It is most unfortunate but true that the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way we do business at the town office indefinitely. In an effort to keep the public and employees safe we are implementing the following practices.

Business at the town office for the month of June will be very hectic as residents catch-up registrations and licensing for March, April, May and June. To accommodate the public’s need we have scheduled ten days of extended hours 8:00 am to 6:00 pm and we have scheduled Saturday hours for June 6th and June 20th from 9 am to 3 pm.

CDC social distancing guidelines will be followed by creating a “Waiting Room” for the 20 residents that will be in the building at one time. Residents should plan to come alone and expect a wait time. Also, no children or pets will be allowed in the building.

Masks and gloves can be worn at the residents discretion. Most important is for residents to prepare for their visit by bringing ALL of the necessary documents, i.e., bill of sale, title, insurance, old registration or license. Only three transactions per resident until we get caught up.

We understand how inconvenient and frustrating these measures can be but our main goal is to keep everyone safe!

The Assessor’s Office is now open to the public by appointment.

Please call 426-8511 to schedule a Wednesday (9 to 3) appointment with Garnett or his associate.

If you have a question about your tax assessment Garnett is the one with the answer!
A big “Thank You” goes out to the Clinton Food Bank for providing Emergency Food Grants for Clinton residents during the Covid-19 pandemic. During April and May the town office staff assisted the Food Bank with distribution of one hundred $25 gift cards to Tradewinds Market!

These grants not only helped needy families but also supported a local business during a very difficult time for both. For information regarding Food Bank operations for June please contact Pam Nuite at 861-2984 with three months of vehicle registrations to catch up on the town office staff will no longer be able to continue the distribution of gift cards.

Did You Know……you can also renew your Hunting & Fishing license as well as your Snowmobile or ATV registration on-line at Maine.gov? It’s easy! Just follow the prompts. No visit to the Town Office necessary!

Did You Know……you can renew your motor vehicle registrations on-line at Maine.gov? For your convenience Clinton participates in the Bureau of Motor Vehicle's “Rapid Renewal” program. Just search Maine.gov for “Rapid Renewal” and follow the prompts. No visit to the Town Office necessary!

There are two positions on the Board of Selectmen up for re-election at the July 14th Town Meeting Election.

* One 3-Year Term
  ♦ Edward Blanchard (Incumbent)
  ♦ Geraldine Dixon

* One 2-Year Term position
  ♦ Brian Bickford (Incumbent)

* Brown Memorial Library Director
* MSAD # 49 School Board Member

By order of the Governor and the Secretary of State Absentee Ballots cannot be made available to voters until Monday, June 15th 30 days before the July 14th State Referendum Election and the Clinton Town Meeting Election. Call 426-8521 to request an application for an absentee ballot.

A big “Thank You” goes out to the Clinton Food Bank for providing Emergency Food Grants for Clinton residents during the Covid-19 pandemic.

During April and May the town office staff assisted the Food Bank with distribution of one hundred $25 gift cards to Tradewinds Market!

If you would like to show your appreciation for this project to beautify our town in a meaningful and patriotic way please donate by calling the Town Office at 426-8511 and Judy Irving, Chairman of the Flag Committee will contact you to make arrangements.

Good News! The State of Maine has increased the Homestead Exemption for the new tax year from $20,000 to $25,000! Bad News! Homesteaders will NOT be allowed to use all of their exemption because the State de-valued Clinton to 80% for lack of a Revaluation. Homesteaders will be required to pay tax on $5,000 they otherwise would NOT pay.

For information regarding Food Bank operations for June please contact Pam Nuite at 861-2984 With three months of vehicle registrations to catch up on the town office staff will no longer be able to continue the distribution of gift cards.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING SCHEDULE
Tuesday, June 9th ~~~ Tuesday, June 23rd
Thursday, July 16th ~~~ Tuesday, July 28th
The Clinton Municipal Budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 is available to the public on the town’s website! A budget booklet and/or a copy of the town meeting warrant will be mailed to residents upon request. The new year budget shows an increase of $230,711 (8.67%) which is largely made up of:

- $50,000 additional dollars for road paving;
- an unanticipated $37,272 increase in the public safety dispatching contract with the City of Waterville;
- a $26,979 increase in Transfer Station disposal cost;
- a $19,856 increase in Workers Comp and Property insurance.

These four items alone account for 57% of the increase. Other contractual obligations and employee benefits required by the town’s personnel policy account for the remaining increase.

However, when analyzing the expense budget one must not forget the tax relief that comes from the Revenue budget. This year the projected revenue that comes from over-the-counter transactions is $1,069,183 an increase over last year of $228,828 (27%). State revenues are projected at $662,077 but the impact of the pandemic will most likely cause the State revenues to underperform from the amounts projected. The net amount to be raised by taxes for municipal services - $1,151,838.

Intergovernmental Assessments - In addition to the taxes raised for municipal services there are three assessments that also raised by taxation: MSAD #49 - $2,205,301; Kennebec County Tax - $232,371 and Overlay, which is up to 5% of the total commitment. Overlay acts as an emergency contingency account.

Selectmen recently approved a ban on parking on the Railroad Street sidewalks and paid $33,700 to resurface 1,400 feet of that pedestrian walkway. In total the town has invested more than $60,000 for that pedestrian walkway, therefore, we strongly encourage residents and heavy delivery trucks to protect that investment.

The Code Enforcement Office is open for business by appointment only - NO WALK-INS
If you are in need of a building permit, a plumbing permit, a sub-surface waste system inspection, you MUST call 509-6719 or email fgioffre@clinton-me.gov.
The Brown Memorial Library is YOUR hometown library, and it is a great place to spend a quiet hour or two with a good book. We have many interesting books and large selection of movie DVDs you can check out to enjoy at home.

Please stay tuned for our new Children’s Reading Program!

It will be a challenge to create a program in the post pandemic environment but we will come up with something GREAT soon!

NEW HOURS
MON - 10 to 5
TUES - 10 to 7
WED - 10 to 4
THURS - 12 to 8
FRI - Closed
SAT - 9 to 1

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ONE OF OUR MOST VALUABLE VOLUNTEERS!
Marydee Mock takes care that the Town Office Building has beautiful flower pots and a roadside garden.

July 11 Deadline forExpired Vehicle Registrations
If you are driving on plates that expired in March, April or May because the Bureau of Motor Vehicles was shut down by order of the Governor you have until Thursday, July 11th to renew your registration. This deadline was set by the Secretary of State and agreed to by the Town Manager of Clinton to give residents as much time as possible to catch up. After this deadline you can be stopped by law enforcement for driving an unregistered vehicle. We encourage you not to procrastinate because the lines will be long at the town office.

Informational Public Hearing on the Budget
Although the Board of Selectmen held a Public Hearing on the budget on Wednesday, April 15th to satisfy the requirements of the Town Charter, they will also hold another public hearing to satisfy Governor Mills Executive Order establishing Tuesday, July 14th as Clinton’s Town Meeting Election date.

Informational Public Hearing on Town Meeting Warrant
Tuesday, June 30th
Banquet Room - 6:30 pm

Mark Your Calendar
Don’t sit on the sidelines...Get involved!
RECYCLING EXCHANGE SHOP is OPEN for the Season!!

Wednesday, June 3rd
The Recycling Exchange Shop Will be open for the Season!

During the next year the Town of Clinton intends to continue its effort to divert reusable and recyclable items from its waste stream by providing meaningful and realistic education for the public regarding all types of recycling and by dramatically improving the Recycling Exchange Shop.

Of course, it all depends on whether the town is a recipient of the 2020 DEP’s Solid Waste Diversion Grant to dramatically improve and utilize the Recycling Exchange Shop.

It’s unfortunate the Covid-19 pandemic has made it necessary to practice social distancing at the Shop which means only two shoppers at a time, but we’ll keep the Shop open as many hours as possible through the Summer and Fall.

I Love Recycling AND Shopping!

Officer Wrex with his handler
Officer James Leathers
Wrex is specifically trained to be a drug detection officer

KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED!

Spring 2020 Road Paving
Season is in full swing! The Horseback is getting another mile of pavement, and Hillcrest Drive and Cindy Blodgett Drive are being repaved by Pike Industries for sum of $156,434 and we expect the project to be finished by June 30, 2020.

Spring 2021 Road Paving will go before the voters on July 14th. If Town Meeting Warrant Article 21 for $200,000 passes the Dixon Road, Beaudoin Road, Pishon Ferry Road and another mile of the Horseback Road will be paved before June 30, 2021.

STAY SAFE!
Possibly no other article on a Clinton Town Meeting Warrant has been so hotly contested as this one. And, possibly no other article has had a more negative impact on the financial health and well being of the Town of Clinton for the lack of being passed. The tug of war over this matter between Selectmen and voters must be understood to enable a real solution to be achieved on July 14th.

Selectmen are duty bound by two powerful rules of law, i.e., the Maine Constitution and M.R.S. Title 30-A, both of which mandate the town to perform a Revaluation of real estate property within its borders every 10 years. It is the law’s attempt to protect and maintain tax equity for the residents of each town. In Clinton’s case several Select Boards during the last 15 years have failed to abide by the State’s mandate which caused property valuations to deteriorate and erode to such a degree the State of Maine is now reacting. This year the State recognized the lack of a Revaluation as an irresponsible practice on the town’s part and responded by reducing the town’s valuation to 80%.

On the other hand voters have effectively tied Selectmen’s hands by continuing to reject any attempt to acquire a property Revaluation largely out of fear their tax bill would increase. Unfortunately, the very thing the voters fear is the thing that has come upon them! It is precisely the lack of a Revaluation that causes voters to pay more taxes in 2020 than they would otherwise. Because voter’s are not intimately aware of how the town’s diminishing State valuation affects their tax bill they continue to reject a Revaluation at their own peril.

Voter’s have also misunderstood the question asked on Article 33. Many believe the $200,000 cost for a Revaluation would affect the mil rate which would cause their tax bill to increase so if they voted the article down. That has never been the case. The $200,000 has been sitting in the town’s savings account (Undesignated Surplus) waiting to be transferred to the Revaluation reserve account. The question is simply to give Selectmen permission to move the $200,000 out of savings and into a reserve account so it can be spent for Revaluation services.

Let’s talk about how the lack of a Revaluation causes YOUR tax bill to increase. If you are one of Clinton’s 808 Homestead Exemption accounts then the State of Maine has given you a $25,000 reduction in your taxable value as tax relief. The problem is the State devalued Clinton to 80% this year so you will be allowed only a $20,000 reduction in taxable value, meaning you will pay taxes on the other $5,000. To add insult to injury the state will reduce it’s reimbursement to the town for those Homestead Exemptions by 20%. So, you pay more and the town gets less - and that is only one state revenue formula!

The State’s formula for calculating town revenues is now 20% less than it was a year ago because of the lack of a Revaluation and the State will continue to devalue the town until there is a Revaluation. So, this situation is not going to go away - it’s going to get exponentially worse. As a result all State revenues, i.e., Maine Revenue Sharing, Tree Growth, Local Road stipend, Personal Property (BETE) Reimbursement and Veterans Exemption reimbursement will be reduced accordingly causing a shortfall in tax relief from state revenues.

Do the math! Whatever the shortfall is worth in dollars that amount is spread to the town’s 2,050 tax bills according to their taxable value - a taxable value that has not been updated for 15 years! Turns out nobody is paying their fair share because there is no way to determine "fair share" without a Revaluation. The lack of a Revaluation continues to create an untenable and inequitable (unfair and unjust) tax situation for everyone.

PLEASE VOTE “YES” ON ARTICLE 33