

To: Ancram Town Board  
From: Art Bassin   
Date: 10/19/2010  
Subject: Supervisor's Report – September 2010

## Financial Results – We continue at expected pace

**YTD September Financial Results:** We closed on the \$400,000 garage loan from the Bank of Greene County in late September. The loan is for a 10 year term at a 2.99% interest rate. We negotiated the right to prepay the loan at any time with no penalty, so we can repay the loan over a 5 year period if we had the funds to do this, and decided to prepay.

With the loan proceeds included, revenues through the end of September were \$1,604,000. Without the loan, revenues through the end of September were \$1,204,000. For the rest of the year, we expect an additional \$150,000 of income, for a full year total excluding the loan, of \$1,354,000. This compares to an original budget of \$1,303,000, which will put us about \$50,000 ahead of budget in revenues. The \$150,000 in expected revenue will come from a combination of sales tax revenues, state highway aid, additional mortgage tax revenues, building department fees and justice court fines. The State highway aid check for \$62,000 and the sales tax check for \$58,000 arrived this month and will be part of the October numbers. We have been advised by the County that the mortgage tax check expected this month or next is running slightly higher than expected, and we should be getting about \$20,000, which will make our full year mortgage tax number about \$40,000, compared to a budget of \$30,000.

Expenses through the end of September totaled \$1,101,000, including the \$126,000 of unbudgeted capital projects - the garage (\$71,000), the solar panel match (\$21,000) and the new grader (\$33,500). Excluding the capital spending, expenses are about \$67,000 under budget as of the end of September and about \$100,000 under last year.

Including the \$400,000 of garage loan proceeds, the town had a cash balance of \$1,257,000 as of the end of September. By year end will have used the \$400,000 in garage loan proceeds, and should have about \$700,000 in the bank.

## Projects & Activities

- 1. New Garage:** Work started in mid-September, and has progressed well. The building is up, radiant heating tubes installed, concrete floors poured, structure up, roof on, insulation partially on, boilers on site and electric work underway. We are waiting for the exterior siding, doors and windows, and will start the interior sheet rocking next week. It looks like we are on track to be done and in the new facility by the end of the year.
- 2. 2011 Budget:** We will hold the first public hearing on the 2011 Budget 10/23 at 8:30 at Town Hall. I have circulated a separate overview of the 2011 Tentative Budget which we should plan to review at our 10/23 Town board meeting following the public hearing.

The 2011 budget holds taxes flat by limiting spending to what we can afford with no property tax increase, and focusing on town priorities within this framework.

3. **Town Health Insurance Policy:** The current town health insurance policy which covers highway staff and retirees was budgeted at \$45,000 in 2010, will actually cost us about \$50,000 in 2010, and will increase to about \$60,000 in 2011 if left as is. I have been looking at alternatives for the past 90 days, and recommend the town switch from the MVP HMO we are now using at a cost of \$6300 per person per year to an MVP EPO with a \$1500 deductible, which will cost \$3800 per person per month. To prevent any financial hardship to the individuals participating in the program, I suggest the town cover any out of pocket costs incurred by the people covered by the new program above the copays now in place under the HMO policy. We could do this by either paying for the first \$750 of deductibles under the new plan, or by paying costs charged over the level of the current copays in place until the \$1500 deductible is exceeded and the insurance covers all additional costs with copays only for drugs. In either case, the town should be able to reduce health insurance costs by at least \$15,000 next year by making this switch, while those covered by the insurance policy will not be out of pocket any more than they would have been under the current policy's copays.
4. **Rescue Squad:** The rescue squad has proposed a 2011 fee of \$84,000, which represents Ancram's fair share of expected 2011 rescue squad costs based on our usage of rescue squad services in 2010. This \$84,000 compares to the \$87,000 we were asked to pay in 2010, and the 2010 budget of \$132,000. Ancram is one of two Columbia County towns to still pay its own rescue squad costs – all other towns in the county except New Lebanon charge their rescue squad costs through the County, and these costs are added to the county tax bill for residents of those towns.
5. **Ramp for Ancramdale Polling Place:** This project has been completed. Total cost is about \$5000. Community contributions totaled about \$3100, including about \$2500 from Neighbors Helping Neighbors. The town will fund the \$1900 outstanding cost per the resolution we passed earlier this year, and will apply to the County Board of elections for a grant to cover the town's \$1900 payment.
6. **Cell tower law:** This law is ready to adopt. The County Planning Board is scheduled to approve the law at its 10/19 meeting. Please review this law again (it's on the town web site, [www.townofancram.org](http://www.townofancram.org) if you have misplaced your hard copy) prior to the 10/23 meeting and be prepared to discuss any last minute changes you would like to see incorporated in the law.
7. **Ethics law:** We will be discussing the Ethics Law at the 10/23 meeting. Please review this law and come prepared to raise any questions or comments you have. Members of the Ethics Committee will be available to review this law with us and respond to any questions. This law is also on the town web site, and you should have hard copy. We will hold a public hearing on this proposed law in November, and will pass the law in November or December.
8. **Wind turbine law:** We will also be discussing the wind turbine law. Please review this document (which you got by email last week) and come with any questions or comments. Will hold a public hearing on this proposed law prior to the November meeting, and will adopt if in November or December.
9. **New dog licensing law:** The State has mandated that Towns handle dog licensing effective January 1, 2011. We will review the proposed new dog licensing law at the

10/23 Board Meeting, will hold a public hearing in November, and pass the law in November or December.

**10. Building Department Issues:** The press coverage we received from our last town Board meeting discussion about how to enforce the NY State Building Code and town zoning has been helpful in making people aware of the issues. While the focus of the discussion last month was on enforcement, I think we also need to work on how to make getting permits easier and faster, and making overall compliance less of a hassle. We need to discuss how to do this, and may want to consult with state experts, local contractors and building departments in nearby towns to get more familiar with the “best practices” that are out there.