

Clinton Community Newsletter

August & September 2020



Highest and Best Use!

During the months of April, May and June all public hearings and Selectmen's meetings were held via ZOOM video conferencing and streamed live on Facebook because it was impossible to meet the social distancing guidelines in the existing Selectmen's Conference Room. At the same time we were looking for ways to provide safe workspaces for employees who couldn't maintain social distancing during work hours in a small cramped office. Another concern brought about by the Coronavirus pandemic was keeping town employee's movements and activities separated to provide minimum of exposure both to the public and to the employees. It soon became clear - It was time to renovate 27 Baker Street!

The large and grossly under utilized "Banquet Room" is now the Multi-Purpose Meeting Room. Reclaimed flooring, new ceiling fans and fresh paint started off the renovation. With guidance from Frank Gioffre as Facility Maintenance Supervisor, Owens Builders, a Clinton construction company built a 20' x 20' x 7" stage in front of the large eyebrow window. There are plans for carpeting the stage, new window treatments and an 18 ft. conference table that will allow Selectmen to social distance. But that's not the best of it!

During video conferencing we discovered the public enjoyed being able to view Selectmen's meeting via Facebook and several residents even participated in the ZOOM sessions. We all discovered the value of transparency in local government affairs and that live streaming provided the truth and accuracy that is healthy in the discussion of public matters. Keeping everyone on the same page became imperative. The end result is that by August 31 a state of the art audio/video system will be installed so, henceforth all meetings will be live on Facebook.

All of this renovation left the old conference room available to develop two new office spaces for the Code Enforcement Office and the Manager's Office. This, in turn, provided a space for an employee entrance in the back of the building adjacent to an employee parking lot. We have long needed more storage than the "vault" provided so storage space will also be part of the renovation in the old town manager's office space.

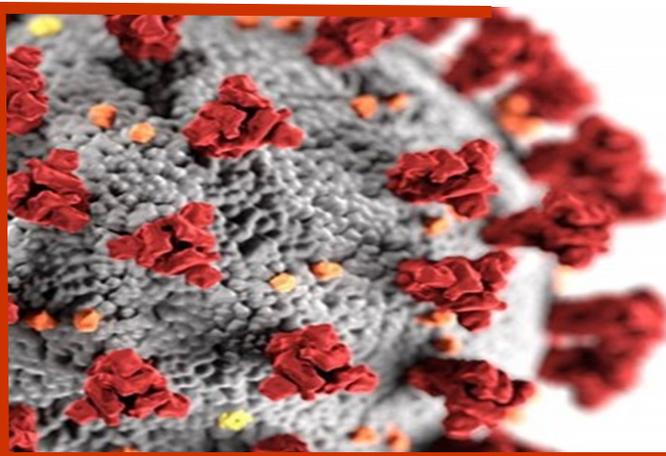
Using 27 Baker Street to it's highest and best purpose will provide Clinton many years of service without further remodeling.

A fair question that has been asked is how all of this unanticipated activity will be paid for. At the July 14th Town Meeting Election Article 29 asked for \$15,000 for Facility Maintenance and Article 35 asked for \$5,000 for Town Hall Capital Improvement. Both articles passed voter approval. All other expenses will come from the Town Hall Maintenance budget.

RECYCLING EXCHANGE SHOP

Enthusiasm continues to run high for the "Shop". Lots of new items have come in since the June 3rd opening!

Inventory turns over quickly so don't miss out—visit often!



CORONAVIRUS PROTOCOL FOR CLINTON TOWN HALL

(Until Further Notice)

No one is happy about the operational changes Coronavirus has forced management to implement in the name of public health safety at the Clinton Town Office - least of all, staff members! We liked the open door policy where everyone was welcomed with their friends, children or pets.

However, with the Coronavirus being so virulent and infectious we immediately took steps to protect the public and our staff. Most residents understand and appreciate our safety measures, while others are annoyed and impatient with the whole process. Nonetheless, we will continue to practice the protocol until there is a vaccine or until science tells us the pandemic has passed, which is most likely a year or two away.

- **NO CHILDREN UNDER 16 YEARS OLD AND NO PETS** - We understand that it is a huge inconvenience for parents with small children not to be able to bring the children with them while doing town business and we are sorry for that. However, to maximize safety for the children, the public and employees we will continue to hold this standard. Because scientific reports are not clear whether or not animals could be carriers of the virus we decided to err on the side of caution and not allow them into the town office.
- **NO FRIENDS OR COMPANIONS** - To minimize the exposure to residents or from residents we are limiting the number of people at the counter—one person per transaction. Although it was common for couples or friends to come into the town office that can no longer be allowed safely. We insist on keeping the number of residents in the town office at any given time to a minimum, therefore, entry is allowed only to those essential to the transactions.
- **SOCIAL DISTANCING AND FACE MASKS** - Residents will notice large social distancing markers on the floor. All residents are required to maintain that 6 ft. distance while waiting their turn to conduct town business at the counter and are NOT required to wear a face mask. Residents who refuse to maintain social distance or insist on loitering in the lobby will immediately be asked to leave the town office. For public meetings in the new Selectmen's Meeting Room chairs are arranged 6 feet apart to accommodate as many members of the public as possible which allows occupants of the meeting to be unmasked. However, when the number of occupants exceed the chair arrangement and social distancing can no longer be maintained everyone in the meeting is required to wear a face mask. (For liability reasons the town does NOT provide face masks for the public.)
- **NEW FOOT TRAFFIC PATTERNS** - Residents will continue to use the main entrance for entry into the town office but are directed to exit through the side door. This traffic pattern prevents residents of turning back onto those waiting in line thereby violating social distancing. Also, those visiting the Code Enforcement Office should NOT use the main entrance. The Code Enforcement Office now has its own entrance through the side door of the town hall. This separation of foot traffic provides more safety and protection to the public by making it unnecessary to go through the lobby to see the Code Enforcement Officer.
- **RESTROOMS AND WATER FOUNTAIN** - It is unfortunate but to maximize safety for residents the restrooms are CLOSED and the water fountain has been removed.
- **PLEXIGLASS BARRIER AND FREQUENT SANITIZATION** - Employees inside the town office and behind the counter are not required to wear masks because of the plexiglass barrier and because only authorized personnel is allowed entry into the "safe zone" for employees. However, the clerks frequently wash their hands and sanitize both sides of the counter and the surrounding surfaces to maximize public safety.

Absentee Ballots Available - October 5th

APPLICATIONS for Absentee Ballots for the November 3rd election are available. Upon request an application can be mailed to your home address or you can fill one out and leave it on file at the Town Clerk's office.

The Town Clerk will verify that you are a registered voter in Clinton and on Monday, October 5th a ballot will be mailed to your home address.

Clinton
ME

Town Clerk
Yania Quirion
426-8321



Save the Dates for the Old Mill Park!

Big E Live

August 12th

6:30pm-8:00pm

The Bobcats

August 26th

6:30PM-8:00PM

Bring the kids and a chair and
Social Distance in the great outdoors!

The current Road Paving Budget for **Spring 2021** in the amount of \$200,000 was approved by the voters and will be spent to pave the last part of the Horseback Road, Dixon Road, Beaudoin Road and Pishon Ferry Road.

Article 32 was also approved by the voters and the \$11,000 project has been completed. Guardrails have been re-installed on the Horseback Road per the MDOT's instruction regarding bridge safety.

Other work planned for road improvement before snowfall includes serious tree removal from the right-of-way of the Peavy Road and repairing the erosion and ditching problem on that road. This project is now in progress.

Recently the Comprehensive Planning Committee provided a draft copy of the Ten Year Paving Schedule as part of their Transportation Plan. Of course the schedule still needs the blessing of the Selectmen and approval of the voters before it becomes a living document that will determine paving budgets in the future.



Selectmen's meeting

Tuesday, August 11th

Tuesday, August 25th

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**Tuesday, September 8th**

**Tuesday, September 22nd**

**6:30 p.m.**



## ROAD REPORT

Occasionally residents express the need to reach Selectmen directly to discuss town affairs.

Selectmen's phone numbers are listed below.

Jeffrey Towne - 426-8809  
Ronnie Irving - 426-8130  
Geraldine Dixon - 902-0496  
Stephen Hatch - 680-8169  
Brian Bickford - 446-5653



## **"What you Can When you Can" Bottle Drive**

Please support the effort to show appreciation for our First Responders by dropping your bottles and cans in the big blue collection box outside the Town Hall and at the Transfer Station.

All proceeds will go towards an event to be held later in the year to honor First Responders and their families.



## **BE PART OF THE FUN!**

Parks & Recreation is looking for  
Volunteers to help plan Halloween,  
Thanksgiving and Christmas Events  
Call 426-8511



## **NEW SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL ORDINANCE**

On July 14th voter's approved the new Solid Waste Disposal Ordinance that brings Clinton's operating practices into compliance with our Department of Environmental Protection license and improves on-site methods of handling and disposing all solid waste material from two rural but vibrant communities with a combined population approaching 6,000.

There is only one significant change in the FEE SCHEDULE that residents should be aware of and that is the cost per ton for Demo Debris. Effective July 15th the cost per ton is \$106 instead of \$96.

Also, hours of operation has changed by 15 minutes per day. To avoid overtime cost management opted to CLOSE THE GATE at 4:45 pm each day to give staff time to close the facility for the night.

**PLEASE BE THOUGHTFUL AND PLAN YOUR VISIT TO ACCOMMODATE THIS CHANGE TO AVOID BEING TURNED AWAY AT THE GATE.**

The Transfer Station Staff strives to provide friendly and informative customer service to our residential and commercial residents and are willing to answer questions about services at the Transfer Station.

**DAVID WOODS, DIRECTOR - 426-8187**

**Transfer Station**



**INFO**

WE ARE  
**CLOSED**

**Labor Day - Monday, Sept. 7th**

**Patriot's Day - Friday, Sept. 11th**

## **FALL CLEANUP**

Scheduled for  
**Saturday, September 26th**

Check out the new FEE SCHEDULE  
on the website - [Clinton-me.us](http://Clinton-me.us)

Please separate all your reusable  
items for the  
**Recycling Exchange Shop**



## **2020 PROPERTY TAX BILLS IN YOUR MAILBOX BY AUGUST 31st**

At their July 28th meeting the Clinton Board of Selectmen committed Property Tax for FY 2020-2021 with the **first installment being due Thursday, October 1st.** The Board opted to use \$288,000 from the Undesignated Fund Balance to stabilize the mill rate at \$19.50 which, regrettably, is a 50 cent increase over last year. The net assessment, meaning that all tax relief revenues have been applied, for commitment is \$3,616,418. which includes \$2,392,653 for MSAD #49 and \$232,370 for Kennebec County Tax.

## PROPERTY REVALUATION PROCESS FOR FY 2020-2021

At the July 14th Town Meeting Election voters approved the \$200,000 transfer from Undesignated Fund Balance for the purpose of performing a long overdue revaluation of property tax. At the July 28th Selectmen's meeting the Board signed a contract with Maine Assessment & Appraisal, Inc. to perform revaluation services during the next twelve months.

Garnett Robinson understands that residents have a lot of questions about how the revaluation and home visits will work to restore equity in Clinton's tax system so he has planned an **Instructional Meeting for Tuesday, August 25th** as part of the Selectmen's regularly schedule meeting to answer questions and explain how his employees will lawfully visit each property. Maine Assessing law provides broad powers for assessors to access each property to accurately calculate valuation. Many homeowners resent the assessor's presence and refuse to cooperate. Garnett will explain how uncooperative behavior ultimately harms the home's valuation and how the law allows an assessor to maximize the valuation formula thereby increasing the homeowner's taxes.

Garnett is eager to answer all questions and put resident fears to rest and to explain how his employees will work in the community during the next year. Please plan to attend the August 25th meeting and get accurate information about how the revaluation process affects you.

Make an appointment to  
have your home  
assessment visit on your  
schedule!

Call Garnett Robinson  
Clinton's Assessor  
426-8078

**“Smart” Benefits of LED Street Lighting** – Given voters approved \$39,136 for the conversion of 107 street lights from sodium lamps to energy saving LED bulbs perhaps we ought to explain why this project is a smart choice.

The foremost reason is that LED lighting is 40 to 60% more efficient than traditional lighting. Typically, Clinton spends \$18,000 for street lights but if we can manage a “middle of the road” with 50% savings that means the Town Services Budget will show a permanent decrease \$9,000.

Given the actual conversion contract with Affinity for the 107 street lights is \$39,136 (*\$365 per pole*) it is easy to see that after four years the town will realize the return on its investment and for many years to come the LED's will be saving money!

Towns and cities across the nation have recognized that LED street lighting remains one of the most visible energy efficiency projects to undertake that benefits the entire community long-term.

The new Code Enforcement Office now has its own entrance so residents no longer have to go to the counter to request a meeting with Frank Gioffre, Clinton's CEO.

The side entrance facing the parking lot will soon have signage directing residents to access the CEO office for building permits, inspections and other CEO Services.



**CALL FRANK AT 509-6719**  
To schedule an appointment



## BIDS FOR SURPLUS EQUIPMENT

Selectmen have authorized the disposal of two items of surplus equipment the 1999 New Holland Backhoe and the 2015 Ford Police SUV. The minimum bid for the backhoe is \$8,000 and for the police cruiser \$5,000.

Vehicle information and bid instructions are available on the Town's website at [www.Clinton-me.us](http://www.Clinton-me.us) or at the Town Office, 27 Baker Street.

Bids are due at the Town Office by 3:00 pm - Tuesday, August 25th and will be reviewed by Selectmen that evening.

