

TOWN OF MONTVILLE -- PUBLIC SAFETY COMISSION
Regular Meeting – April 26, 2021 -- 6:00 PM
VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES

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

Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet, or smartphone at:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/124605589>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: +1 (571) 317-3122

Access Code: 124-605-589

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 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 Public Safety 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 Chair of the meeting. The Public Safety 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.

1. Call to order.

Chairman Yuchniuk called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.

Present were Commissioners Mickey Gillette, Gary Murphy, Karen Perkins, Stephen Stewart, and Chairman Robert Yuchniuk. Also present were Lt. Dave Radford, Fire Marshal Paul Barnes, Town Council Liaison Lenny Bunnell, and Mayor Ronald McDaniel. A quorum was present.

4. Firefighter Badge Pinning Ceremony.

Paul Barnes – Fire Marshal --- Ethan Gagnon – Firefighter --- Ryan Sholes --- Firefighter --- Paul Zabolis – Firefighter ---- Zack Willis – Firefighter

Mayor McDaniel made opening remarks for the Firefighter Badge Pinning Ceremony, delayed by the pandemic, to allow friends and family to take part in the occasion. He summarized the note-worthy history of Paul Barnes, the newly appointed Fire Marshal, as having had 25 years of service to the Town of Montville with multiple certifications and a skill set to move the Department forward. The badge of Fire Marshal Barnes was pinned by his wife Amy.

Fire Marshal Barnes introduced his staff and explained one of the four recent hires, Paul Zabolis, had unavoidably hurt himself and his ceremony will take place at a later date. He summarized the firefighting history of Firefighter Ryan Sholes who started in the Town of Bozrah where he has been the chief for 8 years and has 20 years of experience. His badge was pinned by his wife. Firefighter Zack Willis became a cadet at age 16 in Ledyard and is a certified fire service instructor and EMT. His badge was pinned by his fiancé. Firefighter Ethan Gagnon was a volunteer firefighter for the Town of Franklin for 8 years and holds several certifications. His badge was pinned by his father Wallace. A round of applause was given to all.

The meeting was paused at 6:08 p.m. so photos could be taken and resumed at 6:13 p.m.

5. Amendments to the Agenda.

Chairman Yuchniuk reported the resignation of Commissioner Jon Leonard and the retirement of Commissioner Jim Moran, former vice-chair of the Commission.

Motion by Chairman Yuchniuk; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to add New Business, Item 13.b, To consider and act on a motion to nominate and elect a Commission Vice-chair. Discussion: none. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

6. Communications:

- Copies of monthly statistics reports from Fire Departments, Fire Marshal, Police, Animal Control and Building Official.

Chairman Yuchniuk confirmed all Commissioners received copies of the monthly reports.

7. Consideration and action to approve minutes.

- a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of March 22, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Murphy to approve the March 22, 2021. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

8. Remarks from the Public (Agenda items—three-minute limit).

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

9. Remarks from Department Heads.

Police Department Report

Lt. Radford reported the PD monthly statistics ending March 31, 2021, into the record as follows: There were 1280 total calls for service that included Type 1 calls (74), arrests (32), and juvenile arrests (0). The source for these calls were Troop E (145), PD (220), Walk-in (64), and By Officer (721). Also, he responded to Chairman Yuchniuk concerning the pink patches being created that will be affixed to shirts for the officers in support of breast cancer awareness in October. As well, additional patches will be used as a fundraiser and will be posted online.

Fire Department Report

The FD statistics for the month ending March 31, 2021, are as follows: There were 211 calls for service of which 135 were medical EMS calls or 64.0% of all calls for service. Fire Marshal Barnes had no additional remarks.

10. Committee and Liaison Reports.

- a. Report from Fire Department Liaison (*Perkins*)

Commissioner Perkins read into the record the Mohegan Fire Company statistical activity received from Chief Gaetano for March 2021 as follows: Calls for Service: Total Calls Responded To (137); Total Mohegan Calls (90); Fire (21); EMS (111); Mutual Aid Out-of-Town (5). Total Training Hours for the month 996 as follows: Regular Monthly Training: Rescue Jacks and Heavy-Lift Airbags (16 members, 2 hours = 32 Hours); Junior and Probationary Member Training: Continuing Hands-on Training and Signoffs (53 members, 18 hours = 954 Hours); Online Training: Continuing Education (10 courses completed = 10 Hours). Commissioner Perkins also attended the Montville Volunteer Fire Relief meeting earlier this evening and reported on the first quarter stipends as follows: Montville (3); Mohegan (15); Chesterfield 10) and Oakdale (17).

- b. Report from Animal Control Liaison (*Murphy*)

Commissioner Murphy read into the record the monthly statistics submitted by ACO Swanson of the Town and Salem Animal Control for March 2021 as follows:

Animal Control Reports

Town of Montville Animal Control Report (March 2021)

| | Month | YTD |
|--|-----------|------------|
| # of Animals Impounded | 3 | 54 |
| # of Animals Sold as Pets | 2 | 28 |
| # of Animals D.O.A. | 0 | 0 |
| # of Animals Euthanized | 0 | 1 |
| Total Complaints Investigated | 61 | 728 |
| Total Animal Bites Investigated | 1 | 19 |
| Total Infractions/Summons | 0 | 1 |

Town of Salem Animal Control Report (March 2021)

| | Month | YTD |
|--|----------|-----------|
| # of Animals Impounded | 1 | 9 |
| # of Animals Sold as Pets | 0 | 0 |
| # of Animals D.O.A. | 0 | 0 |
| # of Animals Euthanized | 0 | 0 |
| Total Complaints Investigated | 6 | 49 |
| Total Animal Bites Investigated | 1 | 7 |
| Total Infractions/Summons | 0 | 2 |

c. Report from Police Department Liaison (*Gillette*)
 Commissioner Gillette had no report other than what was reported by Lt. Radford.

d. Report from Building Department Liaison (*Stewart*)
 Commissioner Stewart read the Building Department monthly statistics for March 2021 into the record as follows:

Building Department Report

| 2020-2021 Building Department Report | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----|-----|------|
| | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | June |
| Permits Issued | 115 | 76 | 197 | 111 | 151 | 110 | 83 | 73 | 150 | | | |
| Open/Pending Permits (New System) | 115 | 85 | 101 | 100 | 88 | 85 | 102 | 123 | 98 | | | |
| Open Permits (Old System) | 3201 | 3176 | 3166 | 3150 | 3133 | 3066 | 3063 | 3060 | 2945 | | | |
| Inspections | 103 | 78 | 113 | 119 | 107 | 96 | 131 | 88 | 116 | | | |
| Plan Reviews | 37 | 17 | 96 | 9 | 20 | 25 | 17 | 11 | 194 | | | |
| CO's | 0 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | | | |
| Violation Notices | | 2 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | | | |
| Unsafe Notices | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | | | |
| Blight | 530* | 534* | 534 | 538 | 538 | 538 | 539 | 539 | 540 | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|--|--|
| Identified To Date | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Blight Abated To Date | 342 | 345 | 347* | 349 | 349 | 351 | 354 | 356 | 358 | | | |

*Corrected numbers.

11. Remarks from Fire Chiefs. -- *None*

12. Unfinished Business.

a. To consider and act on a motion regarding a noise ordinance.

Town Councilor Bunnell reported he had nothing to report and asked that the item remain on the Agenda.

b. Fire Department Solutions.

Town Councilor Bunnell said with the appointment of a Fire Marshal a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the progress made or not made depending upon your opinion. Chairman Yuchniuk asked if Commissioner Perkins would be included in the meeting which Councilor Bunnell confirmed.

c. Discussion and action on the Animal Control Facility.

Town Councilor Bunnell reported Mayor McDaniel has returned the CIP amount to budget as a contingency plan. He also said talks continue with New London and Norwich concerning options.

13. New Business.

a. To consider an act on a Town of Montville Public Safety Commission Policies and Procedures, Section F.4, G.2 2.4, Attachment 1 & Attachment 3, 6.6.2, Adopted June 13, 2011.

Commissioner Murphy spoke of the request he made last month to add an item to the agenda which was done at the wrong time and said he was given a copy of Commission Rules and Procedures adopted in 2011. Upon his review of them, he found concerns with the protocol of the Commission concerning the establishment of the committee for interview of the fire marshal that per Commission Structure, page 9, refers to a committee “establish[ed] by the majority of the Commission by vote.” Further, the Policies of Department Staffing section states, “the Commission shall interview each perspective candidate...and make recommendation to the Mayor” and the Commission in conjunction with the HR Department and the Commission Secretary make arrangements for interviews. His point was policy should be followed or otherwise amended for consistency and to prevent any question of improprieties in the process. Chairman Yuchniuk responded that subcommittees for an animal control facility and fire department issues were established by the Commission. Recognizing the rules and procedures for interviews, the Commission instead follows Robert Rules of Order and forms an interview committee to include the Town Council Liaison, the Commission Chair or Vice-chair, and one (1) other person. Interview candidates presented to the Commission by

the Mayor and following procedure would require having a recording secretary present and the filing of an Agenda with more than three (3) interviewees present. He reflected on the Commission interview process giving scenarios as examples for getting the job done without losing viable candidates. He also spoke of the Commission as being uncompensated volunteers, referred to the benefit of their time, and there being no conflict of interest real or perceived in the current interview process. Further, he noted he would not recommend a poor candidate as it would be unhelpful to the Town and resolved the interview process has caused no issues to this point. Town Councilor Bunnell stated the interview process has to be consistent with the Town Charter and said the problem over years was having available persons to take part in the interviews therefore for flexibility “[you] do what is done to get the job done.” He also said the rules and procedures should be revisited. Per the Public Safety Manual, review of rules and procedures should be occur once a year every three (3) years. A version of the rules and procedures will be obtained by Mayor McDaniel and sent to the Commission and spoke of a 2015 copy (held by the Recording Secretary) that may or may not have been vetted and adopted. Commissioner Murphy said a quick review of that copy would suffice the need for establishing a subcommittee. This item will remain on the agenda.

b. To consider and act on a motion to nominate and elect a Commission Vice-chair. Chairman Yuchniuk referenced his emails regarding former Commissioner Moran’s health and the need to elect a vice-chair. Motion by Commissioner Perkins; seconded by Commissioner Murphy to nominate and elect Commissioner Gillette as the Commission Vice-chair, given no other nominations. Discussion: Commissioner Gillette said he would accept the position. Voice vote: 4-0-1, Commissioner Gillette abstained. Motion carried. Congratulations were offered.

14. Remarks from the Public (non-agenda items—three-minute limit).

Chairman Yuchniuk asked three (3) times for remarks. PD Officer Aleshire, 911 Route 32, Uncasville, publicly thanked former Commissioner Leonard for his service to the Commission and then addressed perceived rumors and false claims attributed to Commissioner Murphy and the Town of Montville Facebook page, and her investigation of the same.

15. Remarks from the Mayor

Mayor McDaniel remarked an agreement was reached for additional radio frequency band width similar to that of the Town at no additional cost and worked out with the dispatcher according to Lt. Radford. He also reported on the following: an exchange of private duty assignments (mutual aid) with the Town of Colchester; a Millstone drill on May 4 in preparation for an evaluation on June 8; working with the Town Attorney and the Coggeshall family for legal drawings and right-ups per waste cleanup and fire suppression for the pond; reviewing applications for an Assistant Blight Officer; and advertising for an Assistant Fire Marshal, a union position, for which two (2) persons have applied and would require an interview committee. School/training for the Assistant Fire Marshal position begins in July and 90 days for certification. Commissioner Stewart inquired if the increased band width frequency was with the State. Lt. Radford said there are two (2) additional on the State fire

band but not good for the fire departments as they have no radios. Mayor McDaniel concluded the continued effort to build out infrastructure.

16. Remarks from Town Council Liaison.

Town Councilor Bunnell congratulated Fire Marshal Barnes and spoke of his long line of public safety persons and officers, and his contribution to and experience with fire safety. As well, he commented on the training and certifications of the new staff and said he hoped they stay in Town. Thanks was given to former Commissioner Leonard for his service, and he spoke of the difficulty for volunteers of commissions. As to the band width, he said it was long overdue given the cost to the Town for radios. Town Councilor Bunnell also commented on the agreement with Colchester that is not part of the LEC as are two (2) other towns that provide mutual aid. Lt. Radford said a separate agreement was made with Colchester. He concluded with the comments made regarding Commissioner Murphy and said the Commission was not the place to handle it and could have been handled differently.

17. Remarks from Commissioners.

Commissioner Perkins gave congratulations and good luck to Fire Marshal Barnes; said she sorry for the retirement of Commissioner Moran; and said she would miss Commission Leonard who she described as an asset to the Commission and would be greatly missed. Commissioner Murphy congratulated Fire Marshal Barnes and spoke of working with him for many years. He also responded to the public remark by saying he did not speak against the PD; instead, he spoke with other Commissioners regarding the harassment by the fire service and potential investigation of claims. Commissioner Murphy also thanked Commissioner Leonard for his service to the Commission. Commissioner Stewart said he would miss Commissioner Leonard and would miss Commissioner Moran's steady hand. He also reiterated Town Councilor Bunnell's comments regarding the wealth of experience of the new firefighters. Commissioner Gillette congratulated the Fire Marshal and Firefighters, gave prayers and well wishes to Commissioner Moran, and said he would miss Commissioner Leonard. He also stated the issue between the volunteers and paid firefighters needs to be fixed. Chairman Yuchniuk said flowers and fruit were sent to Commissioner Moran.

18. Adjournment.

Motion by Commissioner Perkins, seconded by Commissioner Stewart to adjourn the meeting at 6:54 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote; 5-0; all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Gloria J. Gathers
Recording Clerk, Town of Montville

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