

TOWN OF MONTVILLE -- PUBLIC SAFETY COMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes -- January 24, 2022 – 6:00 PM
Town Council Chambers – Town Hall

All persons in attendance must wear a face mask if not fully vaccinated and remain six feet from others.

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.

1. Call to order.

Vice-Chair Gillette called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.

Present were Commissioners William Bauer, Traci Callaghan, Mickey Gillette, Gary Murphy, Thomas Pedersen Karen Perkins, and Stephen Stewart. A quorum was present.

4. Amendments to the Agenda. -- *None*

5. Election of Officers

Motion by Commissioner Perkins to nominate Commissioner Gillette as Chair. No second made on the motion.

Motion by Commissioner Callaghan; seconded by Commissioner Stewart to appoint Commissioner Murphy as Chair. Roll Call vote: *In favor:* Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed:* none. 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Perkins; seconded by Commissioner Bauer to appoint Commissioner Gillette as Vice-Chair. Motion by Commissioner Murphy; seconded by Commissioner Stewart to close the nominations for Vice-Chair. Voice vote: 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried. Roll Call vote for Vice-Chair: *In favor:* Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed:* none. 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

6. Communications:

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

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

7. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve minutes.

a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of December 27, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Murphy to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 27, 2021, as presented. Discussion: None. Voice vote: 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

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

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

9. Remarks from Department Heads.

Police Department Report

Lieutenant Radford read into the record the PD monthly statistics report ending December 31, 2022, as follows: There were 1242 total calls for service that included Type 1 calls (76), arrests (29), and juvenile arrests (2). The source for these calls were Troop E (168), PD (208), Walk-in (67), and By Officer (641). Lt. Radford also reported K-9 Molly has retired her duties as the Town narcotic dog after nine (9) years of service will be greatly missed. She served the Town very well by finding copious amounts of narcotics, assisting with multiple arrests, and partaking in countless community events. Officer Fazzino will become the new handler for the next narcotics dog. The dog is being picked up tomorrow and will begin training in the near future. Lt. Radford also reported they were in the final stage of the hiring process doing a background check for one of the applicants and anticipate filling the current vacancy and hope to have a lateral transfer hired by next month's meeting. The Body Worn Camera system has been installed at the PD and we are in the process of working out any bugs before we go live with entire department. The Policy was completed, updated, and presented to this Commission for review. Lt. Radford thanked Commissioner Stewart for bringing a POSTC update to his attention and was incorporated into today's revision. Finally, the new RST Chris Vallencourt, originally a Town resident, began working effective January 1, 2022. Lt. Radford responded to questions about training for the new narcotic dog (12 weeks) and where the dogs are obtained (a kennel in NY).

Fire Department Report

Fire Marshal Barnes reported the FD monthly overall statistics for December 2021 as having 265 calls, two (2) passenger vehicle fires (\$1,200), and one (1) building fire (\$12,000). Total calls for 2021 were 3024, 192 more than 2020. Thus far this year, there have been 247 calls averaging 10-14 calls per day. Fire Marshal Barnes also reported Firefighter Ethan Gagnon was hired by the City of Norwich Fire Department and has given his two-week notice. From the existing list, Matthew DesRosiers of the Mohegan Tribe and fire chief at Attawaugan Fire Department was hired and will begin work on January 31 at Chesterfield. He also reported the distribution of N95 Masks and At-Home Test Kits at Camp Oakdale from 9-12 AM on January 5; the test kits (1200) were all distributed within two (2) hours later. On January 8, additional test kits, 1100, were distributed and exhausted within two (2) hours at Tyl from 3-5 PM. More test kits are anticipated, and need will be reported per an emailed survey from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for the Town. Fire Marshal Barnes also commented on the loss

of three (3) firefighters today in Baltimore, MD and 11 this year and said firefighter safety is paramount and must be a priority.

10. Committee and Liaison Reports.

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

Commissioner Perkins reported on the Public Safety Members Committee Meeting on January 12. Present were the dispatch, career firefighters, Fire Chiefs, Committee Liaison, Town Council Liaison, the Mayor, Fire Marshal, and PD Lieutenant. These meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Wednesday of the month at the Public Safety Building. Discussed at the meeting was the NextGen software that is available for purchase which the Fire Chiefs will review with the representative. Also discussed was the Firefighter/EMS Driver Qualification developed by Fire Marshal Barnes that must be completed by paid and volunteer firefighters. The Volunteer Fire Relief Meeting was postponed to February 3, at 5:00 PM.

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

The statistical reports for month ending December 31, 2021, submitted by ACO Swanson are as follows:

Animal Control Reports

Town of Montville Animal Control Report (December 2021)

	Month	YTD
# of Animals Impounded	6	127
# of Animals Sold as Pets	20	159
# of Animals D.O.A.	0	0
# of Animals Euthanized	1	7
Total Complaints Investigated	92	464
Total Animal Bites Investigated	2	10
Total Infractions/Summons	0	0

Town of Salem Animal Control Report (December 2021)

	Month	YTD
# of Animals Impounded	0	1
# of Animals Sold as Pets	0	0
# of Animals D.O.A.	0	0
# of Animals Euthanized	0	1
Total Complaints Investigated	2	20
Total Animal Bites Investigated	0	1
Total Infractions/Summons	0	0

Commissioner Callaghan reported she was happy about the approval by the Town Council of funds for a new Animal Control Facility and said she wanted to bring in Town residents so they can see its condition. She praised those who work at the facility and said she will be in touch with ACO Swanson.

c. Report from Police Department Liaison (*Gillette*)
 Vice-Chair Gillette congratulated retiring canine K-9 Molly. Lt. Radford confirmed Vice-Chair Gillette’s question about fundraisers for funds toward the PD canine care.

d. Report from Building Department Liaison (*Stewart*)
 The Building Department statistics for the month ending December 31, 2021, were emailed as follows:

Building Department Report

2021-2022 Building Department Report												
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Permits Issued	110	171	99	92	136	107						
Pending Permits	124	137	57	100	110	91						
Inspections	118	134	166	108	98	105						
Plan Reviews	17	29	43	13	36	14						
CO’s	5	4	4	7	6	6						
Violation Notices	2	3	0	1	3	2						
Unsafe Notices	0	1	0	0	2	1						
Blight Identified	557	559	660	660	576	420						
Blight Abated To Date	388	393	408	409	412	178						

Commissioner Stewart read the December 2021 Building Department statistics into the record and said the Building officials are still working on the budget. As to the status of the Assistant Building Official vacancy, Mayor McDaniel said the subcommittee choice for the must be certified and has spoken to the candidate who will take test.

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

12. Unfinished Business.

a. Discussion and Action on the Animal Control Facility.

Mayor McDaniel reported the Town Council ARCA funds of \$800,000 toward a new facility previously in CIP stating the next phase will be the design phase and set up a subcommittee. Town Councilor Yuchniuk forwarded the AC facility information from the 2018 to Commissioner Callaghan and said the \$800,000 would not cover everything needed. Mayor McDaniel stated the subcommittee should include representatives of the Commission, Town Council, and residents and said the Town Council would need to form the subcommittee. Town Councilor Yuchniuk will bring the matter to the attention of Chairman McNally and spoke of having a specific line item to hold funds toward the project.

b. To review and act on a motion to approve the 2021-2022 Department budgets.

Mayor McDaniel stated the addition of more staffing salaries would be questionable due to contract mediations. Commissioner Perkins asked whether additional staff was added to the FD budgets--Fire Marshal Barnes said “no”—referencing his comments this evening. Including additional staff in the budget shows a need even if it gets cut according to Commissioner Stewart. The Commission commented on staffing with Fire Marshal Barnes speaking of strategic plans for a full 24-72 hours, four (4) full-time firefighters at all times with the ultimate goal of obtaining three (3). Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Murphy to approve the 2021-2022 Fire Department Budget of \$93,730. Discussion: The flat \$91,000 budget for the stations for the prior three (3) years with the pandemic having hurt/helped the revenue stream would seem appropriate to increase the budget as proposed by Commissioner Stewart. Chairman Murphy stated flat budgets have not been fair as the stations do not all do the same thing referencing the EMT calls from Oakdale that takes care of 35% of its budget. Mayor McDaniel commented eight (8) years ago there was an equity issue among the Fire Chiefs regarding an increased budget. Commissioner Gillette proposed leaving the budget at \$91,000 and commented on the \$500 amount for snow removal at Chesterfield. Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Pedersen to amend the 2021-2022 Firefighter Budget to \$91,000. Discussion: Chairman Murphy said the snow plow amount is not correct and spoke of expenses paid at Oakdale for a truck (\$3,000) and wear and tear of it (\$500). Commissioner Stewart commented that everyone who owns a vehicle uses it to plow and suggested readjustment of the \$500 for snow plowing to wear and tear stating the Town has never moved funds for the same and firefighter budgets are audited for appropriateness. Commissioner Bauer proposed the snow plow cost be moved to miscellaneous as wear and tear. Roll Call vote: *In favor*: Commissioners Bauer, Gillette, and Pedersen. *Opposed*: Commissioners Callaghan, Murphy, and Stewart. *Abstained*: Commissioner Perkins. 3-3-1. Motion failed. Original motion Roll Call vote: *In favor*: Commissioners Callaghan, Murphy, and Stewart. *Opposed*: Commissioners Bauer, Gillette, and Pedersen. *Abstained*: Commissioner Perkins. 3-3-1. Motion failed.

Commissioner Callaghan did not receive the Animal Control budget. The PD budget was sent out two (2) months ago per Commissioner Gillette.

Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to approve the Fire Marshal 2021-2022 Emergency Management Budget of \$28,488. Discussion: none. Roll Call vote: *In favor*: Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed*: none. 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to approve the 2021-2022 Fire Marshal Budget of \$4,990. Discussion: Commissioner Stewart commented the budgets do not reflect vehicle fuel as it is supplied by the Town Public Works. Mayor McDaniel stated the Town has records of individual department consumption that is aggregated into one account.

Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to approve the 2021-2022 Dispatch Center Budget of \$7,250. Discussion: none. Roll Call vote: *In favor*: Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed*: none. 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to approve the 2021-2022 the Fire Marshal Fire Protection Budget of \$486,000. Discussion: none. Roll Call vote: *In favor*: Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed*: none. *Abstained*: Commissioner Perkins. Vote: 6-0-1 Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to approve the 2021-2022 the Police Protection Budget of \$124,450. Discussion: none. Roll Call vote: *In favor*: Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed*: none. 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Stewart; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to approve the 2021-2022 the Police Public Building Budget of \$73,500. Discussion: none. Roll Call vote: *In favor*: Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed*: none. 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mohegan Fire Chief Gaetano explained his budget to the Commission specifically addressing the snow plow. He stated the station owns the truck, plow, and equipment on it and is used to respond to emergencies in-town and in district as well as clearing snow the driveway. Further, the 2004 truck budgeted at zero and will be used until it dies and funds for its maintenance are taken from another part of the budget. Fire Chief Gaetano also reported he asked for a 3% increase that will help to offset rising costs and said a review of the Town budget versus the Mohegan actual budget is 20% - 25%. Chairperson Murphy suggested the four (4) chiefs get together with the Finance Director concerning a more uniform budget sheet and remove that line item as discussed. Chief Gaetano said an updated form was created a few years ago and is in use and the line item would be removed.

13. New Business.

a. To review and act on a motion to approve the Use of Body Worn Cameras.

Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Stewart to approve the amended policy for Use of Body Worn Cameras presented by Lt. Radford today. Discussion: Commissioner Bauer asked whether implementation would be a red flag given the approaching deadline, issues for funding the policy as well as storage to meet the deadline. Lt. Radford responded the Department already has camera storage in addition to cameras in place approved by the Town Council. Also, a 30% grant reimbursement application will be submitted. He reported no additional storage is needed and servers are in place as there are already in-car cameras. Lt. Radford also responded to Chairman Murphy regarding replacement cameras and said all of the cameras have two (2) 12-hour batteries that are realistically 10 hours and are the same brand as the in-car cameras. Commissioner Stewart asked whether the policy would

discourage or reduce frivolous law suits; Mayor McDaniel responded “no.” Chairman Murphy asked Lt. Radford about guidelines for camera video request--that would follow requirements set by the State--and what would occur when a camera malfunctions or accidentally shut off—it will be addressed by the supervisor on duty and replaced. Roll Call vote: *In favor*: Commissioners Bauer, Callaghan, Gillette, Murphy, Pedersen, Perkins, and Stewart. *Opposed*: none. 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

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

Chairperson Murphy asked three (3) times for remarks. Matt Suárez of 14 Cranberry Drive disagreed with the comment that just EMTs not firefighters were needed and remarked you cannot work with hope and gave an spoke of a potential situation as an example. He also commented the suggestion was asking Town employees to risk lives.

15. Remarks from the Mayor

Mayor McDaniel congratulated Chairperson Murphy on his appointment and thanks to those who assisted with the distribution of In-Home Test Kits and N95 Masks specifically the Fire Department, American Legion, Commission members, the Town Council, and of course the staff. He also reported the Blight Officer was doing well and spoke of an issue he had with data on the current report. Additionally, he reported former RST Gosselin has been promoted to Lieutenant and scheduling meetings with all RSTs in his area, Chiefs, Mayors, and First Selectmen.

16. Remarks from Town Council Liaison.

Town Councilor Yuchniuk remarked on the budgeting and requesting additional firefighters or anything “If you do not ask for it, the worse they can say is no.”

17. Remarks from Commissioners.

Commissioner Callaghan thanked the Town Council for their approval of ARCA funds for the AC Facility and made a request to Fire Marshal Barnes for In-Test Kits for seniors. Commissioner Bauer asked about the number of test kits per case and asked if they were adequate for the two (2) senior Village communities. Commissioner Stewart concurred with the funds approved for the Animal Control Facility and spoke of making sure it does not get waylaid. He also thanked Fire and Police responders and EMS telling them to be safe and remember Covid is still here. Commissioner Perkins echoed the comments of Commissioners Callaghan and Stewart Chairperson, thanked Fire Chief Gaetano for attending this meeting and the one at the PSB on January 12, and thanked firefighters and police. She urged the first responders to stay safe. Chairman Murphy remarked he was not opposed to firefighters but said if relief is needed for firefighters other alternatives should be sought, such as mutual assistance from other towns. He said a lot can be done and he did not want firefighters to violate rules or be harm’s way.

18. Adjournment.

Motion by Commissioner Perkins; seconded by Commissioner Stewart to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote; 7-0; 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.**