

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes – August 19, 2020 -- 6:30 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING

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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 GoToMeeting.

Written comments must be emailed to the Town Clerk's Office at townclerk@montville-ct.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 Parks & Recreation Commission.

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

Comments will only be accepted at times designated for public comment by the Chair of the meeting. The Parks & Recreation Commission Rules of Procedure, decorum, timeliness, and suitability shall be followed and enforced in the same manner as if the meeting were held in person.

Town of Montville--Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes [Virtual]
Wednesday, August 19, 2020

1. Call to order.

Chairperson Hajj called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.

Present were Commissioners Matt Beaupre, Noah Carver, Jon Chase, Jennifer Hajj, Heather Kenniston, Morgan Matthewson, Kate Southard, and Rocky Stone. Also present was Park Recreation Director Peter Bushway and Town Council Liaison Colleen Rix (by phone).

4. Adjustments to the Agenda. *None*

5. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3-minute limit). *None*

6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to Approve.

a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of July 15, 2020.

Motion by Commissioner Matthewson; seconded by Commissioner Southard to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of July 15, 2020. Discussion: Commissioner Beaupre noted a correction to the header that should say June 17, not July 15. Voice vote: 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried. *Motion not amended.*

b. The Special Meeting Minutes of July 30, 2020.

Motion by Commissioner Beaupre; seconded by Commissioner Stone to approve the July 30, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

c. Director's Report for August 2020.

Motion by Commissioner Stone; seconded by Commissioner Southard to approve the Director's Report of August 2020. Discussion: Chairperson Hajj said some items from the report are included on the agenda. Voice vote: 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

7. P&R Newsletter for September 2020

Director Bushway responded to a question by Commissioner Matthewson about the status of the bus trip. He reported the maximum number of passengers on the bus is fifty but said he received additional information from the State on August 17 that he is still reviewing. Commissioner Southard commented on how nice the newsletter looked this month.

8. Report from Finance

Commissioner Stone inquired about the funds from the Mohegan Tribe for the summer camp tents. Director Bushway explained the funds were to go to Mayor McDaniel, approximately \$6,700, and the tribe was to pay half the cost. Commissioner Chase asked about the donations from Rand Whitney and the Mohegan Tribe, specifically what is it and

Town of Montville--Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes [Virtual]
Wednesday, August 19, 2020

where it goes. Director Bushway said funds are solicited from businesses for the concerts each year and reported \$3,000 was received but \$2,800 of it was used. The balance of \$200 he gets to kept. He also said the \$15,000 for this year's concerts remains.

9. Review of Recent Programs and Events

a. 2020 Summer Camp

Director Bushway reported the Commission will receive a summary of summer camp finances stating this was the first year a profit was made. He said the camp was well received and parents wanted the camp to continue for an additional week, but it ended the first week of August as some camp counselors were returning to school.

b. 2020 Summer Concert

Chairperson Hajj commented on details from the Director Bushway's report and asked about attendance at the event. Director Bushway reported the attendance was in the high 130's and said there was a variety of food and money was made.

c. 2020 Summer Movie

Director Bushway reported 87 moviegoers attended and said it was a beautiful but humid night as the screen was dripping moisture. He also said eight (8) packages of popcorn were consumed. Chairperson Hajj asked whether he considered having the movie earlier in the year when it is less muggy. Director Bushway said movies have been shown in October but said having them in the spring are subject to the warmth of the weather and sunset hours.

10. Upcoming Programs and Events

a. September 2020 Events and Programs

i. Montville Race Day

Director Bushway the race that is sponsored by the Rotary was cancelled this year but said he usually involves a 5K and 10K master's race.

ii. Mud Run

Director Bushway reported the mud run was rescheduled to the Saturday at the end of September. He said approximately 20 runners have signed up but said there are usually 130-170 participants. He added \$2,000 has been received in donations thus far. Commissioner Chase commented on his tour of the fields and a mud pile he saw. Director Bushway said the mud pile was actually a 3-6-foot-deep sink hole that stretched the field and rotted and caved in. Chairperson Hajj asked Director Bushway to add the status of the same to his report and inquired about the end date for registration; he said it was the day of the event. He also said at this year's run there will be family units participating.

iii. Judo

Director Bushway said judo has been postponed to January 2021 stating one senior instructor will return but another who is a national coach will retire.

iv. Karate

Town of Montville--Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes [Virtual]
Wednesday, August 19, 2020

Director Bushway reported that karate classes will be conducted in person and via Zoom. He reviewed the schedule and said there will be smaller, split classes with classes being held twice a week with the Zoom class on Wednesday. Responding to Chairperson Hajj, Director Bushway said he wants to start classes September 1, notification will be given by mass email, and classes will be limited to six (6) attendees.

v. Gymnastics

Director Bushway reported the concern with gymnastics is an issue of numbers. He said there are normally 15 participants using the gym at the Community Center, but classes will be shortened by 15 minutes in order to sanitize. The Department will be providing the cleaning items.

vi. Dance

Director Bushway reported classes will be held five (5) times a week with five (5) children per class. Classes will be held at the Community Center and virtually from 2:15 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Chairperson Hajj said the Commission had spoken about changing the dance schedule and classes at the Community Center. Director Bushway said he was trying to find a larger space as the Community Center gymnasium is small. Commissioner Beaupre asked whether the schools could be used on Wednesday since 50% of students will attend school on Monday and Tuesday and the other 50% on Thursday and Friday. Director Bushway explained the space and usage per State Covid guidelines. Chairperson Hajj asked the Director to contact Youth Services for use of their space.

vii. Yoga

Director Bushway explained yoga classes are normally held at Murphy School but instead would be here at the gym on Wednesdays. Chairperson Hajj said it would be a good idea to take a look at the potential number of participants if using the same instructors. Director Bushway said he reached out to the instructors proposed by former Commissioner Perkins but said they were unavailable for slots needed.

b. October 2020 Events and Programs

i. Pumpkin Decorating Event

Director Bushway said this is a 2-hour event that involves 40-60 children. Chairperson Hajj inquired about social distancing, but Director Bushway said the children do not all come at one time.

ii. Trick or Trunk

Director Bushway said there are 2,000 participants in a normal year at this event. Given the pandemic, a drive-through program is under consideration at the Tyl Middle School driveway, but said he is awaiting feedback from the Department of Health, State, and Mayor McDaniel. He asked the Commission to send him any ideas they may have. Commissioner Beaupre commented on not being able to see the children in their costumes and Chairperson Hajj asked if the lack of volunteers would be a problem this year and to get the word out about the need for them. Director Bushway said fire and police departments would be present.

Town of Montville--Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes [Virtual]
Wednesday, August 19, 2020

iii. Scarecrow Village

Director Bushway stated the event would be held on Sunday, October 18 with help provided by Youth Services. Thirteen have submitted scarecrows that are put on display in front of the Community Center. Commissioner Beaupre asked if this event could be added to the newsletter. At the request of Commissioner Matthewson, Director Bushway described the event that involves individuals/groups/families who make scarecrows that cannot be more than six feet tall and said some represent themes.

c. November 2020 Events and Programs

i. Basketball Evaluation Clinics

Director Bushway said the clinics are held indoors and he is hopeful that he will be able to use the school gyms but is awaiting feedback from the Superintendent of Schools although there is no backup location as of yet. Giving a nod to Commissioner Beaupre's involvement in the clinics, he also said the clinics involve drills, evaluation of skill levels, and practice that are scheduled to begin the first of November. Chairperson Hajj asked when a decision needed to be made for a location. Director Bushway said tryouts would not begin until mid-October as well as background checks of coaches and securing volunteers that would take time.

ii. Indoor Volleyball

Director Bushway reported the volleyball program had the same issue as that of the basketball clinics involving use of schools. He said the program continues through until mid-May and has 30-35 participants a night on two courts at the middle school. Chairperson Hajj asked about alternate locations and Director Bushway said he needed to make contacts and said he did not know about access to private schools.

11. Unfinished Business

a. Discussion to have documents relative to the Parks & Recreation Commission for distribution—ordinances, Town Charter, bylaws, etc.—to address Commission questions. Chairperson Hajj Chase commented on the documents that address duties and responsibilities the workability of bylaws, and the structure of the Commission stating that going forward they should be followed. He also spoke to meeting monthly to review the bylaws, working with the Department and the Finance Department by way of the Finance Committee, and suggested the documents be brought to meetings.

b. Development of Parks & Recreation Logo

Commissioner Stone said he is working on the logo, gathering information on its purpose, and guidance for the schools to help prepare it which he will present to the Commission next month.

c. Holiday Parade (December 2020)

Director Bushway reported that permit processing for the parade is usually done in August.

d. 2020 Decorations

Town of Montville--Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes [Virtual]
Wednesday, August 19, 2020

Motion by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Stone as to whether the Commission should maintain the Holiday Decorations line item under the Parks & Recreation budget. Discussion: Commissioner Stone questioned whether the decorations fall under the purview of Commission per the Town Charter or if it is something the Commission wants to be a part of and if so, it would require a vote. Per a question by Commissioner Matthewson, it was clarified the \$5,000 appropriation was for holiday parade decorations. Commissioner Chase described the issue as wants versus responsibility. Town Councilor Rix stated the Town Council approved the allocation and the flags that were on display were donated and said the issue before the Commission could be brought to the Town Council. Commissioner Beaupre commented the budget for decorations was \$1,000 prior to the \$5,000 allocated by the Town Council for holiday decorations and said if lost the Commission should ask for additional money for the parade. Commissioner Chase said the function seemed to be a Public Works function and stated no direction was needed to put up flags and said the funding could serve another purpose given the times. Commissioner Stone asked whether the Commission wanted to select and be involved in all decorations or approach the Town Council if it should continue. Commissioner Chase said it is part of the function of the Commission to meet recreational needs of the Town and promote activities but said the decorations did not fit the Commission responsibilities from the Charter. Motion by Commissioner Chase; seconded by Commissioner Stone to withdraw the motion on the floor. Discussion: none. Voice vote; 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Chairperson Hajj; seconded by Commissioner Southard should the Commission continue to choose banners and flags on the utility poles on Route 32. Discussion: Commissioner Chase said his concern was the expanded role of the Commission not the holiday parade. Chairperson Hajj said the issue could go either way and spoke to the passion of former commissioners. Commissioner Beaupre commented the line item was started for the holiday parade and if lost the holiday parade would need to be secured. Roll Call vote: *In favor*—Commissioners Hajj, Kenniston, Southard. *Opposed*—Commissioners Beaupre, Carver, Chase, Matthewson, Stone. 3-5-0. Motion denied.

Motion by Chairperson Hajj; seconded by Commissioner Carver to use the \$5,000 allocated for decorations for other purposes and inform the Town Council. Discussion: The Commission discussed the purchase of new decorations or whether to serve the needs of the community. When asked for his thoughts, Director Bushway, he said it was a question for the Town Council to decide. Low morale, the pandemic, family costs for programs, free or discounted pricing for programs for Town recreation were considered as opposed to the Commission having line item transfer approval, whether it should be involved with holiday decorations, and appropriate use of the funds such as tutors for home schooled students due to the pandemic. The Commission discussed obtaining clarification of Chapter C of the Town Charter as to the Commission's duties and responsibilities and whether the funds were earmarked inappropriately pending response from the Town Council. Motion by Chairperson Hajj; seconded by Commissioner Beaupre to withdraw the motion. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

Town of Montville--Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes [Virtual]
Wednesday, August 19, 2020

Motion by Chairperson Hajj; seconded by Commissioner Southard to table Agenda Items 11.e, 11.f, and 12.a until the next Commission meeting. Discussion: none. Voice vote; 8-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

e. 2020 Bus Trips -- *Tabled*

f. Potential Events and Programs -- *Tabled*

12. New Business

a. Eagle Scout Proposal -- *Tabled*

b. Proposals from Parks & Recreation Department for new programs or events -- *Tabled*

13. Communications

Chairperson Chase saw on Facebook that Trick or Trunk was attributed to Youth Services, a point of reference she wished to share with the Commission.

14. Remarks from the Public of Non-Agenda items (3-minute limit)

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

15. Remarks from Town Council Liaison

Town Councilor Rix asked that the question by Commissioner Stone for a response from the Town Council be sent to her.

16. Remarks from Parks & Recreation Director Bushway --None

17. Remarks from the Commissioners

Commissioner Southard said she loved the idea of using the holiday decorations funds for the community right now. Commissioner Chase said he had been looking at the status of the facilities and ways to resolve those impediments as well as facilities and finance reports. Commissioner Kenniston noted the Commission was not trying to spend money frivolously. Commissioner Carver referenced budget cuts and their impact. Commissioner Beaupre said in past years the Commission had one (1) meeting a year when they toured the facilities. Commissioner Matthewson had no remarks. Commissioner Stone thanked Director Bushway for getting his reports to the Commission early. Chairperson Hajj spoke of having a special meeting with the Town Council and said the last person was appointed to the Farmer's Market Committee.

18. Adjournment

Motion by Chairperson Hajj; seconded by Commissioner Matthewson to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 8-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Town of Montville--Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes [Virtual]
Wednesday, August 19, 2020

Respectfully submitted by,
Gloria J. Gathers
Town of Montville Recording Secretary/Minutes Clerk

**AN AUDIO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN
OF MONTVILLE WEBSITE.**