

**TOWN OF MONTVILLE**  
**Parks & Recreation Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes – January 20, 2021 -- 6:30 p.m.**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

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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.

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 GoToMeeting.

Written comments must be emailed to the Town Clerk's Office at [townclerk@montville-ct.org](mailto: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 Parks & Recreation Commission.

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

Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chairperson of the meeting. The Parks & Recreation Commission Rules of Procedure, decorum, timeliness, and suitability shall be followed and enforced in the same manner as if the meeting were held in person.

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**1. Call to order.**

Vice-Chair Southard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance.**

All stood and pledged the flag.

**3. Roll Call.**

Present were Commissioners Matt Beaupre, Noah Carver, Jon Chase, Kevin Clang, Heather Kenniston, Morgan Matthewson, Kate Southard,\* and Rocky Stone. Also present were Parks & Recreation Director Peter Bushway and Town Council Liaison Colleen Rix.\* A quorum was present. \*Remote access by phone.

**4. Adjustments to the Agenda.**

Motion by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Stone to move up Item 11.d to 5.a on the Agenda. Discussion: none. Voice vote; 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Stone; seconded by Commissioner Chase to remove Item 12.b and 12.c from the Agenda. Discussion: Commissioner Chase discussed emails sent by Recording Secretary Gathers concerning the Agenda and changes to it per email responses she received from commissioners. G. Gathers emailed Mayor McDaniel who communicated with Commissioner Chase regarding the same. Commissioner Beaupre concurred with the removing the agenda items per review by the Commission. Voice vote; 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

**5. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3-minute limit).**

Vice-Chair Southard asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

**5a. Discussion of instruction and guidance from Town Attorney regarding FOI matter, Town Charter, and Ordinances as the effect the Commission.**

Town Attorney Richard Cody gave a presentation and responded to Commission questions regarding FOI matters, the Town Charter and Town Ordinances, and their impact on the function and purpose of the Commission. *[Due to the length of the discussion and for purposes of clarity and summary will be forwarded to the Commission under separate cover by Recording Secretary Gathers for information and discussion purposes and amended to the minutes.]*

**6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve.**

a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2020.

Motion by Commissioner Beaupre; seconded by Commissioner Stone to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2020. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

b. Director's Report for December 2020.

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Motion by Commissioner Stone; seconded by Commissioner Carver to approve the December 2020 Director's Report. Discussion: Director Bushway reported the wreathmaking and centerpiece workshops were well attended. Voice vote: 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

c. Director's Report for January 2020.

Motion by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Carver to approve the January 2020 Director's Report. Discussion: Director Bushway spoke about the first bullet on his report about shortcuts being taken by visitors to the Dog Park as reported to him by Public Works. The question as to making the shortcut permanent that would require cutting down a tree and putting a hole in the rock wall was discussed. The Commission spoke of the existing path and the shortcut as being a hazard a hindrance to the esthetic look of the park. Director Bushway also reported winter sports would not be held in the Tyl gym as it is being used as a cafeteria. A decision from the School Superintendent is due by February 1 regarding use of the remaining elementary schools. He also said recreation departments and middle schools have eliminated basketball at this time. Director Bushway also reported the basketball recreation season ends February 15. He responded to Commissioner Matthewson that few had signed up for the program. Commissioner Beaupre expressed a need for normalcy, spoke of the loss of spring sports, and proposed having a shorter season that extends to March/April. As to Commissioner Matthewson's question regarding officials, Director Bushway said of the 128 officials 38-40 have opted out and of the Superintendent's concern about cleaning the facilities. Vice-Chair said the cost for facility staff increased after 10:00 p.m. Director Bushway agreed to forward information from the State, the Superintendent, and the information on area schools regarding the same.

**7. P&R Newsletter for January and February 2021.**

Director Bushway reported the basketball information in the February will change once more information is obtained.

**8. Report from Finance**

Director Bushway reported there are no surprises regarding the budget that is still on track and emphasized that extra money would be in the accounts at year's end. He also confirmed that no funds had been received from the Mohegan Tribe for the summer camp tents.

**9. Review of Recent Programs and Events**

**a. Update on Current 2020 Events and Programs**

i. Judo (on hold)

Director Bushway reported the event was still on hold.

ii. Karate

Director Bushway reported on upcoming registration of this event per the newsletter.

iii. Gymnastics

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Director Bushway reported on upcoming registration for the next session per the newsletter.

iv. Dance

Director Bushway reported the new season would begin this week due to a Covid issue with the instructor.

v. Yoga

Director Bushway reported on the status of the virtual yoga class said there are 14 students in the Thursday class.

vi. Basketball Evaluation Clinics

Director Bushway reported the session will not have students running, instead students will be placed on teams.

vii. Indoor Volleyball

Director Bushway reported will not occur as it was to take place at Tyl. He commented on a sand volleyball program at private facility in Groton.

**b. Review of December 2020 Events and Programs**

i. Holiday Light Contest

Director Bushway reported figures for this event were in the Finance Report.

ii. Wreathmaking Class

Director Bushway reported figures for this event were in the Finance Report.

iii. Holiday Centerpiece Class

Director Bushway reported figures for this event were in his Finance Report.

iv. Holiday Scavenger Hunt

Director Bushway reported figures for this event were in the Finance Report.

v. Holiday Memorial Tree

Director Bushway reported the event was cancelled due to poor weather, so the memorials were placed on the tree and all went well.

**10. Upcoming Programs**

Director Bushway reported on a craft class held on February 6 and an upcoming 2-day event. He spoke of the poor luck with potential bus trips last year and said a Christmas trip would be the target for this year. Commissioner Matthewson asked about outdoor spring and summer activities. Director Bushway said bands for the summer concerts are usually booked now and would be a socially distanced events. The Commission discussed outdoor events. Commissioner Matthewson spoke of a Go-Fund-Me for care of the animals at the Beardsley Zoo.

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**11. Unfinished Business**

a. Development of Parks & Recreation Logo

Commissioner Stone distributed a handout of potential logos and Commissioner Carver spoke of the information having been emailed to the Commission. Commissioner Carver said a Montville High School alumnus designed the logos free of charge and would be happy for feedback for possible changes to them. The Commission held discussion of the similarity of three (3) of the prototypes and differences among the others and how they could be used—for t-shirts, flags or banners--; the colors used; and signage to identify Parks & Recreation facilities. Commissioner Stone proposed using logos #1 and #2 together with a couple of variations.

b. Mostowy Property

Commissioner Chase stated it would be hopeful to get DEEP information and have the conservation representative return to speak on the wildlife habitat interest of the property. He spoke of improvements over the last few months to the trails that he said could continue at a very modest cost. Director Bushway spoke of his discussion with Public Works of work on the trails using a brush haul or mower before they become more overgrown and flagging them as well. Commissioner Chase noted the significant work done by Public Works and said path trails are not cost extensive. He also said he was looking to next year for trail signage and tie-ins to existing trails, a Commission field trip meeting or spring walkthrough, and a presentation by the DEEP of its suggestions.

c. Potential Events and Programs

Vice-Chair Southard said this item and already been discussed.

d. Discussion of instruction and guidance from Town Attorney regarding FOI matters, Town Charter and Ordinances as they effect the Commission.  
This item was moved up to 5.a on the agenda.

**12. New Business**

a. To consider and act on a motion to approve the slate of nominees of 2021 Commission officers for election at the February 17, 2021 meeting.

Chair Southard said the Selection Committee meet to discuss and present the 2021 Slate of Officers for the Commission as follows: Chair – Kate Southard; Vice-Chair – Rocky Stone; and Secretary – Matt Beaupre.

Motion by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Carver to approve the 2021 Slate of Officers as presented by the Selection Committee. Discussion: Vice-Chair Southard said the slate takes effect at the next Commission meeting. Voice vote; 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried

b. To consider and act on a motion to approve the Parks & Recreation budget for 2021-2022.

This item was removed from the agenda.

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- c. To consider and act on a motion to approve the Capital Improvement Projects for FY 2021-2022.

This item was removed from the agenda.

- d. To consider and act on a motion (the word “Discussion” deleted) to have documents relative to the Parks & Recreation Commission for distribution—ordinances, Town Charter, bylaws, etc.—as a formal packet for new commission members and to address Commission questions.

Commissioner Stone spoke of the Commission-related documents be compiled into a packet as reference for current and future Commission members. He said the information is helpful and could be replaced annually (such as the budget) or recreated as needed. Commissioner Stone agreed to send the information to the Commission in PDF format.

Motion by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Clang to have relative reference documents for the Parks & Recreation Commission for distribution as a formal packet for current and new Commission members. Discussion: Commissioner Stone said he would update the packet with the latest data in PDF format and email it to all. He also agreed to maintain the packet and welcome new information. Commissioner Matthewson did not agree with including the Director’s job description in the packet. Commissioner Stone commented the Director reports to the Mayor. Commissioner Carter spoke of insuring information for future commissions. A copy of the job description is in the Town Clerk office where a Commission candidate may want to look. Commissioner Stone was thanked for taking on this task. Voice vote; 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

**13. Communications**

Town Councilor Rix said the resignation of Commissioner Hajj was sent to the Town Council which Vice-Chair Southard confirmed. Commissioner Chase suggested it be sent to the Town Clerk as well and spoke of Commissioner Hajj’s enthusiasm, energy, direction, and purpose for the Commission. Commissioner Beaupre commented on a Facebook messenger regarding a Dog Park incident with younger children present and said one of the rules for the park was \_\_\_\_\_ and spoke of the inability of policing it.

**14. Remarks from the Public of Non-Agenda items (3-minute limit)**

Vice-Chair Southard asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

**15. Remarks from Town Council Liaison**

Town Councilor Rix reported she received Commissioner Hajj’s resignation that she forwarded to the Town Council and Mayor McDaniel. She said she was looking forward to spring, implementing the great ideas discussed by the Commission, and to the Mostow Property.

**16. Remarks from Parks & Recreation Director Bushway**

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Director Bushway said the Mostow Property would be included in the Parks & Recreation budget.

**17. Remarks from the Commissioners**

Commissioner Stone thanked Commissioner Hajj for pulling through with the new commissioners. Commissioner Matthewson echoed Commissioner Stone's comment; said she was looking forward to 2021 and said she did not get a copy of the Finance Report. Commissioner Beaupre spoke of normalcy with having basketball and said at the next meeting and/or special meeting the Commission could review the upcoming budget and CIP. Commissioner Clang said Happy New Year to everyone. Commissioner Carter said, "2021 will be our year." Commissioner Chase commented on budget discussion at the next meeting or special meeting and when the bylaws would be reviewed. Vice-Chair Southard commented there was not a carnival meeting scheduled set for 2021 and spoke of a special meeting for February 10, at 6:00 p.m. per a poll of the commissioners. Commissioner Beaupre said votes on the budget and CIP would take place at the regular February meeting of the Commission on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Kenniston said she was sorry to see Commissioner Hajj go and said she was looking forward to spring for activities. Vice-Chair Southard expressed thanks to Commissioner Hajj.

**18. Adjournment**

Motion by Commissioner Beaupre; seconded by Commissioner Matthewson to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 8-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Gloria J. Gathers  
Town of Montville Recording Secretary/Minutes Clerk

**AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN  
OF MONTVILLE WEBSITE.**