

TOWN OF MONTVILLE  
Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting Agenda – July 20, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.  
Virtual Meeting Minutes

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

Please call number below to attend the meeting at:

[1-\(605\) 313-5935](tel:1-605-313-5935)

[PIN # 401237](#)

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 FreeConferenceCall.

Written comments must be emailed to the Town Clerks Office at [townclerk@montvillect.org](mailto:townclerk@montvillect.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 Economic Development Commission.

Live audio comments may be made via FreeConferenceCall by calling from your telephone.

Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chair of the meeting. The Economic Development 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 Hewitt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

All stood and pledged the flag.

3) Roll Call

Commissioners present were Heather Harris, Sheelagh Lapinski, Christopher Napierski, Jim Toner, and Chairman Walter Hewitt. Also present was Town Planner Marcia Vlaun. Commissioners Mickey Gillette, Christopher Napierski, and Town Council Liaison Colleen Rix were absent. A quorum was present.

4) Alterations to the Agenda -- *None*

5) Remarks from Marcia Vlaun.

Town Planner Vlaun expressed sympathy for the passing of Commissioner Jim Toner who was also a Commissioner on Planning & Zoning. She gave a snapshot of labor statistics for the region and Town of Montville that included the Norwich/New London and Montville labor markets from federal and state data for April and May. The retail jobs for Norwich/New London was 15,300 jobs in April and 13,000 jobs in May while leisure and hospitality jobs were 17,600 in April and 16,500 in May. As to the labor market in Montville, there were 9,184 workers in April and 7,925 currently and before the pandemic the unemployment rate was 3.7% and is now 13.1%. The Mohegan Sun workforce was 3,300 but is now 2,000. Published information on the Payment Protection Plan (PPP) for Town businesses and businesses lost (day care, dance studio, hair salon) was reported. A report on demolishing the remains of West Rock on August 3rd was also reported. Closed businesses are operating via drive-by with restaurants doing take-out. Businesses open include nail salons and Home Depot and Stop 'n Shop that never closed. The data reported will be sent by email to the Commission with updates. (*Town Planner Vlaun left the meeting at 7:10 p.m.*)

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

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

7) Remembering Jim Toner

Chairman Hewitt who was saddened by the loss of Commissioner Toner said he relied on Jim's knowledge, expertise, and for being the backbone of a lot." Commissioner Harris said she appreciated Jim's vote of confidence in her skill set.

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

i.) The Minutes of the Regular Meeting June 15, 2020.

Motion by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Harris to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2020. Discussion: none. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

9) Unfinished Business

a. Montville real-estate properties for development

i. James M. Gillanders, Londregan Commercial Real Estate Group – 3 properties.

(1) Asked if the Town had 6,000 SF of office space for small, private school building.

Chairman Hewitt reported he had heard from J. Gillanders via email a few weeks ago who was seeking a 6,000 sq. ft. space for a small private school in Town, but there were no spaces that size available.

b. Mohegan Tribe and our request for contact information regarding retention of businesses vacating the casino – Bill Caron

Chairman Hewitt reported he had written B. Caron but had no response.

c. New Business Report – *No report*

d. Business Survey – Heather

Commissioner Harris reported she sent out 30 surveys but received no responses from them nor from letters she mailed. She said the project probably should be abandoned for now for a better way to communicate with businesses and said the project is better suited for in-person contact. She also wondered whether the Town had a means for rallying around businesses but be more probable in the third phase of pandemic recovery. Chairman Hewitt talked about Channel 3; WFSB-CBS helping by creating a venue for local businesses to post. He said a Town list of businesses could be posted there and on the EDC web page.

e. Chamber Business After Hours – Heather

Commissioner Harris reported there were no events scheduled.

10) New Business

a) Deliver plaque to Healing With Horses at Wildrose Horse Farm

Chairman Hewitt reported the EDC plaque was to be presented at the last Town Council meeting, but Town Councilor Rix did not attend. He said the plaque was ordered and a letter sent to the business and that a volunteer called and expressed happiness for the honor to the organization. Chairman Hewitt reported he had no response from Town Councilor Rix through Facebook or email as to whether the plaque was in hand. He poled the availability of Commissioners Harris, and Lapinski to try to coordinate presentation of the plaque and said he would try to get the plaque for the next presentation ordered and possibly contact the plaque vendor.

b) Pandemic and EDC Process

Chairman Hewitt was hopeful to deliver the EDC plaque with social distancing which he said would be good for the Town and the business. He spoke of Commissioner Gillette's performance for having EDC meetings in person and the dial-in process for virtual meetings—an email was sent to Town IT Director B. O'Neill. Chairman Hewitt reported he would not be available for the August meeting and would confirm attendance for it.

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

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

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

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

14) Townspeople and Business Feedback

a) Proposed Recipients for Business Recognition Award

Chairman Hewitt reported there is a list of award recipients through July 2021 and some who have dropped from the list that will need to be replaced. He will reach out to Town Councilor Rix regarding the awards for the next three (3) recipients.

15) Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Lapinski; seconded by Commissioner Harris to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.