

**To: Ancram Town Board**

**From: Art Bassin**

**Date: 1/17/2011**

**Subject: Supervisor's Report – December 2010 - Draft**



**Financial Results:** Preliminary December numbers indicate we ended 2010 ahead of Plan. Including the 4Q sales tax revenue of \$56,000, our cash on hand is about \$730,000 – about \$30,000 over where we had expected it to be. Revenues for 2010 came in about \$100,000 ahead of budget, and costs were under budget by about \$130,000. The general fund was about \$90,000 better than budget on the cost side, and the highway department came in about \$40,000 better than budget, even after allocating about \$50,000 of its budget toward labor & materials related to site prep and interior finishing work at the new town garage. Garage construction costs in 2010 totaled about \$450,000, excluding the highway department contribution and about \$30,000 in garage planning costs.

**2010 Accomplishments:** Looking back on 2010, we were able to get a lot of things done. Here is a summary of accomplishments:

1. Adopted the Comp Plan & set up the Zoning Revisions Committee;
2. Installed solar panels on the Town Hall;
3. Had an outside firm of professionals review the 2008 revaluation process and resulting property valuations, and verified that the process was consistent with NYS guidelines and the resulting property values were equitable;
4. Passed 6 laws: veterans property tax exemptions; term extensions for the highway superintendent & the town clerk; the telecommunications tower; the dog licensing; and the ethics law;
5. Set up the Conservation Advisory Council & the Financial Advisory Council;
6. Switched to a more cost effective health insurance policy;
7. Expanded community communications with email updates, and published 5 community newsletters, which are mailed to everyone not on the Ancram Email list;
8. Built a new garage at the existing site.

### **Community and Volunteer Activities and Accomplishments in 2010:**

Ancram's Community and volunteer organizations also had an excellent year in 2010, and added significantly to the quality of life in Town:

1. Jane Moore and her volunteers painted the Town Hall;
2. The Ancram Angels Christmas Gala raised money for the Rescue Squad
3. Neighbors Helping Neighbors, the Ancramdale Presbyterian Church and the community raised money to build a handicapped ramp for the Ancramdale polling place;
4. The Ancram Preservation Group donated the Mary Moon quilt to the Town;
5. The Youth Commission received over \$15,000 in contributions from the Ancram Angels and private donors for the playground fund;
6. Donations from the Ancram Preservation Group and residents allowed the Town to buy a 150 year-old school banner originally from one of the town's school houses;
7. Two residents donated land to facilitate the construction of the new town garage.

**2011 Priorities are already underway:** While we accomplished a lot in 2010, there are still a lot of things we are working on, and need to get done in 2011:

1. Build a new playground at Town Hall;
2. Convert the milk factory building into a salt shed;
3. Evaluate highway equipment needs and develop an equipment replacement plan;
4. Put Town laws on the internet;
5. Develop an employee manual;
6. Develop town policies & procedures manual;
7. Complete and adopt zoning revisions consistent with the new Comprehensive Plan;
8. Complete and adopt Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan;
9. Develop an emergency preparedness plan;
10. Get a cell tower and improve cell service;
11. Adopt a wind turbine law;
12. Hold a community clean-up day;
13. Review and revise town fees;
14. Develop ways to enforce town zoning and the NYS Building & Fire Code.

**NY State Cutbacks Likely:** Given the financial situation NY State faces, we can expect Governor Cuomo to take drastic action to close the State's \$10 billion budget gap. There will be financial consequences for counties and towns from whatever Cuomo does. What this means for Ancram is unclear. But we know that we will have to continue to be very careful how we spend town money, and continue to cut back in areas where we can find savings. We should know by mid-year how the State will plan to solve its \$10 billion budget gap, and how that may affect us in Ancram.

Regardless of what the State does, we should plan to hold property taxes flat again in 2012, which means we will have to continue to allocate funds from "business as usual" spending to our new priorities, without increasing total spending levels. With about \$730,000 in the bank, Ancram is in better financial shape than many towns in the county, and should be able to deal with any financial uncertainties in the near term.