



A Message from Town Clerk Mary Alex

Dated: March 18, 2021

This message is to advise the residents and concerned citizens of the Town about Town Board Zoom meetings, an upcoming Town Board meeting and Land Tax payments.

As many of you are aware, my office was closed for a 10 day period due to a mandatory Covid related quarantine. Mindy and I worked from home during that time, however it provided some challenges. We are currently playing catch -up on a variety of items.

I have been attempting to maintain Town Clerk and Tax Collecting responsibilities, schedule employee staff meetings and continue to operate Town Board meetings via Zoom. While I would like to say that all have been done effectively, I can't.

It has been my responsibility to coordinate the Town Board Zoom meetings and it had been going fairly well when we had just a few people attending the meetings. Things changed rapidly when we held the February 25th meeting. As you witnessed, there were problems with that meeting due to broadband issues, microphones and the recording. Broadband and microphone problems occurred during the regularly scheduled Town Board meeting on March 11th. I've consulted with the Town's IT contractor to fix some of the problems, and we will continue to do so. If you have recommendations to improve upon any Zoom problems, please share them with me. I am happy to learn.

As to the meeting scheduled for March 15, my apologies to those of you unable to participate. When the meeting was opened, I allowed everyone to enter the meeting that was in the waiting room, assuming everyone was being given access. During the meeting, I did not have the computer in front of me, so I could not tell that the people attempting to enter after the initial access, were waiting to be let in by the host. I could hear the bell sounding for each new entry and believed everyone was included in the meeting. A Town resident shared with me the message he was receiving and I was able to determine the problem. This feature is disabled for the Zoom meetings scheduled for the full year. I will have to turn this waiting room feature off for future special meetings of the Town Board.

Due to the problems we have encountered with Zoom and the public interest in how the Town proceeds, Supervisor Gary Ciferri has authorized me to schedule a special meeting to be held at the Town Park, for residents to be able to share their thoughts. I expect the meeting to be held in early May, dependent upon Town Board availability. Information will be posted as soon as available.

I ask that everyone have patience with me in responding to and posting email correspondence to the website. I see all of the emails and have or will be sharing them with the Town Board. There are certain things I am legally obligated to do in my position as Town Clerk, so they take precedence over emails. I'm sorry for not getting to your emails as quickly as you would like.

The final item I want to share with you is that we are up to date on tax collection. All payments are posted on the website to the tax portal or through an Excel spreadsheet. We are working diligently to update all payments to the tax portal.

As always, please know, I am here to serve the residents of the Town of Washington. My email address is malex@washingtontny.org. It might take me a few days to respond, but I read everything sent to me. You may call me at 845-677-3419 ext 100.