

**TOWN OF MONTVILLE -- PUBLIC SAFETY COMISSION**

**Regular Meeting – November 23, 2020 -- 6:00 PM**

**VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

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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](mailto: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 Public Safety 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 Public Safety 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.

1. Call to order.

Chairman Yuchniuk 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 Commissioners Mickey Gillette, Victor Lenda, Jr., Jon Leonard, James Moran, Karen Perkins, Stephen Stewart, and Chairman Robert Yuchniuk. Also present were Mayor Ronald McDaniel, Town Council Liaison Lenny Bunnell and Fire Marshal Bill Bundy (by phone). Absent was Lt. Dave Radford. A quorum was present.

4. Amendments to the Agenda.

Motion by Commissioner Perkins; seconded by Commissioner Stewart to add Item 12b, Fire Department Solutions, under New Business. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

5. Communications

- Copies of monthly statistics reports from Fire Departments, Fire Marshal, Police, Animal Control and Building Official.

Chairman Yuchniuk confirmed the Commissioners received copies of all of the monthly statistics reports. Commissioner Lenda spoke of a matter sent to him by email from Lt. Radford for discussion. It was agreed the topic would be brought up under Item 9c.

6. Consideration and action to approve minutes.

- a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of October 26, 2020.

Motion by Commissioner Moran; seconded by Commissioner Leonard to approve the October 26, 2020, minutes. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

7. Remarks from the Public (Agenda items—three-minute limit).

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

8. Remarks from Department Heads.

Police Department Report

The PD monthly statistics ending October 31, 2020, are as follows: There were 1406 total calls for service that included Type 1 calls (75), arrests (15), and juvenile arrests (0). The source for these calls were Troop E (158), PD (218), Walk-in (94), and By Officer (776).

Fire Department Report

Fire Marshal Bundy reported FD statistics for the month ending October 31, 2020, as follows: There were 224 calls for service of which 180 were medical EMS calls or 80% of all calls for service. Of the 180 medical EMS calls, 134 calls resulted in transporting by ambulance (74%) of which there were two (2) paid (71 or 55%); one (1) paid (32 or 23%); 0 paid (27 or 20%); transported by other four (4) (<1%); no transport five (5) (<1%); lift assist 15; and refusals 26. There were also 118 inspections (AIN).

9. Committee and Liaison Reports.

a. Report from Fire Department Liaison (*Perkins*)

Commissioner Perkins reported on Montville Fire Company statistical activity for October 2020 as follows: 71 total fire calls; 72 total ambulance calls; EMS training two (2) hours. The company will also participate in “Fill the Truck,” a food drive on December 5<sup>th</sup> at the Montville Shop & Shop from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. with proceeds going to the Montville Social Service Food Bank. The appearance of Santa on the fire trucks will take place as follows: Montville – December 19, rain date December 20; Mohegan – December 19; Chesterfield – December 12, rain date December 19, and Oakdale – December 20. Also, the Mohegan department will collect unwrapped toys for Social Service at the Norwich Walmart on November 28 from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

b. Report from Animal Control Liaison (*Gillette*)

The statistics of the Town and Salem Animal Control for October 2020 monthly reports were read into the record by Commissioner Gillette as follows:

Animal Control Reports

Town of Montville Animal Control Report (October 2020)

	<b>Month</b>	<b>YTD</b>
<b># of Animals Impounded</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>30</b>
<b># of Animals Sold as Pets</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>
<b># of Animals D.O.A.</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b># of Animals Euthanized</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total Complaints Investigated</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>337</b>
<b>Total Animal Bites Investigated</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total Infractions/Summons</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

Town of Salem Animal Control Report (October 2020)

	<b>Month</b>	<b>YTD</b>
<b># of Animals Impounded</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>
<b># of Animals Sold as Pets</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b># of Animals D.O.A.</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b># of Animals Euthanized</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Complaints Investigated</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Total Animal Bites Investigated</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Total Infractions/Summons</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

c. Report from Police Department Liaison (*Lenda*)

Commissioner Lenda read into the record the October 2020 monthly statistics for the Department. He also reported the selection process was still open for an officer; the ceremony for the new sergeant Travis Stumpf will take place tomorrow, November 24, and the promotion of Officer Noyes to detective. He then spoke of an email sent to the Commission from Lt. Radford regarding the Chesterfield PIO and the copy of the logo sent out with the canine wearing a police hat and the presence of a patrol car. Commissioner Lenda said Lt. Radford felt the matter should be investigated for misrepresentation and retaliation against the ACO. He then read the social media post concerning the PD. Mayor McDaniel commented he did not take the matter as being foul and said he found no policies regarding use of the PD logo nor was he aware of a trademark/copyright of the logo but said permission was required for use of the Town logo. Further, he said he would look into the issue. Chairman Yuchniuk said he wished Lt. Radford were present to provide clarity. Commissioner Lenda said he found no offense in the matter; said Chief Truex was aware of it and said Mayor McDaniel stated he would review it.

d. Report from Building Department Liaison (*Stewart*)

Commissioner Stewart reported everything in the Department was in line and that there were no other issues. He also said the meeting mentioned last month concerning the new formatting software with Mayor McDaniel had not occurred but asked that he be included once it does. The current Department statistics reported by Building Inspector Vesey are noted on the table below.

Building Department Report

2020-2021 Building Department Report												
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Permits Issued	115	76	197	111								
Open/Pending Permits (New System)	115	85	101	100								
Open Permits (Old System)	3201	3176	3166	3150								
Inspections	103	78	113	119								
Plan Reviews	37	17	96	9								
CO's	0	3	2	3								
Violation Notices		2	2	3								
Unsafe Notices		0	0	0								
Blight Identified To Date	530*	534*	534	538								
Blight Abated To Date	342	345	347*	349								

\*Corrected numbers.

10. Remarks from Fire Chiefs. -- *None*

10. Unfinished Business.

a. To consider and act on a motion regarding a noise ordinance.

Town Councilor Bunnell reported the policy for the noise ordinance was a not a dead issue. He said TARP will examine ordinances from other towns tomorrow and the Town Attorney is reviewing the current language. He asked that this item remain on the agenda.

11. New Business.

a. To consider and act on a motion to approve the 2021 Meeting Schedule.

Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Stewart to approve the 2021 Meeting Schedule. Discussion: none. Voice vote; 7-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

b. Fire Department Solutions.

Commissioner Perkins referenced the email sent to the Commission today from Union president and firefighter Tim Condon regarding a proposal for a Town of Montville fire service that he spoke of at last month's meeting. FF T. Condon commented on the proposal brought for review for the Town to formerly recognize that it has a fire department that he felt was

recognized in the Town Charter and agreements with the fire companies. He talked about benefits for grants, staffing, the Stafford Act, and reimbursement opportunities of a Town fire service in addition to shifting management models and the challenges of managing a fire service, a quote from a report commissioned by the U.S. Fire Administration. The proposal also included a report entitled “Reserving and Preserving the Future of the Volunteer Fire Service. FF Condon also spoke to “the Town having a mechanism for its own voice” via the Mayor, Fire Marshal, and the Fire Chiefs to chiefly deal with the issue of control and for a better line of communication to maintain individuals and authorities. Commissioner Perkins clarified for Chairman Yuchniuk, who had an issue with the proposal not being on the agenda and being presented just before the meeting, that the purpose this evening for the proposal was for discussion. Town Councilor Bunnell stated you need to have previous knowledge in order to discuss it and asked if the document was sent to the Town Attorney for review. He also acknowledged the proposal had merit that he had addressed with multiple people but had received no reply. Commissioner Leonard asked if the Town Attorney could attend the next meeting. Mayor McDaniel said he would meeting with the fire chiefs to discuss the proposal.

Motion by Chairman Yuchniuk; seconded by Commissioner Perkins to table agenda item for discussion at the next meeting. Discussion: none. Voice vote: 7-0; all in favor. Motion carried.

12. Remarks from the Public (non-agenda items—three-minute limit).

Chairman Yuchniuk asked three (3) times for remarks. Gary Murphy referenced the four (4) fire companies are the Town Fire Service as the 27 people who virtually attended the meeting and included 12 who were not taxpayers of the Town. He advocated for hiring a fire chief who has experience with a union and volunteers, not a public safety director, for a fulltime fire department as it has been proven it does not work and he would. G. Murphy also recognized the Town fire department for doing a fantastic job, the departments for their purchase of equipment, specifically ambulances; but said the job was not simple and a lot had to be looked into. He also spoke about the lack of written complaints received and said in his 34 years as a fire chief he had received no complaints and took issue with the timeliness of the proposal presented.

Jeff Douchette of the statistics of 55% of paid staff responding to calls asked whether the Town was compensated for paid firefighters doing EMS call. It was explained to J. Douchette that the public remarks were not a question and answer period. He spoke of the disparity of the lack of payment to the Town for their service. He also referenced a newspaper article about lessening the confusion of recruits but said the four (4) departments each have a different set of SOPs that he said should be uniform in order to ensure safety.

Steve Frischling, the Montville Public Information Officer commented on the fill the cruiser event by the Montville PD that took place on November 7 and November 8 to meals on behalf of the Montville Social Services. He said no adverts were done by the PD, so he initiated a post for it since many knew nothing about the event. He spoke about the number of social

media posts and hits regarding the event and stated the event was not advertised to mock anyone. Instead, it was done to notify the public of needful service.

Mark Batista, Chesterfield Fire Company remarked on the report he just heard about paid personnel staffing 50% of calls. He stated there are certain times when paid volunteers do not want to work with paid staff and spoke of belittling, being ignored, doing something wrong, or given the silent treatment that he said he had heard and seen. He said the relationship between paid staff and volunteers would not resolve itself overnight but said decorum was needed on both sides. He also spoke about augmentation on transport calls between both volunteers and paid staff and having to work together for a common goal.

Fire Marshal Bundy clarified points made by M. Batista regarding the 55% transports stating all paid crews represented 23%. He also addressed comments by G. Murphy regarding taxpayer costs for fire protection, 2 million, for a budget that he prepares. The Fire Marshal also mentioned ambulance reimbursement and critical service to the Town provided by 13 persons (including himself) who do not live in Town. He said there are five (5) services working together for recognition by the Town and issues that warrant attention needs to be brought to his attention and they will be addressed.

Tim Condon reiterated that the proposal was “a real proposal” and was not done at the last minute to “jam something through” but instead was meant to start a dialogue, not create malice or ill intent. He said communication needs to happen among career and volunteer staff, without subservience by either party, and urged everyone to read the Blue-Ribbon Report.

Matt Suarez spoke about “the why” of service to the Town provided by career and volunteer staff. He spoke about personality conflicts and working someone you do not like. He said you do the job because you are there and available.

Steve Rischling clarified a comment by T. Condon about the four (4) the departments working on a department of their own as a fire service was not fact. He said the intent is for recruiting and public messaging and is not a change on how the company is operating.

Gary Murphy said this issue was not divide and conquer. He spoke of the respect he had for all staff during his career as a chief, safety issues brought to his attention, and a commonality of purpose. He also commented about the issues, the hate and discontent between career and paid firefighters, and said he was perplexed about its origin. He concluded that taxpayers pay for a fire department.

13. Remarks from the Mayor

Mayor McDaniel remarked on the private PD promotional ceremony mentioned earlier by Commissioner Lenda and said TARP would take up the issue regarding the assistant blight officer position and said the Town Attorney had helped with the same. He also spoke about the ACO contract with Salem that was expiring and said another 5-year contract would be drafted. Mayor McDaniel also remarked on the fire service agreements stating there were no written agreements until a few years ago. He said multiple documents are being reviewed by the Town Attorney who has been in contact with Town Councilor Bunnell concerning the rights of the parties. He also said there was currently not a place for a fulltime fire department but said volunteers love to do what they do. Mayor McDaniel then wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

14. Remarks from Town Council Liaison.

Town Councilor Bunnell remarked the contract with the four (4) fire companies was in place until 2027. He spoke about his request over the past four (4) months for suggestions, drafts, to improve what needs to happen and said the document from T. Condon was the first response. Town Councilor Bunnell stated the complaints, bullying, ridiculing, and discouragement among the companies needed to cease and reported to the Fire Marshal, the Mayor, or the Fire Chief. He also wished all a Happy Thanksgiving with all the limitations.

15. Remarks from Commissioners.

The Commission expressed their wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving. Commissioner Moran asked why the Town does not buy the ambulances for the fire companies which Mayor McDaniel explained had to do with the provisions of the exclusive service areas. Commissioner Stewart said the five (5) fire entities in Town were waiting for a lot of details but said they all must work together. He also thanked the public for calling, G. Murphy for his dedication, and the departments for their community involvement.

16. Adjournment.

Motion by Commissioner Perkins, seconded by Commissioner Moran to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote; 7-0; all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Gloria J. Gathers  
Recording Clerk, Town of Montville

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