

Town of Clinton  
54 East Main Street  
Clinton, Connecticut 06413

**Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, January 22, 2024  
Town Hall Green Room**

In Attendance: Chairman Carrie Allen, Chris Passante, Michael Shove, Brian Roccapiore, Chris Aniskovich, Dennis Donovan  
Absent: Hank Teskey  
Also participated: Michelle Benivegna, Town Manager

C. Allen called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Dennis Donovan led the council in the pledge of allegiance.

**VISITORS**

Virginia Wohlke gave a brief history and spoke about the importance of saving the Commerce Street Gazebo.

Eric Bergman discussed the American Exchange Project, a fully funded cultural exchange program available to all high school seniors. From July 2 to July 9, 2025, Clinton will host 10 students from across the country. Council members are encouraged to get involved, and the program is seeking families willing to host a student from another region in their homes for the week.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 08, 2024**

C. Passante made a motion, seconded by B. Roccapiore to approve the minutes from January 08, 2024. The motion was unanimously approved with one abstention from C. Aniskovich.

**APPOINTMENTS**

C. Aniskovich made a motion, seconded by M. Shove to appoint Jeremiah Dunn (R) to the Police Commission for a term until November 2025. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Aniskovich made a motion, seconded by D. Donovan to appoint Bryan Pellegrini (R) to Planning & Zoning alternate seat until November 2027. The motion was unanimously approved.

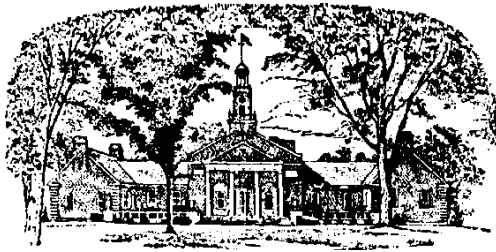
C. Aniskovich made a motion, seconded by D. Donovan to appoint Matthew Beauvais to the Sustainability Committee for a term until June 30, 2026. The motion was unanimously approved.

D. Donovan made a motion, seconded by M. Shove to appoint Marc Palmieri (R) to the Economic Development Commission for a term until June 30, 2026. The motion was unanimously approved.

B. Roccapiore made a motion, seconded by C. Passante to appoint Marc Palmieri (R) to the Beautification Committee for a term until June 30, 2026. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Aniskovich made a motion, seconded by M. Shove to appoint David Carroll (R) to the Fair Rent Commission for a term until June 30, 2028. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Passante made a motion, seconded by D. Donovan to appoint Mary Saunders (R) to the Human Services Advisory Board for a term until June 30, 2027. The motion was unanimously approved.



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D. Donovan made a motion, seconded by C. Passante to appoint Joseph Alves (R) to the Fair Rent Commission for a term until June 30, 2026. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Passante made a motion, seconded by D. Donovan to appoint Barbara Corcoran to the Human Rights Committee for a term until July 1, 2027. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **DISCUSSION AND POLICY ON FILLING OF VACANCIES ON ELECTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

M. Benivegna addressed recent questions about how seats are filled for elected boards and commissions. The Town Council approved a policy in March 2020, with an amendment in July 2020. To clarify the current policy, Benivegna consulted with the town attorney. The council reviewed the proposed amendments to the current policy. These changes do not alter past practices. C. Passante made a motion, seconded by B. Roccapriore to approve the additional language to the current policy. The motion passed unanimously.

### **COMMERCE STREET GAZEBO**

The town has received a letter from an attorney representing the owner of 11 Commerce Street regarding the gazebo that's located on the southwesterly corner of their property. The gazebo is in poor condition and the property owner is concerned about the potential liability associated with the gazebo. The town is responsible to maintain the gazebo. The building official has inspected the gazebo and determined that the current structure is unsafe due to termite and weather damage. In 2023, the council considered using ARPA funds to repair the gazebo, with the estimated cost at the time being \$45,000. However, the council ultimately decided not to fund the project with ARPA funds. Benivegna recommended taking down the gazebo for liability reasons. There was some discussion on raising money and moving the gazebo to town property, but concerns were raised on the allotted time necessary to raise enough funds. The council agreed to have Benivegna contact the property owner and have the structure evaluated by the next meeting.

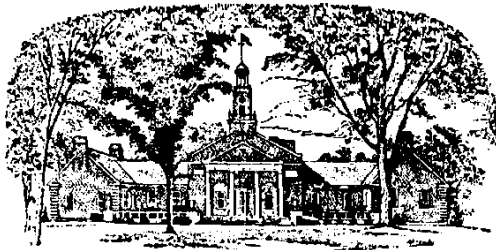
### **FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Robert Tait, Finance Director, reviewed his monthly financial report with the council.

### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

M. Benivegna reported on the following topics.

- Budget Process: Department requests have been submitted, and the budget will be presented to the council in February.
- Town Council will have a workshop in the spring to discuss Rocky Ledge and downtown. Questions are due to back by Friday.
- Odali Rodriguez has been hired as the new Outreach Coordinator. She started this week.
- MIRA will officially dissolve on June 30, 2025. Clinton and 10 other towns currently rely on MIRA for waste disposal. The towns are collaborating to increase tonnage, aiming to secure better rates. Updates on the process will be provided to the council as it progresses.



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- The Plan of Conservation and Development survey has been created to gather insights from the Clinton community on priorities for the next ten years, as well as to identify the town's strengths and challenges. The council is encouraged to promote the survey widely to maximize community participation.
- Applications are now being accepted for the 2025 Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP). M. Benivegna is collaborating with A. Piersall to identify shovel-ready projects. The completed application and authorizing resolution will be presented for approval on the February 5th agenda.
- The town's insurance has denied the claim for the water leak that occurred in the Town Manager's office copy room. A line-item transfer was approved at the last meeting to cover the repair costs.
- The council has scheduled a workshop with the town attorney on Thursday, January 30th, at 6:00 PM to go over Roberts Rules and council roles.
- The Town Planner and Zoning Enforcement Officer will provide a department update at the next council meeting.

#### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

C. Allen inquired about updates from the legislator regarding educational funding.

#### **COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

D. Donovan asked about the status of the new Morgan School reimbursement from the state. B. Tait stated that state auditors are scheduled to visit in February.

#### **TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS**

D. Donovan reported on this week's Police Commission meeting and B. Roccapriore reported on Planning & Zoning.

#### **ADJOURN**

C. Passante made a motion, seconded by M. Shove and unanimously adjourned the meeting 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Schettino  
Executive Assistant  
Town Manager

## **Town Council Policy Governing Filling of Vacancies on Boards and Commissions**

### **I. Definitions:**

The following words and phrases are defined herein, as indicated below. Other words and phrases within this policy are defined by legal authority or shall operate by their natural meaning.

“Appointive Board and Commissions” means board and commission within the Town of Clinton whereby membership initially commences by way of appointment, regardless of how membership vacancies are to be filled by the Charter or other governing law.

“Elected Offices” means offices, including boards and commissions within the Town of Clinton whereby membership initially commences by way of election, regardless of how membership vacancies are prescribed to be filled by the Charter or other governing law.

### **II. Policy regarding Vacancies on Appointive Boards and Commissions**

The process to fill vacancies that occur on Appointive Board and Commissions that are filled by the Town Council are partially described in the Town of Clinton Charter. See Section 2-3 (minority representation), and 7-2C & 7-2D (limitations on the number of boards one can serve on).

The policy is meant to more fully describe the appointment process that will be used by the Town Council that are not described in the Charter.

1. Section 7-2B of the Charter requires the Town Council to fill vacancies to Appointive Board and Commissions within 60 days.
2. Resignations are to be filed with the Town Clerk.
3. The Town Clerk will acknowledge the resignation by forwarding the resignation by email to the Chairs of the respective political parties (Democrat, Green, Republican) alerting them to the vacancy. A notice of vacancy will also be posted on the Town's website and Facebook page to alert other resident electors (unaffiliated, Independents, unendorsed major party candidates, etc...) of such a vacancy.
4. The Town Council shall take no action to fill the vacancies until 14 days have passed since the resignation was distributed by the Town Clerk.
5. During the 14-day period, the names of potential candidates should be advanced from political parties. The names of interested residents that are electors (unaffiliated, Independents, unendorsed major party candidates, etc...) should be submitted through the Town's website.
6. After the conclusion of the initial 14-day period, the Town Council will be provided with the political party supplied background information as well as the application information collected through the Town's website for other interested individuals (unaffiliated, Independents, unendorsed major party candidates, etc...), that are on file at the time.
7. The Town Council shall conduct interviews of candidates in advance of making an appointment at the future Town Council Meeting.

8. Appointments shall be placed on the next Town Council agenda for action after the interview process is completed and before the 60-day appointment process required by the Town Charter.

### **III. Policy Regarding Elected Offices**

Town Council appointments to Elected Offices are described in in Section 3-2 of the Town Charter. Specifically,

1. Town Council shall fill, by appointment, a vacancy in any and all elective Town offices, including the Board of Education, within 30 days from filing of the vacancy.
2. The appointment shall be for the balance of the unexpired portion of the term.
3. Where the party vacating an office was elected as a member of a political party, such vacancy shall be filled by appointment of a member of the same political party. If that is the case, i.e., If such vacancy must be filled by the same political party, the Town Committee for the applicable political party pertaining to the vacancy shall advance the name of one candidate for said vacancy to the Town Council for appointment, if appropriate, within the time limitations prescribed by law. The Town Council shall vote on and appoint said individual if sufficient votes are achieved.

Town Council Adopted: January 22, 2025

