

Town of Clinton
54 East Main Street
Clinton, Connecticut 06413

**Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 5, 2025
Town Hall Green Room**

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

C. Allen called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM. Dennis Donovan led the council in the pledge of allegiance.

VISITORS

No visitors wished to speak at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 22, 2025

B. Roccapiore made a motion, seconded by M. Shove to approve the minutes from January 22, 2025. The motion was unanimously approved with one abstention from H. Teskey.

APPOINTMENTS

D. Donovan made a motion, seconded by C. Aniskovich, to appoint Richard Way (R) to the Local Veterans Advisory Committee for a term until 6/30/25. The motion was unanimously approved.

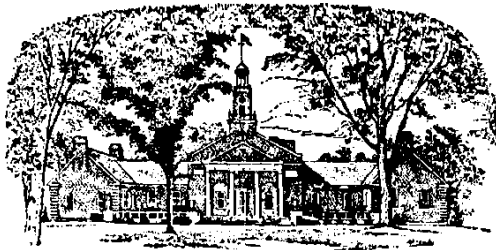
CLINTON PLACEMAKERS EXEMPTION REQUEST TO ORDINANCE 194-4A AND 194-5A, MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION FEBRUARY 28TH

Clinton Placemakers is hosting a Mardi Gras event at Town Hall on February 28th and is seeking council approval for attendees to bring alcohol to the event. The town has contacted its insurance company to explore ways to minimize liability. The council agreed to approve their request and provide feedback to Clinton Placemakers if any additional provisions are required. C. Aniskovich made a motion, seconded by H. Teskey to approve the Clinton Placemakers exemption request to ordinance 194-4A and 914-5A for the Mardi Gras Celebration on February 28th at Town Hall. The motion was unanimously approved.

B. Roccapiore made a motion, seconded by D. Donovan, to amend the agenda by adding Assessor update to item #6. The motion was unanimously approved.

TOWN PLANNER AND ASSESSOR UPDATE

Abby Piersall, Town Planner, and Donna Sempey, Assessor, provided an update on recent activities and developments within the Land Use and Assessor Departments. The Assessor's Office recently completed the 2024 Grand List, which reflects a slight decrease. The decline in motor vehicle values is due to changes in evaluation methods, while personal property values increased, and real estate showed a slight decrease. D. Sempey also reviewed changes to the veterans' exemption and its impact on the overall Grand List.



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STEAP GRANT APPLICATION

The Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) has announced a new round of funding for 2025. The Program is managed by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and was last available in 2023. Clinton's last STEAP grant was awarded to support the Façade Improvement Program for commercial properties. Since that time, the potential funding awards have been raised from \$500,000 to \$1million.

STEAP covers 80% of the project costs to fund capital projects in eligible communities. This is a reimbursable grant; therefore the Town is required to fund the project in its entirety and seek reimbursement for 80% of eligible costs. The deadline to apply is February 20th.

Eligible projects include capital investments, including new construction of public buildings. Priority is given to projects that are "shovel-ready" and can proceed to implementation upon award. Planning and engineering costs are not eligible. In reviewing potential projects that are in Clinton's capital projects pipeline against the grant criteria, it was determined that a new building at Public Works is the most "ready" project at this time. A new building would serve to store vehicles and equipment that are currently stored outside. A portion of the building would be dedicated to storage and working space for Emergency Management Operations. Funding for this building is currently included in the FY26 Capital Budget request.

The Director of Public Works has estimated the total project cost to be \$679,500. If the STEAP grant is awarded the Town's final cost would be \$135,900 for this new facility. C. Aniskovich made a motion, seconded by B. Roccapriore to endorse the construction of a new building at the Public Works facility at 117 Nod Road, and authorize the Town Manager to submit a STEAP grant application on behalf of the Town of Clinton to seek funding for the project and to acknowledge that the Town is required to fund the project in its entirety and seek reimbursement for 80% of eligible costs. The motion was unanimously approved.

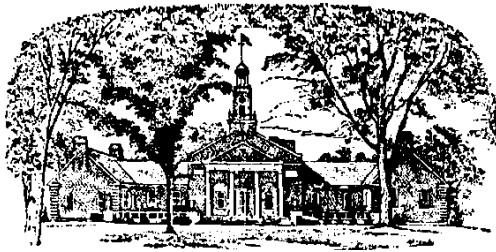
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REVISED MASTER MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The Connecticut Department of Transportation has sent a revised Master Municipal Agreement for Construction Projects. This is a revised ten-year agreement intended to replace the previous agreement which was executed in March 2015. The previous agreement also had some minor grammatical and referencing errors that needed to be rectified. C. Passante made a motion, seconded by B. Roccapriore, to hereby authorize the Town Manager, Michelle Benivegna, to sign the agreement entitled Master Municipal Agreement for Construction Projects. The motion is unanimously approved.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

M. Benivegna reported on the following topics.

- Hammock Bridge Repairs/ Bid update:
A meeting was held with potential contractors at the bid walk with DEEP and Ducks Unlimited to kick off the bridge and tide gate construction. The bids will be received in the coming months and anticipated construction will start in April. The project will take about 18 months to complete. The road will be closed during this time. Ample signage, detour notices and information will be throughout the town.
- Recognition of DPW employees
A copy of the email is attached to the minutes.



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- Gazebo update
Last week Public Works attempted to move the Commerce Street Gazebo to Public Works. The gazebo was safely moved off the property but once it was removed from the flatbed truck the gazebo crumbled. Public Works was able to salvage some of the pieces.
- Executive orders and potential impact on the town:
The recent flurry of executive orders coming out of Washington may have implications for the Town of Clinton, particularly in areas such as funding, regulatory requirements, and policy changes. We are monitoring any potential impacts on our town operations and budget.
- Workshop follow-up
Last week the council held a workshop with the attorneys to review Robert's Rules of Order, ethical principles of governance and potential conflicts of interest. One of the key takeaways was the significant liability exposure created when individuals hold "dual roles." It was made clear that this practice is not best practice and could pose legal and ethical challenges for the town. Additionally, the attorneys pointed out that Clinton's current Code of Ethics does not accurately reflect our current form of government, as it still references a "Board of Selectmen." Formal ethics training will be provided to all the regulatory boards and commissions.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The council has their first budget meeting scheduled for February 20th. At that meeting, the Town Manager and Superintendent of School will present their budget.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

B. Roccapiore spoke about the executive orders and their impact on transgender youth, urging the council to make a statement in support of them. The council asked the Town Manager to draft for their view and consideration.

The council had a discussion on last week's workshop regarding the liability exposure to the town when individuals hold more than one role. The council agreed they will lead by example and correct anything that appears to be a conflict.

TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

C. Passante reported on this week's Police Pension Committee meeting.

ADJOURN

C. Passante made a motion, seconded by M. Shove and unanimously adjourned the meeting 9:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Schettino
Executive Assistant
Town Manager

From: Dunn, Debora
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 11:15 AM
To: Michelle Benivegna
Subject: Department of Public Works Employees

Good morning Ms. Benivegna,

Welcome to Clinton as the Town Manager. I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize two of your Department of Public Works employees that recently helped me in a situation. I was driving on Route 81, headed into the town of Clinton when I got a flat tire. I pulled into the area that houses the garage that is owned by the Department of Public Works of Clinton. I met Casey Bell and Jay Ruff who immediately came to my rescue. They took time out of their day to change my tire, and even went above and beyond to ensure my spare had sufficient air to get me safely into town to a garage. I cannot tell you how appreciative I was, as well as fortunate it happened there.

As a manager in a business myself, I think it is of great importance to take time out to recognize our employees for their dedication to their hard work, but also to especially recognize them in those times that they go above and beyond. I feel far too often things are appreciated but go unrecognized or acknowledged. I wanted to be sure to take time to recognize their good deeds and let you know of your valuable employees. Thank you for your time.

Wishing you a wonderful day.
Best Regards,
Debora Dunn