

**TOWN OF MONTVILLE**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes – May 16, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.**

**Town of Montville has lifted the mask mandate effective Monday, February 28, 2022, throughout Town facilities in coordination with our schools. Although the mask mandate has been lifted, Uncas Health strongly recommends that all individuals, both vaccinated and unvaccinated, continue to wear masks indoors. 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

Co-Chair Napierski called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and pledged the flag.

3) Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Sierra Davis, Walter Hewitt (by phone), Sheelagh Lapinski, Thomas McCarthy, and Christopher Napierski. Absent were Commissioners Mickey Gillette and Meracus Hernandez. A quorum was present.

4) Alterations to the Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Davis to move up New Business Item 8c and 8d before Item 8b. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried. *This motion was not acted upon; the Agenda was followed as posted.*

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

Co-Chair Napierski asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

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

a) The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 18, 2022.

Motion by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner McCarthy to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 21, 2022. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

7) Unfinished Business -- *None*

8) New Business

a) Leadership Coach Pro Presentation by Michelle Hartley.

Motion to move Agenda Item 8a, *Leadership Coach Pro Presentation by Michelle Hartley*, to the next Commission meeting. Discussion: Assistant Planner Bezanson spoke of a power outage in the Ms. Hartley's town on Long Island that prevented her from forwarding a copy of her PowerPoint Presentation. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

b) Presentation by seCTer – Melanie Wilson

Assistant Planner Bezanson introduced Paul Whitescarver, Executive Director of seCTer, who gave a PowerPoint presentation on what seCTer does and how it can help the Commission. Copies of his presentation were given to the Commission. Mr. Whitescarver highlighted seCTer's role as the region's designated economic development organization with enabling federal grants; to coordinate, write, and implement the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy ("CEDS"); and to provide value for member municipalities. He reported on the domestic supply chain in the region including total investments to the region. Small business lending, small business development center, and a procurement component to assist small businesses was mentioned. The Pandemic economic recovery of the region was touched upon in addition to Montville Economic data concerning total workers for Montville by industry and its economic overview. Mr. Whitescarver fielded questions of the Commission stating his organization would love to be involved with the EDC, does not have onsite help for websites or grants for them, can do seminars for businesses owners, and works with CT Advanced doing site finders for State and out-of-state businesses coming to municipalities that is not marketed well by the State. EWIB and the push for wind energy in state and associated education for potential workers in the field, a shortage of available housing, a State worker shortage, and seCTer's lack of social media (newsletters) were mentioned. Mr. Whitescarver was thanked for his presentation upon conclusion of the Q & A period.

c) New Business Report

Co-Chair Napierski asked if everyone had received a copy of the report. Assistant Planner Bezanson proposed attaching it with the meeting packet for future meetings.

d) Staff Updates:

a. Discussion about town passport

Assistant Planner Bezanson commented on the partnership of the EDC with Parks & Recreation regarding a passport event as done by Norwich as discussed at the April meeting in a presentation with Director Peter Bushway. The Norwich passport event had prizes totaling \$10,000 and was partially subsidized by a grant. The Commission needs to consider where the funds will come from to promote a passport event; whether all businesses will be included; and will it be a seasonal event. A list of Town businesses organized by categories was handed out to the Commission, one that was researched via Goggle but the retail businesses may not be totally up-to-date. The list of brick and mortar businesses were categorized. Using business receipts, treatment of home-based businesses, the length of the event and the price point for it, and the pass-through status of the Town were discussed in addition to the biggest Town attractions concerning passports. Other proposals considered were sponsorship of the town passport by big box businesses, a funding goal for the project for next year (\$1,000) and supporting town businesses from gift cards provided by them. Business activities in Town were also discussed.

b. Sustainable CT updates

Asst. Planner Bezanson reported the Town Sustainable CT plan for certification has been extended to fall of next year. It will take time to conduct more research to make suitable decisions, particularly figuring out the design for the new website that will affect the timeline for its completion. The Town business list should be reviewed for potential targets to support traffic to Montville. Service businesses were deemed not a good idea. Commissioner Davis

proposed a passport for the elderly for transportation for medical purposes; she also spoke of the lack of foot traffic. The Commission will add to its next agenda, “Business Spotlight” to discuss highlighting local businesses as done prior to the pandemic.

9) Report from Town Council Liaison – *No report*

Town Councilor Yuchniuk was absent from the meeting.

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

Co-Chair Napierski asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

11) Remarks from the Commissioners and Town Council Liaison

Assistant Planner Bezanson reported a note received from Commissioner Meracus who was unable to attend the meeting due to a second job and asked if the meetings could be pushed back to 7:00 p.m. It was noted that the posted 2022 Commission Meeting Schedule has the time as 6:00 p.m. Commissioner McCarthy remarked if it was possible to get the status of properties in Town such as the drive-in; can the Commission help with sales; and whether there are Route 32 properties the Commission can market. Commissioner Davis remarked if the Town Blight Officer could spearhead cutting back trees and overgrowth at an adjacent property and whether available properties can be spotlighted on the Town webpage that are looking for renters or start-up businesses. Assistant Planner Bezanson reported on approval of that property for a project and remarked on spotlighting properties on the website. Commissioner McCarthy also remarked on having events that pass-through town such as a bike run that he suggested last year and events to help fund projects; Co-Chair Napierski remarked word does not get about events. Assistant Planner Bezanson remarked the Town calendar, *Montville Times*, and the community booklet will be used to advertise events; Commissioner Davis suggested having more multicultural events. Assistant Planner Bezanson will check on the status of the Rock Ten property per an inquiry by Commissioner Lapinski. Investments in schools and incentive programs were proposed by Commissioner McCarthy; Commissioner Lapinski will discuss the same with the Board of Education. Commissioner Davis remarked on the sustainable Haitian farms in Town; Commissioner McCarthy mentioned a community garden.

12) Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner McCarthy to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 5-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.