

Special Meeting concerning Covid-19 via Facebook Live and Zoom

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE:

Mayor Kovach read the following statement: “Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided, indicating the time and place of the meeting, which notice was posted, made available to newspapers, and filed with the Clerk of the Town of Clinton in accordance with Section 3(d) of Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975.”

VIRTUAL MEETING STATEMENT

Mayor Kovach continued with this statement: “N.J.S.A 10:4-8(b) authorizes municipalities to conduct public meetings through use of streaming services and other online meeting platforms. Recently adopted P.L. 2020, c. 11 amends OPMA to clarify that in times of emergency public bodies may vote, accept public comment, and cause a meeting to be open to the public via electronic means. The Town of Clinton is using ZOOM Video Meetings, which are also live-streamed to Facebook Live on the Town’s Facebook Page at @clintonnjgov. Please be aware that this meeting is being recorded for the public record. Both ZOOM and Facebook Live are imperfect, so if glitches pop-up, please be patient. We will address all questions and general comments after the governing body has conducted business and shared reports. We will take comments during the public hearings of any Ordinances on the agenda. Councilman Mike Humphrey will be moderating questions and comments on ZOOM and Facebook. Please use the chat feature in Zoom to indicate that you wish to be recognized for a comment. You can also type in questions. Feel free going forward to email councilmeeting@clintonnj.gov with any questions or concerns between meetings or questions you would like answered during future council meetings. You MUST provide your name and address to be recognized for comment. We ask that you keep your device muted until called upon by the council. The meeting’s moderator may also mute participants. The Mayor and Council will respond to all votes using chat. Please send me a note at jkovach@clintonnj.gov, call or text me at 908-399-8921 for any reason after the meeting.”

MAYOR’S COMMENTS

There were issues with residents congregating downtown on Main Street and on the terrace of the Art Museum. DPW removed the benches and barricaded the terrace to discourage residents from congregating. This is hurting our businesses downtown as socializing in larger groups will prolong the time of the quarantine. Dog walkers must curb their dogs and pick up their waste. The Town does have a number of stations with bags. Garbage and recycling needs to be put in reusable cans with a lid. Additionally if it is a windy day, please ensure that your can does not blow over and scatter items along the street. We have asked the collectors from Republic Services to pick it up if they see it, but they will not be able to pick up every stray piece. If you see something please pick it up, even if it isn’t yours, to keep Clinton clean and beautiful.

COUNCILMAN HUMPHREY

Check the website clintonnj.gov, Instagram, and the Town Facebook page for information. “Like” posts so that they gain more visibility. We will need to set up a second account for zoom meetings as committees and commissions are now all holding meetings virtually. We have started to receive the emergency notification requests from residents. Please continue to encourage residents to sign up. Direct new thoughts or ideas to the appropriate councilperson assigned to that area to facilitate.

COUNCILWOMAN JOHNSON

#Healthcare Heroes has been posted to Facebook pages. Residents are encouraged to participate in the upcoming “Easter Egg Hunt” by putting Easter eggs in front windows or on the porch or lawn for children to see as they walk past. Councilwoman Johnson has noticed people going in and out of businesses. Police will continue to patrol downtown to ensure residents are following social distancing requirements.

All businesses may be required to provide curbside pickup only to prevent people from gathering. Mayor Kovach requests that Chief Kubinak be notified by Council members when they see people not following the requirements so that an officer can go help the business figure out a solution. Councilwoman Karsh suggested that the rules be made clearer for both business owners and residents. Mayor Kovach requested that Ms. St. Angelo work with Chief Kubinak to create more specific guidelines. Councilwoman Intrabartola suggested that the curbside pickup should require the restaurant workers to come out and put the order in a car, so that the patrons do not get out of their car. Councilman Humphrey noted that the grocery stores are doing a good job of enforcing social distancing by making aisles one way, and putting tape on the floor to keep people 6 feet apart. He suggested that the ice cream parlors put tape on the ground outside. Councilwoman Intrabartola questioned whether that may create lines of people in town that would be difficult for other people to walk past, and suggested have the restaurant owners give their patrons a specific pick up time. Mayor Kovach stated that she will talk with Chief Kubinak about all of these issues and have him create a workable solution.

COUNCILMAN TRAPHAGEN

Councilman Traphagen noted that the patrons of the cigar shop were congregating and notified Chief Kubinak. The Shade Tree Commission will hold their April meeting via zoom.

COUNCILWOMAN INTRABARTOLA

Councilwoman Intrabartola removed the meetings that have been cancelled from the calendar on the Clintonnj.gov web page. She will send suggestions of protocol to follow when creating posts so that we can keep a uniform approach to our social media. Ms. Intrabartola is finishing an informational pamphlet to be sent to the seniors in town since many are not on social media. The pamphlet will have a tear off piece for the senior to return to sign up to receive text and voice messages with important information.

COUNCILWOMAN KARSH

Economic Development Commission will be holding a zoom call to start brainstorming how to help businesses now and once this emergency is over. Councilwoman Karsh has received a number of phone calls and texts from parents looking for “loopholes” to allow their children to get together. While it is difficult to keep children home and not allow them to play with others, the reality is that we can’t allow this: to keep our community safe, people must stay at home.

RICH PHELAN – TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Despite working with a staggered staff, all services continue to be provided to Town residents.

ATTORNEY ST. ANGELO

Ms. St. Angelo will work with the Ms. Razin, the Land Use Board attorney, to work through the new guidance that was published for virtual Land Use Board meetings. There will be a memo forthcoming about unemployment eligibility that can be given to an employee if they must be laid off by the Town.

ADJOURNMENT

The next special update meeting will be held Tuesday, April 14, 2020 at 10:00 am via Facebook Live and Zoom.

Cecilia Covino, RMC/CMC
Municipal Clerk
(Prepared by Caitlin Haughey)

Mayor Janice Kovach