

# Town of Clifton



## Fall Newsletter

October 2020

To all our Clifton residents:

It has been awhile since the board members have sent out a newsletter. It's hard to believe we are nearing the end of 2020. The board members want to give you a synopsis of the year.

First off, I'm sure we can all agree on what a challenging beginning it was, especially dealing with the new norm. The Governor laid out all of the Executive Orders for all towns to follow. We have adjusted and have made the needed changes. During elections this year, we had all the proper personal protective gear in place for everyone. Elections went smoothly. We want to thank our ballot clerks. We couldn't do it without you. The town has been awarded \$5,000 in Grant money to put towards the costs of elections.

You will see a new machine for this November election. This machine will receive your state ballot and do all the counting. We are so excited! We will have explicit instructions on how to use this new machine as the days near November election.

As everyone is aware the town entered into a 20 year Tax Increment Financing (TIF) with Pisgah Mountain Wind in 2017. There are benefits to having this TIF. No state agency or school can touch this. It is sheltered. Also, the expenses incurred do not touch your budget costs and taxes will not increase from the expenses.

There is a whole plan on file here in the office, a plan that involved the town's residents and their thoughts and ideas of what would serve the town. This plan was then sent to the state for approval. The final step is the residents (legislative body) vote to spend what the board members recommend. Once appropriated, this sits in its own reserve account and is spent when needed.

The board members agreed it would be wise to use the TIF money for "Capital Road Improvements" In 2017, they had Lane Construction Corporation come and assess each road in need of improvement. Lane devised a list of "worse to fair" conditioned roads, a list which became part of the plan for the town's projects. Improved this far are Scott Point Road and Bobcat Road with Stagecoach Road in its final stages. With these improvements come some cost savings for future expenditures as less sand and salt will be needed for winter maintenance; another benefit of the TIF.

We have so far completed, Scott Point Road, Bobcat Road and are in the final stages of the Stagecoach Road, the town has spent in Capital Improvements thus far \$516,610.38. The next Capital Improvements will be on the Bruckoff Road. The benefits to having this TIF financing is all these expenses don't touch your budget costs, so no tax increases come from these expenses. Some of the other cost savings for the future expenditures; is that with all our dirt roads becoming paved, the winter costs for maintenance should go down, why you ask, less sand and salt to rid the roads of any icing.

In an effort to keep track of road work progress and accountability, we are adding a Rankin Tracking system application for the board to use, cost of \$15.00 month. It has photos, manpower lists, equipment used to track daily progress of major town projects such as the roads.

We will also be doing our cost comparison for contractors this coming spring which was added to the list of requirements by the board in May of 2020. Every year we are challenged with getting the cost of local contractors cost per man hour, equipment type and rates per hour charged and comparing to the contractors that we use for town projects. This information will help the board in determining if costs are in line for the quality of and ability of work performed. The board has recently hired Rudman and Winchell as additional Town Attorneys. They not only specialize in TIF agreements but also specialize in Municipal Law and have already proven to be a valued asset to the town.

As some of you may be aware we have had a visit from MRC (Municipal Review Committee). They are the committee that helps facilitate the disposal of our trash along with approximately 110 other towns. We (Town) entered into a contract a few years ago with MRC using the new Fiberright facility in Hampden, the facility ran out of funds and MRC is facilitating with PERC and other options for currently disposing of our waste. The Fiberright facility is in the process of possibly being sold, and we are in a holding pattern with all of the other towns with MRC.

We, the board, are going to be working on next year's budget in the coming months and are looking at possibly adding a retirement plan to the full time town employees, as well as adding another member to our staff at the town office.

For the last year, the Clifton Planning Board has been reviewing Silver Maple Wind application for the last year; this project would add five (5) wind turbines to the already existing project, Pisgah Mountain Wind. The planning board held their public hearing on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 via ZOOM for public Participation due to Janet Mills COVID 19 meeting restrictions.

RSU 63 has been qualified for \$1,304,278 from the state and a 10-year interest free loan for \$1,368,972 to install new fan coil units, heating and ventilation units, and Direct Digital Control systems. These units will improve their indoor air quality, control building temperatures, and maintain lower carbon dioxide levels at all three schools. Now comes the clincher, the three (3) towns, Holden, Eddington and Clifton will split the cost of \$1,368,972, not sure of the exact split and what that will do to your taxes. November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 you will be asked on a ballot the referendum question to vote Yes or No for this.

The board member appreciates the attendance at the meetings however, keep in mind we do have a policy that states we have 2 minutes per person for public comments on that nights agenda items, (not question and answer) up to a total of twenty (20) minutes for public comment section. Our meetings are for the board members to conduct Town business. If anyone would like to make comments or speak to a board member they are more than welcome to stop by or call or e-mail townclifton@gmail.com

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month @ 6PM.

You can find all sorts of information on our website, please visit the site. Cliftonme.com also we have a newsletter that goes out, if you want to receive one please e-mail us or call the office to get added to the list.

Thank you to all our residents!

Clifton Board of Select People

Geoff Johnson, Chair

Bill Rand, Vice

Nancy Hatch

Gerald Folster

Lee Bryant