



Mayor Brindle's Opening Remarks April 6, 2021

Good evening, everyone, and thanks for joining us virtually tonight. Please remember that public comment will only be accepted via Zoom, although we are live streaming for viewing only on Facebook. The replay will also be available afterwards on Facebook, YouTube, and TV 36.

COVID-19 UPDATES

- Yesterday, Governor Murphy announced that all New Jerseyans age 16 and above will be eligible to be vaccinated beginning April 19. In addition, travel guidance was updated to reflect that fully vaccinated individuals and those who have recovered from COVID-19 in the past three months who travel domestically aren't required to self-quarantine after their trip, or to get a COVID-19 test before or afterward. Unvaccinated individuals are still subject to post-travel quarantine guidance. For international travel, a negative test result or documentation of recovery is required for all travelers entering the United States following air travel. Details can be found on the [New Jersey COVID Information Hub](#).
- The seven-day average for confirmed COVID-19 cases in New Jersey are down 2% from a week ago and up 32% from a month ago, and the rate of transmission is 1.06. On the vaccination front, New Jersey has administered nearly 4.8 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine — including more than 1.8 million people considered fully vaccinated. As always, more detailed information about statewide numbers is available on the [NJ COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

LOCAL UPDATES

- This week is National Public Health Week, and I'd like to take a moment to recognize the dedicated employees of the Westfield Regional Health Department, who have worked tirelessly over the past year in unprecedented circumstances to provide timely and critical information to the public during the pandemic. Led by Regional Health Officer Megan Avallone, the team has investigated over 8,000 cases of COVID-19 in the eight communities they serve -- including more than 2,000 in Westfield. They have also served a vital role in coordinating outreach efforts to vulnerable populations -- providing informational resources about the virus and vaccines, assisting with the recent pop-up vaccination clinic for the underserved, partnering with community organizations, and launching the new homebound vaccination program.

In addition, Megan was chosen to be interviewed for the New Jersey Oral History Museum about the local public health response to the pandemic, and what that response has meant to their personal lives. It's only fitting that her vast contributions will be part of a permanent record of this truly incredible time for generations to come. Thank you, Megan, and all of your

incredibly dedicated team members for the work you have done and continue to do for the community.

- I recently attended the first meeting of the State League of Municipalities Liquor License Task Force, to which I was appointed with six other members throughout New Jersey. I am thrilled to have a seat at the table on this critical issue to work with a bi-partisan group of legislators on reforming our archaic liquor license laws, which is vital to the long term vitality of downtowns all over the state. We are fortunate to have the support of Downtown NJ, which is led by our DWC Executive Director Bob Zuckerman, as we seek to find a solution that protects the investment of existing license holders while allowing New Jersey to compete for the best restaurant talent with neighboring states.
- Earth Month is here, and the Green Team has been busy planning! The very successful Free Market returns on April 24, when gently used goods can be dropped off at the South Avenue lot of the train station, and residents can then pick them up for free. Residents are free to browse from 9:30- 3:00 without signing up, but drop off slots require [registration](#). On May 2, the Annual Spring Clean Up will take place at Tamaques and Brightwood Park from 10:00 - 12:00. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and religious organizations who need to fulfill community service requirements are welcome to [participate](#).
- On April 26 at 1:00PM, Lifelong Westfield and the Westfield Police Department will present a webinar to help residents identify and avoid fraud and scams, many of which target senior citizens and are on the rise during the pandemic. To obtain the Zoom meeting information, attendees must register in advance by emailing westfieldnjseiors@gmail.com or calling 908-201-1287.
- We have two Facebook Live discussions coming up! Join Chief Battiloro and me at noon this Thursday, April 8, to provide an update on the latest efforts of the Westfield Police Department -- including the ongoing car burglaries/thefts, thoughtfully addressing teen gatherings in Mindowaskin, and Downtown enforcement plans during outdoor dining -- as well as the outcome of the recent accreditation process. To submit a question to be addressed, please visit [westfieldnj.gov/fblive](https://www.facebook.com/westfieldnjgov/fblive).

On Wednesday, April 14 at 7:00PM, join us for "More Than Just a Gazebo," a discussion focused on the impact and importance of public spaces in civic life. I'll be joined by a fabulous panel of experts, including Asima Jansveld, Westfield resident and Executive Director of The Highline Network; Don Sammet, Town Planner; Phil Abramson, Topology; Richard Heapes, Streetworks Development, and special guest Dan Biederman, Executive Director of Bryant Park and President of Biederman Redevelopment Ventures.

- Work continues on setting up the expanded outdoor dining spaces throughout the downtown area, as well as on an enhanced pedestrian plaza on Quimby Street to deliver an attractive, cohesive, upscale destination for Downtown Westfield. This will include additional tents and decor, as well as a variety of programming and the return of Sweet Sounds! Please be sure to follow the DWC for more information as it becomes available. In the meantime, please remember that the 15-minute parking spots are available to facilitate pick up from our local

businesses, and the Westfield Police Department will be actively enforcing any misuse of those spaces.

- We have another productive agenda tonight. We will hear an ordinance on second reading for the adoption of the 2021 capital budget, which will address needs such as road paving, public safety equipment for our Fire, Police, and Public Works departments, and amenities for our parks.

Also on second reading is an ordinance requiring landscapers and tree companies to register each year with the Town, which allows us an opportunity to provide information about our rules and regulations that relate to the work that they perform.

As part of a broader effort to incorporate safe bicycling options in Town, we'll vote to appoint members to the newly re-established Bicycle Advisory Board, and we'll also vote on a resolution authorizing the submission of an application for funding through PSE&G's Sustainable Jersey Grants Program to help us design an improved bike infrastructure.

With that, we'll get to work. I want to remind everyone that I will once again be enforcing Robert's Rules this evening to ensure we stay on topic and the meeting runs efficiently.

Thank you.