

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Agenda – November 16, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES

The Town of Montville will be utilizing a virtual FreeConferenceCall service for this meeting.

Please call number below to attend the meeting at:

[1-\(605\) 313-5935](tel:1-605-313-5935)

[PIN # 401237](#)

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.

Link: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/Executive-Orders/Lamont-Executive-Orders/Executive-Order-No-7B.pdf>

For all publicly broadcasted meetings, public comment on agenda items or topics in accordance with the Town charter may be submitted in writing in advance or by live audio via FreeConferenceCall.

Written comments must be emailed to the Town Clerks Office at townclerk@montville-ct.org at least **1 working day in advance** (if the meeting is on a Monday the questions must be submitted by close of business the previous Friday).

Written comments may not be read in their entirety, but rather similar messages may be aggregated or paraphrased for submission to the Economic Development Commission.

Live audio comments may be made via FreeConferenceCall by calling from your telephone.

Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chair of the meeting. The Economic Development 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 Hewitt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and pledged the flag.

3) Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Mickey Gillette, Heather Harris, Sheelagh Lapinski, Christopher Napierski, and Chairman Walter Hewitt. Also present was Town Planner Marcia Vlaun and Town Council Liaison Colleen Rix. A quorum was present.

4) Alterations to the Agenda

Chairman Hewitt noted for the record the removal of Agenda Item 9f, a duplicate of Item 9c. Motion by Chairman Hewitt; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to add under New Business Item 10c, to consider and act on a motion to approve the 2021 Meeting Dates, and Item 10d, to consider and act on a motion to approve the 2021-2022 Budget. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

5) Remarks from Marcia Vlaun

Town Planner Vlaun stated she was confused about the new State Covid rules but said no additional businesses have closed because of it. She reported on two (2) business applications—a 32-lot subdivision at the intersection of Black Ash that will have 22 housing lots, but half of the parcel is wetlands and will remain vacant. The other is 87 rental units on Maple Avenue with work to begin in the summer. Town Planner Vlaun also said Planning & Zoning had approved a gas station at the intersection of Route 161 and another project on Jerome Road. She said streamlining the development process has paid off and that new housing development is encouraging. She also spoke of a 32-lot development that was looked at seven (7) years ago that a new group is now considering. Also, a Zoom meeting will take place on December 2 with the Mohegan Tribe and Advanced CT, a non-profit wing of the CT Department of Economic Development and Community Development (DECD) that works to engage, retain and recruit businesses and advance economic development. Town Planner Vlaun said she had no information of how restaurants were doing at the casino. Chairman Hewitt commented on the Crystal Mall having gone into bankruptcy and wondered if Montville could be offered for some of the mall stores. Town Planner Vlaun said the Mall was not doing well before Covid and it has lost its anchor stores. She said space would be needed and believed there was only one (1) vacancy and said two (2) areas near the Montville Commons, as suggested by Chairman Hewitt, were small. *Town Planner Vlaun left the meeting at 7:13 p.m.*

6) Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3-minute limit)

Chairman Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

7) Desire to recruit Commissioners.

Chairman Hewitt asked for suggestions for recruiting new commission members. Commissioner Napierski proposed having someone from the housing area. Chairman Hewitt said he would look into people in real estate or building.

8) To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve:

- i) The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 21, 2020
- ii) The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 19, 2020

Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Napierski to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 21, 2020 and October 19, 2020. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Gillette, seconded by Commissioner Napierski to approve the July 20, 2020 Regular [Informational] Meeting Minutes. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 4-0-1, Chairman Hewitt abstained. Motion carried.

9) Unfinished Business

a) Montville real-estate properties for development

Chairman Hewitt reported Town Planner Vlaun gave feedback on the proposal submitted by Dr. Hartley last year. Commissioner Lapinski said she had spoken with her and said she was willing to help the Commission but said the proposal was costly, \$10,000. Chairman Hewitt said Dr. Hartley's proposal could be reviewed again by the Commission and said it would be an expense to hire her that would require an increase to the budget. Commissioner Gillette asked that the proposal be resent since he did not remember it. Chairman Hewitt said Town Planner Vlaun spoke against the proposal and said there were a lot of resources already, some of them through the Town from the State to educate and move forward the Commission. Commissioner Harris asked about the status of the computer data center. Chairman Hewitt reported there was some demolition and issues with financing that will delay the project.

b) Mohegan Tribe and our request for contact information regarding retention of businesses vacating the casino – wrote Billy Caron (Colleen?)

Chairman Hewitt said the initial request for contact was made by former Commissioner Toner. Town Councilor Rix said she will contact Town Councilor Caron to call in to the next meeting or contact Chairman Hewitt directly.

c) New Business Report

Chairman Hewitt commented on the new businesses on the report—a virtual new business trading and insurance sales and marketing. He noted that ownership of Friendly's had changed hands and the reopening of the First Step Day Care.

d) Business Survey – Heather

Commissioner Harris suggested the item be tabled as she has had no responses to emails or surveys. She said it was bad timing right now unless she has an appropriate Covid-related survey.

e) Chamber Business After Hours – Heather

Commissioner Harris said there are none scheduled right now. Chairman Hewitt asked if the subscription for it would be credited towards next year and whether the subscription was for the Commission or the Town. Commissioner Harris said she would check into it.

f) New Business Report (*This item will be removed from the Agenda.*)

10) New Business

a) Deliver plaque to Healing with Horses at Wildrose Horse Farm (Done)

Chairman Hewitt reported he dropped off the business awards for Wildrose Horse Farm and Heller, Heller, and McCoy (*see Item 10b*). He said the Facebook posts about the awards went over well but said the awards have been tabled due to the pandemic. Commissioner Gillette agreed and said everyone is nervous and scared and said the Commission would resume them in the future.

b) Deliver plaque to Heller, Heller, and McCoy (Done)

See the discussion under Item, 10a.

c) To consider and act on a motion to approve the 2021 Meeting Dates.

Chairman Hewitt spoke about changing the meeting dates that fall on Monday holidays to Tuesday. Therefore, the 2020 meeting dates for January and February were changed to January 19 and February 16.

d) To consider and act on a motion to approve the 2021 Budget.

Chairman Hewitt explained the budget figures were the same as that of 2020 as prepared by Town Planner Vlaun. He added that the budget did not show expenditures. As to Dr. Hartley's proposal discussed earlier in the meeting, Chairman Hewitt said he would find and resend it to the Commission.

11) Report from Town Council Liaison

Town Councilor Rix said her only comment was for the gas station approval on Route 85 approved by Planning & Zoning.

12) Remarks from the Public (3-minute limit)

Chairman Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

13) Remarks from the Commissioners and Town Council Liaison -- *None*

14) Townspeople and Business Feedback

a) Proposed Recipients for Business Recognition Award

Chairman Hewitt reported again that the item had been tabled and said he hoped proposed award recipients would still be in business.

15) Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Harris to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 p.m. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.