

Town of Montville Town Council
Special Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
Montville Town Hall – Town Council Chambers

1. Call to Order
Chairman McNally called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence in honor of our military.
3. Roll Call
Present were Councilors Bunnell, Caron, Mandler, May, Rix, Yuchniuk, and McNally.
Also present was Mayor Ronald McDaniel.
4. Special Recognitions/Presentations
Chairman McNally recited a brief description of the heroic efforts and actions of Mohegan Tribal and part-time Montville Dispatcher Jamie Knighton and Eric Walls who aided an 82-year-old woman from a house fire. Public Safety Commission Vice Chairman Stephen Stewart and Liaison Councilor Yuchniuk presented Ms. Knighton and Mr. Walls with a Hometown Heroes Award. Mayor McDaniel and Chairman McNally thanked and congratulated the recipients.
5. Alterations to the Agenda – *none*
6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve:
 - a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of April 10, 2023
Motion made by Councilor May, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
 - b. The General Government Budget Public Hearing Minutes of April 26, 2023
Motion made by Councilor May, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
 - c. The Special Meeting Minutes of April 26, 2023
Motion made by Councilor Yuchniuk, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
 - d. The Board of Education Budget Public Hearing Minutes of April 27, 2023
Motion made by Councilor Yuchniuk, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
7. Executive Session
 - a. To Consider and Act on a Motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of interviewing candidate for the Conservation Commission. Discussions to include members of the Town Council and Mayor Ronald McDaniel.

Motion made by Councilor Rix, seconded by Councilor May. Discussion: Candidate Elaine Hess was interviewed to serve on the Conservation Commission. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried. Invited parties exited Town Council Chambers for Executive Session at 7:05 p.m. Chairman McNally resumed the meeting at 7:17 p.m. No votes were taken during Executive Session.
8. Remarks from the public relating to matters on the agenda with a three-minute limit
Kate Southard, 89 Wildwood Lane, Chairperson, Parks & Recreation Commission, spoke in support of the appointment of Lilyana Sherbanee to the Board of Education and Mary Hillman to the Parks & Recreation Commission.

Donna Geary, 11 Depot Road, also spoke in support of the appointment of Mary Hillman to the Parks & Recreation Commission.

9. Communications
 - a. Copy of the April 2023 Financial Reports from Finance Director Barbara Griffin
 - b. Copy of the legal bills from Suisman-Shapiro for the month of March 2023
 - c. Copy of the legal bills from Halloran & Sage for the month of March 2023
 - d. Copy of the Favorable Report from the Planning & Zoning Commission for the FY2023/24 Capital Improvement Plan Budget.

10. Report from the Town Attorney on Matters Referred – *none*

11. Remarks from the Mayor and/or Administrative Department Heads to include Matters Referred

Mayor McDaniel reported on the Bond signing for the Town and Board of Education Projects. Both he and Councilor Yuchniuk attended the Little League Opening Ceremony, which was delayed due to the Gold Star Bridge accident. The League was presented with a check supporting their annual expenses during the Ceremony. Contract Negotiations for the Dispatchers are continuing; the Communication Policies have been vetted and the Position Descriptions are close to completion and will be sent to the Town Attorney before being sent to the Town Administration/Rules & Procedures Standing Committee for review. He commended Town Clerk Katie Haring for her recent designation as the Master Connecticut Town Clerk by the Connecticut Town Clerks Association.

Finance Director Griffin reported that the Board of Education has begun submitting invoices for their Bond project(s). The Moxley Road Bridge Replacement Project Bids will open on May 16. Other upcoming bid openings include the Roadway Patch Repairs and Drainage and Catch Basin Replacements. She has begun concentrating on the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) expenditures, reviewing the items line-by-line with the relevant parties regarding the status of their projects. The date for the allocation of the ARPA funds is December 2024; the funds must be expended by December 2026.

Newly appointed Police Chief Wilfred Blanchette reported on a 2021 motor vehicle accident at Routes 2A and 12 and the apprehension of an armed suspect by K-9 Barrett. As a result of the incident, K-9 Barrett has suffered severe medical issues, resulting in an inoperable brain bleed. Soon after the incident, K-9 Barrett was nominated to receive the State Police Bravery Award and, last Friday, he and Handler Montville Police Officer Witts were awarded the Medal of Bravery.

12. Reports from Standing Committees

a. Town Administration/Rules of Procedure

The Committee discussed Parks & Recreation Director Bushway's request to increase the hourly wages for the summer staff to meet the minimum wage requirement and bring them in line with the surrounding towns; the item is on this evening's agenda for approval (Item 16(c)).

b. Finance

Most of the items discussed by the Committee are included on this evening's agenda. The Town Council Special Meeting regarding the FY2023/24 Budget will be held tomorrow, Tuesday, May 16, at 7:00 p.m.

c. Public Works/Solid Waste Disposal – *no meeting; no report*

13. Reports from Special Committees and Liaison Councilors

a. Councilor Bunnell: Library Committee, Parks & Recreation Commission, Volunteer Fire Fighters' Relief Fund

Library Committee – *no meeting*

Parks & Recreation Commission – *no report*

Volunteer Fire Fighters' Relief Fund – *no report*

- b. Councilor Caron: Commission on Aging, Social Services, Non-Profit Organizations
Non-Profit Organizations – A letter was sent to the non-profit organizations offering the Town's continuing support and assistance.
Senior Services – The Senior Center held a very successful Art Show and bus trip. He is in the process of seeking additional funding for the Center for Outreach programs. Councilor May added that he was very impressed by the works exhibited at the Art Show and encouraged everyone to view the exhibition.
 - c. Councilor Mandler: Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA), Ad-Hoc Covid-19 Impact Study Committee
WPCA – The Authority discussed and is currently in search of an unexplained loss of water. The Superintendent is currently in the process of researching the rates of the surrounding towns for a possible rate increase for water usage.
Ad-Hoc Covid-19 Impact Study Committee – *on this evening's agenda*
 - d. Councilor May: Conservation Commission
The Commission is seeking volunteers to continue their work on the bog log bridges along the trail. They also plan to reserve a space at an upcoming Farmers Market Community Day to promote their efforts, publicize their trails, and sell rain barrels and composters..
 - e. Councilor Rix: Board of Education, Farmers Market Committee, Planning & Zoning Commission
Board of Education – High School Graduation will be held on June 14 and Middle School Graduation will be held on June 12. She commended the Tyl Middle School staff and students on their very well-presented and successful first-ever play. She looks forward to attending more plays in the future.
Farmers Market Committee –Farmers Market Opening Night will be held on June 13.
 - f. Councilor Yuchniuk: Economic Development Commission, Public Safety Commission, Youth Services Bureau and Advisory Board
Youth Services Bureau and Advisory Board – A Trauma Training Seminar will be held on August 24 at the Montville High School Auditorium for the entire staff, including bus drivers, custodians, and lunch staff..
Public Safety Commission – The Police Department reported 909 Calls for Service and 148 citations. The Fire Department has begun a different reporting system in which each Fire Company submits its report. The Montville Fire Company reported 61 EMS (Emergency Medical Services) Calls, 5 Fire Calls, 10 Motor Vehicles Accident (MVA) Calls, and 7 Other Calls. The Mohegan Fire Company reported 65 EMS, 4 Fire, 9 MVA, and 12 Other Calls. The Oakdale Fire Company reported 29 EMS, 4 Fire, 1 MVA, and 9 Other Calls. The Chesterfield Fire Company reported 11 EMS, 1 Fire, and 7 Other Calls.
Economic Development Commission – The Commission is continuing to work on the Business Spotlight of the Month and plans to speak with the Land Use and Development Department to discuss the project.
14. Appointments and Resignations
- a. To Consider and Act on a Motion to accept the resignation of Anthony Siragusa from the Water & Sewer Commission, Planning & Zoning Commission, and Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority, effective July 1, 2023.

Motion made by Councilor Caron, seconded by Councilor May. Discussion: Councilor Caron expressed his regrets. Councilor Bunnell concurred, thanking him for all of his efforts and recognizing his service to the town and the Planning & Zoning Commission on which he has served for over 20 years. Councilor May, who served with Mr. Siragusa on the Water & Sewer Commission, concurred, adding that his guidance and knowledge will be sorely missed. Mayor McDaniel, who also served with Mr. Siragusa, expressed his appreciation for all he has done for the town, stating that he was always very well prepared and provided an enlightened perspective. Councilor Mandler, who has also been serving with him on the Water & Sewer Commission, commented on Mr. Siragusa's knowledge and input. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

- b. To Consider and Act on a Motion to appoint either Jeffrey Rogers or Mary Hillman to fill a vacancy on the Parks & Recreation Commission with a term to expire on November 14, 2026.

Motion made by Councilor Caron, seconded by Councilor May. Discussion: Councilor Bunnell urged the Councilors to vote unanimously for Mary Hillman. He questioned Mr. Rogers' motives for serving on the Commission and has received several phone calls from the Commissioners and residents regarding the possibility of his appointment. He felt it was their responsibility to appoint members of the community who would be constructive and helpful rather than one who instigates conflict, disagreements, and controversy. He cited both Mr. Rogers' and Ms. Hillman's records and involvement with the town. Chairman McNally, who was offended by Councilor Bunnell's comments, defended Mr. Rogers' who, he felt, has no ulterior motives. He also cited his accomplishments during his short tenure as a member of the Commission. Councilor Caron noted that Ms. Hillman was present and thanked her for her continued interest in serving the town. Voting in Favor of Jeffrey Rogers: Councilors Mandler, Yuchniuk, and McNally. Voting in Favor of Mary Hillman: Councilors Bunnell, Caron, May, and Rix. Mary Hillman was appointed to the Parks & Recreation Commission.

- c. To Consider and Act on a Motion to appoint Caitlyn Casper to fill a vacancy on the Farmers Market Committee with a term to expire on March 26, 2025.

Motion made by Councilor Caron, seconded by Councilor May. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

- d. To Consider and Act on a Motion to accept the resignation of Grace Carlos from the Board of Education, effective immediately.

Motion made by Councilor Rix, seconded by Councilor May. Discussion: The Councilors expressed their regrets. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

- e. To Consider and Act on a Motion to appoint Lilyana Sherbanee to fill a vacancy on the Board of Education, with a term to expire on November 13, 2023.

Motion made by Councilor May, seconded by Councilor Rix. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

15. Unfinished Business – *none*

16. New Business

- a. **Resolution #2023-43. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to refund taxes due to overpayments and corrections in the amount of \$125.80 (one hundred twenty-five dollars and eighty cents) as requested by the Tax Collector. (Councilor McNally)

Motion made by Councilor May, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: None. Roll Call vote, 7-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilor Bunnell, Caron, May, Mandler, Rix, Yuchniuk, and McNally. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.

- b. **Resolution #2023-44. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to amend Resolution #2022-145 and reschedule the Wednesday, November 15, 2023 Town Council Organizational Meeting to Monday, November 13, 2023, at 8:00 p.m., per §C303 of the Montville Town Charter. (Councilor McNally)
Motion made by Councilor Rix, seconded by Councilor May. Discussion: The amendment is due to a clerical error. Roll Call vote, 7-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilor Bunnell, Caron, May, Mandler, Rix, Yuchniuk, and McNally. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.
- c. **Resolution #2023-45. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to approve the Proposed Employees Hourly Rates for the Parks & Recreation Department, as recommended by the Town Administration/Rules and Procedures Standing Committee. (Councilor Yuchniuk)
Motion made by Councilor May, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: None. Roll Call vote, 7-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilor Bunnell, Caron, May, Mandler, Rix, Yuchniuk, and McNally. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.
- d. **Resolution #2023-46. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to approve the Suspense List at the request of the Tax Collector in the amount of \$101,673.48 (one hundred and one thousand six hundred seventy-three and forty-three cents) (Councilor McNally)
Motion made by Councilor May, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: The Suspense List includes those who have been delinquent on their taxes for an extended period of time and is deemed uncollectible by the Tax Collector. Roll Call vote, 7-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilor Bunnell, Caron, May, Mandler, Rix, Yuchniuk, and McNally. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.
- e. **Resolution #2023-47. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to transfer \$65,601 from Capital Non-Recurring Account 20999-52012 to General Fund. (Councilor McNally)
Motion made by Councilor Caron, seconded by Councilor May. Discussion: The funds include money that was unspent or no longer needed. Roll Call vote, 7-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilor Bunnell, Caron, May, Mandler, Rix, Yuchniuk, and McNally. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.
- f. **Resolution #2023-48. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to transfer \$42,400 from Capital Non-Recurring Account 20999-54085 to General Fund. (Councilor McNally)
Motion made by Councilor May, seconded by Councilor Rix. Discussion: None. Roll Call vote, 7-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilor Bunnell, Caron, May, Mandler, Rix, Yuchniuk, and McNally. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.
- g. **Resolution #2023-49. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to transfer \$30,000 from Capital Non-Recurring Account 20999-54119 to General Fund. (Councilor McNally)
Motion made by Councilor May, seconded by Councilor Bunnell. Discussion: None. Roll Call vote, 7-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilor Bunnell, Caron, May, Mandler, Rix, Yuchniuk, and McNally. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.
- h. **Resolution #2023-50. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to approve the proposed list of expenditures related to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from the reallocation of unused funds, as recommended by the COVID-19 Impact Study Committee. (Councilor Mandler)
Motion made by Councilor May, seconded by Councilor Rix. Discussion: Councilor Mandler stated that the Montville and Oakdale Fire Companies would be allocated

\$1,000.00 *each* as a gesture of appreciation for their service. Councilor Caron proposed the possibility of allocating funds for all of their Fire Companies for their hard work and dedication. The list will be amended changing the total amount from \$1,000.00 to \$2,000.00. Roll Call vote, 6-0-1, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilor Bunnell, Caron, May, Mandler, Rix, and Yuchniuk. Voting in Opposition: None. Voting in Abstention: Councilor McNally. Resolution passed.

- i. **Resolution #2023-51. THE TOWN OF MONTVILLE HEREBY RESOLVES** to waive the sealed bid requirement in Section 708(a) of the Town Charter for the Social Services Building Painting, as it is in the best interest of the Town. (Councilor McNally)

Motion made by Councilor Rix, seconded by Councilor May. Discussion: The Contractor will be CertaPro Painters and the estimated cost of the project is \$11,550.00. Four (4) additional verbal price estimates were also received. Councilor Caron noted the difficulty in obtaining three (3) bids at this time. Roll Call vote, 7-0, all in favor. Voting in Favor: Councilor Bunnell, Caron, May, Mandler, Rix, Yuchniuk, and McNally. Voting in Opposition: None. Resolution passed.

17. Remarks from the Public with a three-minute limit

Board of Education Chairman Wills Pike stated his availability tomorrow to answer any questions the Councilors might have on their budget. With respect to bids, he concurred with Councilor Caron's comment regarding the difficulty in obtaining three (3) bids within the given time constraints.

18. Remarks from the Councilors and the Mayor

Mayor McDaniel wished all the mothers a Belated Happy Mother's Day. He thanked Police Chief Blanchette for reporting on K-9 Barrett and Officer Witts and commended Officer Witts' commitment and devotion to the program. He wished Mr. Siragusa all the best in his future endeavors. He reminded everyone that the Memorial Day Ceremony will be held on Sunday, May 21, at noon, followed by the Parade.

Councilor Bunnell wished everyone a comfortable and safe Memorial Day. He also expressed his appreciation to Chief Blanchette for his update on K-9 Barrett and Officer Witts, a dedicated and very good police officer.

Councilor Caron also thanked Chief Blanchette and expressed their support of the Police Department. He also congratulated Ms. Hillman and Ms. Sherbanee on their appointments. He was pleased to see the Department Heads present at their meeting and wished everyone a nice week.

Councilor May gave a shout-out to Town Clerk Haring for her designation. He expressed his sadness upon hearing about K-9 Barrett. He encouraged the town to engage either the Town Engineer or the appointed Company to obtain an accurate bid rather than sending a project out to bid to no avail.

Chairman McNally congratulated the Hometown Heroes.

Councilor Rix informed Councilor May that June 20 is First Responders and Community Day and September 5 is Community Day. She, too, congratulated the Hometown Heroes. She will be thinking of K-9 Barrett and Officer Witts daily. She expressed her sadness about the resignations and congratulated the new appointees.

Councilor Yuchniuk also thanked the Hometown Heroes, who took the time and energy to stop and help someone in need. He also thanked Chief Blanchette for keeping them informed. He questioned the Mayor as to whether new dispatchers have been hired to

which Mayor McDaniel stated that they have received several applications and are waiting to determine the pay scale before hiring any new dispatchers.

Councilor Mandler congratulated the appointees and Hometown Heroes and wished everyone a Happy Memorial Day. He also thanked the Chief and expressed his sadness upon hearing the news about K-9 Barrett and Officer Witts.

19. Adjournment

Motion made by Councilor Mandler, seconded by Councilor Rix. to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes T. Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville

AN AUDIO RECORD OF THE MEETING CAN BE FOUND ON THE TOWN'S WEBSITE LOCATED UNDER RESOURCES – MEETING RECORDINGS