

CLAYTON COUNCIL MEETING - 101

Clayton citizens are welcomed and encouraged to attend town council meetings. Attending a council meeting allows you to be informed about the issues before the Clayton Town Council.

Perhaps you have looked over an agenda for a Council meeting, but found the terminology confusing. For citizens, both new and experienced in local government, “Clayton Council Meeting – 101” is being offered. This issue addresses the following vocabulary found on an agenda:

- Public meeting, public hearing, and evidentiary hearing; and
- Ordinance, resolution, and proclamation

All meetings of the Clayton Town Council are public meetings. This means that meetings are open and citizens are entitled to attend. Public hearings and evidentiary hearings may be scheduled during a public meeting; however each hearing functions differently:

- Public hearing, also known as legislative hearing, occurs when an agenda item has been advertised and noticed according to the law thus allowing persons to come before the Council to state their view. After receiving public comment, the item is turned over to the Council for discussion and action.
- Evidentiary hearing, also known as quasi-judicial hearing, occurs when an agenda item has been advertised and noticed according to the law; however, the Council acts like a court of law. During an evidentiary hearing, the Council receives only sworn testimony and other credible evidence. In addition, the Council must make findings of fact based upon the evidence presented. Citizens may give testimony in an evidentiary hearing after they have taken an oath.

Other vocabulary found on the agenda is ordinance, resolution, and proclamation.

- Ordinances are the laws of the municipality that have been enacted by the Clayton Town Council and are expressed in written form. An ordinance sets forth the standards that govern throughout the community.
- Resolutions are used to record administrative actions. They may also establish policies, set various fees and charges, adopt reports, or approve state or federal grants.
- Proclamations are used to proclaim or announce a specific or special event such as “Friends of the Library Day” or “Centennial Class of Clayton High School”.

The Council agenda may be viewed online at www.townofclaytonnc.org the Friday before a scheduled meeting. If you do not have access to the Internet, please call 919.553.5002 and request a copy of the agenda.

If you have questions or suggestions for the next “Clayton Council Meeting – 101” article, please contact the Town Clerk.

We look forward to seeing you at Town Council meetings.