

**TOWN OF MONTVILLE**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes – October 16, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.**

**Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chairperson of the meeting. The Montville Town Council Rules of Procedure, decorum, timeliness, and suitability shall be followed and enforced.**

1) Call to Order

Chairperson Gillette 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 Chairperson Mickey Gillette, Commissioners Meracus Hernandez, Walter Hewitt (by phone), Sheelagh Lapinski, and Alternate Serg St. Felix (by phone). Commissioners Sierra Davis and Christopher Napierski were absent.

Also present was Assistant Planner Meredith Badalucca, Director of Land Use and Development Liz Burdick (6:02 p.m.), Consultant Robert Santy and Town Council Liaison Robert Yuchniuk.

4) Alterations to the Agenda -- *None*

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

Chairperson Gillette 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 **August 21, 2023**, (not September 18, 2023 as per the Agenda filed with the Town Clerk).

**Motion** by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Hernandez to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 21, 2023. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 4-0-0, all in favor. **Motion carried.**

7) Unfinished Business

- a) Review of Business Report.

Chairman Gillette remarked there has been eight (8) new businesses since the last meeting.

- b) Discussion of status of New Business Introductory Letter.

Chairman Gillette remarked on the new business introductory letter sent by Director Burdick 2-3 months ago prior to her trip. Director Burdick reported the letter was revised to a short, simple version rather than the former one that was too complicated. As of yet, nothing has been done with the letter. Assistant Planner Badalucca will review the EDC Brochure for

revisions. Consultant Santy remarked that by updating the EDC website it could then be used as a reference tool and noted as such in the introduction letter.

c) Discussion of Presentation of Excellence Award policies and presentations.

Consultant Santy remarked on the email he sent to the Commission in August regarding some research he undertook on awards. Towns in Rhode Island and New York were researched where the application process for the award is done completely online and presented annually. Town Staff could offer potential nominees per month for review was a suggestion. Director Burdick noted there is a list of businesses for awards that were sent to her by Chairman Gillette but she was not sure of its status. Chairman Gillette remarked the Excellence Award is presented quarterly, not monthly but if there are a lot of businesses they could be presented every two (2) weeks. Director Burdick suggested that home-based businesses should be included for awards particularly those that give back to the community and should therefore be included for the Business Spotlight as well. Consultant Santy reported on a town in New York that had 260 businesses to make selections from and was maintained on their website. The purpose for the same would garner enough businesses to make selections for the quarterly award as well as the business spotlight and would include home-based businesses too. Consultant Santy and Director Burdick have discussed setting up a spotlight space at the Town Hall so it can be seen by those who come into the Town Hall. A display board, key pens, business cards and other items were proposed for the spotlight space. Consultant Santy remarked he was ready to move forward with this plan and coordinating with IT for setup of the website. He concluded that the plan would not require a formal resolution. Director Burdick noted that the Commission has its own website and that the plan had been brought to the Town Council by Liaison Yuchniuk who are in support of it.

d. Discussion of Business Spotlight policies.

As addressed in his August 20, 2023 email, Consultant Santy commented on the Business Spotlight as discussed earlier under Agenda Item 7c. Referenced were the qualifications for recognizing businesses i.e., a business in good standing, based in Montville, a business application that tells a story, how long in business in addition to the process for review of the applications, among other things. Director Burdick remarked that she, Consultant Santy, and Assistant Planner Badalucca will work jointly on the application or forms in general and by speaking with IT Director O'Neil determine how much of a role IT will take. Direct links to seCTer, Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce, and the Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce will also be discussed.

8) New Business:

a) Update – Montville EDC Support Services Consultant, Robert W. Santy.

Consultant Santy gave an update on connections made with community role players. He reported on having interviewed eight (8) people—Mayor McDaniel, Town Council Chair McNally, Town Council members, the Planning and Zoning Chair, a land developer, a land use attorney, and the Tax Assessor. Plans are to meet with the Mohegan Sun and the WPCA Chair and to coordinate with seCTer, the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce, and the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments. Consultant Santy acknowledged he has not provided a written report of his research and meetings but provided these highlights to the Commission. He remarked on the change in leadership due to the upcoming election that would introduce or alter the role of the EDC going forward i.e., to play other roles as advocates or to review projects before regulatory agencies. These roles would require more work by the

Commission and a great opportunity to play a new role going forward. Commission members with planning and zoning experience to support new business development or one with technical ability can support new businesses in Town. Consultant Santy charged the Commission with thinking about their individual role for positive change as an investment in the community. Director Burdick concurred with these new opportunities and the directives for the EDC and urged the Commission to make known to Town leadership that it is ready to move forward and play a more important role. She suggested having active participation by spotlighting a small business at the Farmers Market and/or an EDC table and banner so businesses can see what the Town wants. Also proposed was their attending Town Council meetings to put their faces out there for community opportunities. Having a liaison with seCTer and other organizations was proposed by Consultant Santy. Director Burdick reported that seCTer has public meetings that provide information on Connecticut development and what is happening in other towns. Attending Chamber meetings and meeting with people at functions to promote Montville was also suggested by the Director. Consultant Santy reported on his work for a 2-hour training program on January 22, 2024, with the leadership of the Town about economic development. Dinner may be provided. Director Burdick suggested having a joint meeting of the Commission and Town leadership. Since the January meeting is moved to 17<sup>th</sup> due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, she proposed having a joint meeting with this single item on the agenda and inviting the Boards, Commissions, and Town Council. The meeting would be held in Town Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m. with a light dinner beginning at 5:30 p.m.

b) Staff projects updates.

Assistant Planner Badalucca remarked on current Town development projects that include the following: (1) a 2-lot subdivision at 958 Route 163, (2) a zoning regulation text amendment regarding the cannabis moratorium, (3) an existing gateway terminal for use to transload marine materials at 125 Depot Road, (4) a 2-lot subdivision at 145 Moxley Road, and (5) a proposal for the 225 Maple Avenue Animal Control Facility. Director Burdick explained the 125 Depot Road project and the construction on the fishing pier at the boat launch site and the potential for a ribbon cutting ceremony once the project is completed.

9) Report from Town Council Liaison

Town Councilor Yuchniuk remarked on the upcoming election and his appreciation for the enthusiasm of the Commission. He urged them to move forward and not get disgruntled as well as going out to vote. Director Burdick thanked Town Councilor Yuchniuk for attending the meetings.

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

Chairperson Gillette asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.

11) Remarks from the Commissioners and Town Council Liaison. -- *None*

12) Adjournment

**Motion** by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Hernandez to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Voice vote: 4-0-0, all in favor. **Meeting adjourned.**