

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
August 20, 2009
Regular Meeting**

Present:	Supervisor Thomas Dias	Councilman James Miller
	Councilman John MacArthur	Councilman Robert Mayhew
	Councilwoman Donna Hoyt	Town Clerk Monica Cleveland

Supervisor Dias called the regular meeting of the Ancram Town Board to order at 7:00pm with a salute to the flag.

Mr. Dias thanked the Ancram Community Day Committee for all of their hard work, especially Councilman Miller. Councilman Miller received a round of applause.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Mayhew to accept and place on record the minutes from the previous Town Board meeting and Town Board Workshop. Motion carried.

Supervisor Dias read the following financial report:

General Checking : \$8,008.90
Money Market: \$854,457.36
T & A Checking: \$11,252.75
CDBG: \$22,000.00

A motion was made by Councilman Mayhew and seconded by Councilwoman Hoyt to accept the financial report as read. Motion carried.

Supervisor Dias stated that although he is asking that the board go out of order, he would like to make a motion to pay the bills. Councilman MacArthur stated that he had questions on some of the bills. Mr. Dias stated that only the bills that the board signed and approved would be covered under the approval of the bills. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Hoyt. Motion carried.

Old Business

Mr. Bob Roth read the following letter concerning the cell tower committee: *“Bob, Secondly, I’m confirming herein that we have received approval for site acquisition of two Columbia County sites, one for Copake and another for the Ancram/Ancramville area. There is, or course, more paperwork that has to be done and where we will be looking will be based upon results of recent drive tests performed and the search rings that will be issues accordingly. While I certainly cannot commit to anything, I can promise you we will meet with your preferred tower construction company when the time*

to see if anything is mutually acceptable to all parties concerned. I'll keep you in the loop. All the best, Greeley T. Ford, Network Sales Support Engineer V."

Mr. Roth stated that although he could not promise anything, he felt that a cell tower is in the near future.

Mr. Dias stated that the board has in their packets the report from the Ancram Building Department.

Mr. Dias stated that the resolution from the Town Of Ancram Town Board on behalf of the Town of Ancram Highway Department in regards to snow removal on county route 8 and 8a had been approved by the county.

Mr. Dias stated that the town board is still considering the possibility of making some of the smaller roads, with less houses, in Ancram seasonal or minimum maintenance.

Mr. Dias stated that he has not received any additional news from Mr. Mike Citrin in regards to potential properties for the proposed highway garage. Councilman Mayhew stated that he thought that the DEC letter read into the minutes included a section that stated the buildings would have to be removed if the property was used. He stated that he did not see this in the minutes. Clerk Cleveland stated that the DEC letter was in the minutes in its entirety.

Mr. Dias stated that the board continues to be in negotiations with the owners of the "Tin Smith" house on Route 82 and 7.

Councilman Mayhew asked if the board had begun work on the towns emergency plan. Mr. Dias stated that arrangements have yet to be made.

Mr. Mayhew stated that upon further discussions with the Town Building Inspector Mr. Ferrato, he has found out that in the other towns that Mr. Ferrato issues appearance tickets. Mr. Mayhew suggested that the town may want to make a resolution allowing the Building Inspector to give out appearance tickets. Mr. Shaw stated that there is the issue of serving the ticket. The complaint, he explained, has to have specific allegations. Most of the time, he told the board, the building department does not do this. Mr. Mayhew asked if the ZEO could issue a failure to comply ticket. Mr. Shaw stated that the complaint has to be filed at the town court level. There has to be a charge pending in court.

Privilege of the Floor #1

Mr. Steven Roberts addressed the board. He stated that he had questions concerning the Money Market account. He asked what the town was receiving in interest and if they were maximizing their returns. He stated that he felt that the town would do good to place their money in treasurer bills. Mr. Dias stated that the town is prohibited in doing some of these investments. He stated that the towns bank has to invest in additional securities in order to back up their accounts. Mr. Dias stated that he wanted to be very careful with the towns money.

Mr. Chris Thomas addressed the board. Mr. Thomas stated that it was his understanding after speaking to the county offices that a payment was made in June on behalf of the Town of Ancram to the Community Rescue Squad. Mr. Thomas stated that he understood that the Town had tabled this decision until after the board had had a chance to go through the books of the Rescue Squad. Mr. Thomas said that the county considered this payment a charge back. Mr. Dias stated that Mr. Thomas needed to speak to the county about this because the board had paid the Community Rescue Squad in full already. Mrs. Hoyt stated that the board paid in June the balance for the 2009 budget for the Rescue Squad. Mr. Dias stated that he did not authorize any chargeback to happen. Councilman Mayhew stated that the board needs to discuss this issue if what Mr. Thomas stated did in fact happen. Mr. Jack Lindsey stated that he has not spoken with Jeanie Scottie in some time and that he was to be called if and when a group was formed to discuss the possible tax district for the Rescue Squad. Mrs. Hoyt stated that she does not agree with putting the Rescue Squad on the tax bill. Mr. Thomas stated that he got his information from Harold Sharp. Mr. Dias suggested Mr. Thomas call Ken Wilber. Mrs. Lynn Miller asked why Mr. Thomas needed to call and why someone from the Town Board is not taking care of this. Mr. Thomas stated that it looks bad that the board is not looking into the issue. Mr. Dias stated that he will check into this issue when he is at the County on Monday. Councilman MacArthur stated that he will not sign off to pay the county back if this indeed happened. The board already paid the rescue squad for 2009.

Mr. Jack Lindsey stated that when he did speak to Jeanie Scottie, the rescue squad were hiring an attorney to coordinate with other towns to charge a flat tax. Mr. Lindsey stated that he was under the impression this would take over a year to do. Mrs. Hoyt stated that she understood that for this to happen all the towns would have to be in agreement. Mr. Lindsey stated that this was true.

New Business

Mr. Dias stated that the MVP issue has been resolved and that he would like to see a change in the payment schedule. He stated that the policy is no longer in a canceled state. Mr. Dias would like to see a quarterly payment schedule. He would like to discuss the medical insurance at budget time. Councilman MacArthur suggested looking at other insurance carriers that would be more value but not decrease the coverage. Mrs. Cleveland stated that the issue with the insurance was that they had two different addresses for the Town of Ancram as well as not listing her as an authorized person on the account. Because of this, she was not allowed to address any issues with the health insurance.

Mr. Dias stated that the town has to decide to put up a traffic sign and post a speed limit on Long Lake Road. Superintendent MacArthur stated that the road is such that people cannot drive fast on it in its condition. Mr. Dias stated that the traffic sign would be a CHILDREN AT PLAY sign. Councilman MacArthur stated that he felt this would bring child molesters to the area. Superintendent MacArthur stated that Long Lake was not a town road. Mr. Dias stressed that it was a town road. Superintendent MacArthur stated that the DOT will not put a speed limit on this road. Mr. Dias stated that he wanted to put

up a children at play sign. Mr. Dias made a motion to that effect, seconded by Councilman Miller. Motion carried with four votes in favor and one against, that one being Councilman MacArthur. Mrs. Libby McKee stated that she would like to be notified in the future of these issues because she is on the County Safety Board. Mr. Dias stated he would forward the e-mails to her.

Councilman MacArthur stated that he had questions regarding the Health Insurance. He stated that he strongly felt that the town should get prices on other Insurance policies. Mr. Dias stated that he has gotten other prices. Mr. MacArthur stated that they were from the same company the town is already doing business with. Mr. Dias and Mr. MacArthur will work together on this project.

Councilman MacArthur had some questions regarding some of the bills. All of these questions were addressed. The Town attorney billed for two moths on this warrant because he did not bill last month. The Kleeber bill was for additional insurance on the sweeper rented for the highway department. Mr. MacArthur questioned the amount of mileage billed to the town, including the Supervisors miles to the bank.

Mr. Bob Mayhew stated that he felt that the town needs a person to update the town website from time to time. Mr. Dias stated that he will do this.

Councilwoman Hoyt felt that in the future when the animal control officer picks up an animal the town can place this in the newsletter.

Privilege of the Floor #2

Mrs. Ruth Wittlinger read the following letter to the board. *Dear Mr. Dias and members of the Town Board, This memo is to request that you allow the court personnel to attend the annual conference(s) this year. Unlike other years the 2 conferences are at different times of the year and in different places. The judges are being held in Lake Placid from October 18 thru 21 and the Court Clerks will be in Albany October 4 thru 7th. Mrs. Lutz and myself are only going to go for Monday, October 4th due to other work commitments we both have. These conferences allow the court personnel to get our hours of training needed to successfully handle our jobs. We get the latest updates on legislature and other issues pertaining to all the other state and local agencies that we deal with. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.*

A motion was made by Councilman MacArthur and seconded by Councilman Mayhew to allow the court offices to attend training during the stated dates. Motion carried.

Mrs. Ruth Wittlinger read the following letter to the board on behalf of the Ancram Youth Commission: *Dear Mr. Dias and members of the Town Board, We appear before you as the Town of Ancram Youth Commission. We have turned to the Town Board for guidance in this issue. We all work diligently to run programs for all ages of children. We all decided to become members of the Youth Commission to do this and to include the children of Ancram in the working of our town and to provide them a group of adults to set an example for them. We also all have a personal goal we would like to see for the*

Town of Ancram youth, or to better phrase it as a "vision". We would like to do fund raising and put together a playground and some other facilities to enhance the lives of the children. We would like direction from the Town Board in 3 directions: 1. Is this something that is wanted? 2. If yes, then where does it go: here at the Town Hall or down in the Blass Memorial Field. And, thirdly, do we have the support of the Town Board? Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Mrs. Wittlinger, the Commissioner of the Youth Commission stated that there were 26 events and programs held in the last year alone. She stated that the youth commission would like the help of the town in building a playground area. Mr. Dias stated that this will be supported by the board. The board, he said, will have to look for a place to build it. He stated that a lot of credit goes to those who built the pool. Councilwoman Hoyt asked if there were any prices available. Mrs. Wittlinger stated that there are books that the commission has been looking at. Councilman MacArthur asked if the playground was increased where would the board like for it to be. Councilwoman Hoyt stated that she would like to see it on the current recreational field. She thought that this would be safer. Councilman MacArthur thanked those in the past for the pool but believed that this and the park should be moved up to the Town Hall property. Mrs. Hoyt stated that the commission was not looking to replace the pool. Mrs. Wittlinger stated that the commission is looking towards the future and the pool is not in great condition. She stated that the commission is looking for a decision as to the placement of the youth properties and if the town board would maybe match funds that the Youth Commission raises. Mr. Dias asked for a wish list from the Commission. Councilman Miller asked how many used the pool. Coleen Lutz stated that on any given day the number was between 20 and 30.

Ms. Lynn Perella addressed the board on behalf of the Ancram Angels. She made a request that they be allowed to use the Town Hall for a holiday party on December 12, 2009 and that they were asking early so they could set up their insurance. Mr. Dias stated that the was behind this 100%.

Mr. Steve Roberts addressed the board with a question regarding communications offered to those in town besides Fairpoint. Mr. Dias stated that he has spoken to Fairpoint and that they bought the contracts from Taconic Telephone and other cannot use their lines. Mr. Shaw stated that no other company will come in.

Mr. Roberts addressed the health insurance and wondered if the town could join other towns and by a larger policy. Mr. Dias stated that he is working on this Health Insurance issue. Mr. MacArthur stated that he recently changed his plan and went to CDPHP as an individual because they would sell it to him for the old amount. He stated that companies are not saving anymore money when there are more subscribers.

Councilwoman Hoyt asked about the Bottle Tree and their public hearing on August 10, 2009. Mr. Dias stated that they had some issues to resolve and are working on them.

Mrs. Hoyt asked if the Senior Commission had met yet. Madeline Israel, Senior Commission Commissioner, stated that she took the job reluctantly and that she is

having a hard time getting people together to meet. They have yet to have their first, organizational meeting.

Mr. Dias asked Diane Valden of the Columbia Paper when they can do legal adds. She stated in April.

Councilwoman Hoyt stated that she had concerns regarding the Ancram Paper Mill and the fact that she has heard that they are planning to begin to phase out in two years. She stated that they are at this time down to 68 employees. Mrs. Hoyt stated that she felt the Town Board needs to get involved with this issue. Mr. Dias thought that as of February they were doing well. Mrs. Hoyt stated that the town keeps the mills assessment down to try and keep them in business. Mr. Legget stated that the mill is assessed at \$2,000,000.00 and that it is a fair assessment considering the age of the building. Mrs. Hoyt argued that the building recently added a 13 million dollar addition. Councilman Mayhew stated that he would like to see another company come in if the mill goes out.

There being no more business, a motion was made by Supervisor Dias and seconded by Councilman MacArthur to adjourn to executive session to discuss a personnel matter. Motion carried. The Clerk was told she was not needed for the executive session portion of the meeting and may leave.

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Cleveland
Town Clerk