Jaskiewicz, seconded by Councilor Rogulski. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

15. Unfinished Business – *none*

16. New Business

- a. **Resolution #2020-40. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to waive the fees as outlined in Ordinance 2012-06, “Ordinance Implementing Fees for Fire Marshal’s Office Permits and Inspections” for “Membrane Structures, Tents and Canopies – Temporary” for a period of 90 days. (Councilor Rogulski)

Motion made by Councilor Jaskiewicz, seconded by Councilor Pollard. Discussion: Councilor Rogulski stated that the State has provided restaurants and places of worship with the ability to serve the public outdoors and, in an effort to help with any expenses that might be incurred, he is proposing that the fees be waived. Businesses and churches will still be required to apply for a permit and the structure(s) must be inspected for safety. In response to Councilor Rix, Councilor Rogulski stated that, to the best of his knowledge, no such structures have been installed since March 20. Roll Call vote, 6-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilors Bunnell, Jaskiewicz, Pollard, Rix, Rogulski, and May. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.

- b. **Resolution #2020-41. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to increase the wages for part-time employees by 2%, effective July 1, 2020. (Councilor Jaskiewicz)

Motion made by Councilor Jaskiewicz, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: Councilor Jaskiewicz felt that the wage increase was fair, adding that he is also in favor of hiring additional Public Works part-time employees so that the town could get caught up on the various projects. In response to Councilor Rix, Finance Director Hart stated that, while in the past, the wage increase for the part-timers had fallen through the cracks, the item is now included on the agenda on an annual basis and helps keep the town in line with the minimum wage increases. Councilor Bunnell felt that the part-timers are worth the value and are a sound investment. Roll Call vote, 6-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilors Bunnell, Jaskiewicz, Pollard, Rix, Rogulski, and May. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.

- a. To Consider and Act on a Motion to adopt and send the letter to the State Legislators supporting sports betting, online gaming, and extended liquor hours at their local casinos, as presented. (Councilor May)

Motion made by Councilor Rix, seconded by Councilor Pollard. Discussion: Chairman May wished to send a letter endorsing their support to follow the bi-partisan letter that was signed and sent by the area’s legislators, as was introduced to them by Senator Cathy Osten during one of their previous meetings. Councilor Jaskiewicz voiced his support for the letter. While in favor of offering his signature to the letter, Councilor Rogulski stated that,

since discussing the item with others, he no longer feels that the legislation would have a negative impact on the area's businesses, but is concerned with the bending of the rules for specific individuals or groups. It is his hope that the State does not "squander" the funds. Chairman May stated that it is his hope that their support will be financially beneficial to the town. Roll Call vote, 6-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilors Bunnell, Jaskiewicz, Pollard, Rix, Rogulski, and May. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.

17. Remarks from the Public with a three-minute limit – *none*

18. Remarks from the Councilors and the Mayor

Councilor Rogulski commended and expressed his appreciation to the Mayor and all of the town's departments for their handling of all of the frustrations that are being handed down to the municipalities and for helping the local businesses during the COVID-19 crisis.

Councilor Pollard concurred, thanking the Mayor, Town Councilors, Department Heads, and Fire and Police Departments, including the drive-by fire trucks and birthday parties. She also expressed her appreciation for the teamwork between all of the various entities.

Councilor Rix also concurred and personally thanked all of the students in Montville, commending them for their distance learning.

Councilor Bunnell stated that when he retired as the Lieutenant for the Montville Police Department three years ago, one of the first things his wife did was turn off the scanner. Recently, he had the opportunity of refamiliarizing himself with all of the EMS (Emergency Medical Services), fire, and related police calls that are received through the texts he now receives through his cell phone. He appreciates everything the emergency personnel does on the front lines, including the Public Works Department and the Mayor for his leadership and efforts. He wished everyone a Happy Fourth of July.

Councilor Jaskiewicz concurred with all of the Councilors' comments. He credited all of the townspeople who have done a great job with following the safety protocols, resulting in the lowest coronavirus numbers in the State. He also cited a general change in attitudes with increased politeness.

Mayor McDaniel echoed all of the comments, thanking everyone for their sacrifices and lifestyle adaptations during this difficult time. He hopes for a new normal that is better, more civil, and does not lead to the killing of our citizens resulting in protests for equality and fairness. He looks forward to a peaceful protest on Sunday. He commended everyone on a great job, especially the Class of 2020 who have lost all of their sports, proms, graduation ceremony, and all of the things that come with their graduation. He thanked Councilor Bunnell for his kind words. He is open to any additional safety suggestions anyone might have.

Councilor May commented on all of the changes that have occurred over the past 90 days. While, at the onset of the pandemic, many appeared to behave negatively, he felt that people are now behaving with more civility, compassion, and empathy. He is saddened by the recent killing leading to a resurgence of the *Black Lives Matter* movement and hopes that the event will bring positive societal changes.

19. Adjournment

Motion made by Councilor Jaskiewicz, seconded by Councilor Rix, to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by: Agnes T. Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville

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