

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
December 17, 2015**

Present: Supervisor Arthur Bassin Councilman James Miller
 Councilman Hugh Clark Councilman Chris Thomas
 Councilwoman Madeline Israel Town Clerk Monica Cleveland
 Highway Superinendent James MacArthur

The regular meeting of the Ancram Town Board was called to order at 7:00pm by Supervisor Arthur Bassin with a salute to the flag.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2015 meeting on a motion by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Thomas. Motion carried.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2015 Final Budget Hearing minutes on a motion by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Clark. Motion carried.

Fire Chief

Mr. Boice reported that there were four calls in the preceeding month. One of the calls was to an unattended burn involving a logging company. The DEC can ticket the logger but Mr. Boice said that this does not happen often. There are a lot of loopholes in this DEC law.

Mr. Bassin stated that it was his understanding that it is not ok to leave the fire unattended at night. Mr. Boice said that a fire such as that one will bank down. Mr. Bassin said that Mr. Ferratto has spoken to the company. Councilwoman Israel questioned if the company or land owner should be asked to give a donation to the Fire Department for their time. Bryce Birdsall stated that the company has been logging this section all summer and has made a lot of money off of it. Councilman Thomas felt that the company and owner has been untruthful about the situation from the beginning. They have been logging for months but just came in for a permit two days ago. He questioned why the town and state have laws that they do not enforce. Mr. Bassin said that Deputy Proper told him that the person to ticket the company would be the ENCON officer.

Mr. Boice stated that in addition to the activity of the Fire Department, they lost 71 year member Elwood "Woody" Hoyt.

Supervisors Report

Town Issues

1. Financial Report – We ended November with \$847,000 in the bank. Revenues and spending through the end of November have been as expected, with the exception of our NYS retirement payment coming in at \$65,000, about \$15,000 over budget due to a prior year adjustment and a revision in how the State computed the Town's retirement cost. We have been advised by the

State that next year the retirement payment will be about \$15,000 less than this year, and back to “normal”. Operating spending in the General and Highway funds are slightly under last year and about flat to budget, excluding “financial transactions” like the \$240,000 loan prepayment made in August 2014 and the \$396,000 truck loan taken out in September, 2015. We are on track to come in pretty much on budget for 2015, with an expected year-end 2015 cash balance of between \$750,000 and \$775,000, and a year-end 2016 cash balance of about \$800,000.

2. Culvert grant – We have received three proposals for engineering support for the \$275,000 culvert grant project. The Culvert Grant Committee will review the proposals with CAC and DEC, and will recommend an engineering firm to assist in the culvert project at the January 4 year-end meeting.

3. Central Hudson LED Program – I have asked Kim Tripp, Ann Rader, Gerry Fultz and Derek Porter to serve on a LED Committee to evaluate the Central Hudson request that we allow conversion of our street lights to LEDs, and recommend a course of action to the TH.

4. Health Insurance – I have been continuing to review our health insurance options, focusing on the 50% co pay feature of the Bronze plan verses the fixed \$ copays of the silver plan. I hope to have completed my review of this issue by Thursday, at which point I will either recommend we confirm our decision last month to go with the Bronze plan (\$411 monthly premium, 50% copays, \$3500 deductible, \$6850 max out of pocket), or that we consider moving to the Silver plan (\$488 premium, fixed \$ copays, \$2000 deductible, \$5500 max out of pocket). The unpredictability of the 50% co pays has caused me to reopen this matter for review.

County Issues

1. 2016 Budget – The County approved a 2016 budget with a .6% tax increase, or about \$300,000. The County is likely to end 2015 with little or no cash on hand, and the 2016 budget does not envision raising enough in taxes to improve that situation by year-end 2016. But with the pending sale of Pine Haven and the expected receipt of some Pine Haven IGT funding, we are likely to end 2016 with \$5 million more cash on hand than we will have at the end of 2015.

2. Year-end Cash Position - The County had about \$4.5 million in the general fund at the end of November, with a \$7 million retirement payment due to NYS in mid-December. In general the County has been doing a better job managing its money and disclosing its numbers in the last few years, but Pine Haven continues to be a drain on County resources, requiring about \$5 million in County support his year.

3. Pine Haven – We expect to close the PH sale during the first half of 2016. The prospective new owners have been running the facility since April, and have managed in 6 months to raise the resident count from 82 to 118, and have implemented a new billing and receivables system to better manage cash. Reports are that the new operators are doing an excellent job with residents and staff.

In regards to the LED Lights, a motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Thomas to hold a public hearing for residents on January 21, 2015 at 6:30 pm. Motion carried.

Mr. Boice asked if the electric company could install an example light in Ancram. Mr. Fultz stated that he will ask them they can do this.

Highway

The Highway Department received 6 bids for Highway road materials. Mr. MacArthur suggested that all bids be accepted except for Callanan Industries. The reason for not accepting this bid was due to the distance and that they do not have a bid for pick-up, only for delivered. A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Thomas to accept the Highway Road Material bids from the following companies: Century Aggregates, Amenia Sand and Gravel, Peckham Industries, Red Wing Sand and Gravel and A. Colarusso & Sons. Motion carried.

Mr. MacArthur gave some final thoughts as he retires this month. He stated that he feels better with the state of the Highway department then where it was in 1996. He is proud of the updated equipment, the new garage and the salt shed. He thanked the residents of the town for the last 20 years. The town board gave remarks and thanked Mr. MacArthur for his service.

Ag Committee

The committee is looking at a possible right to farm law. They would like it to be looked at by the CAC.

Historic District

The state is working on a final write up.

Assessor

The assessor is continuing to work with the county on the revaluation. The preliminary draft should be done by March.

Building Department

The building department will be going through some changes. In addition to his official office hours, Mr. Ferratto will be available by phone or the email to set up appointments. Marie and Colleen will continue the Wednesday and Saturday hours.

Mr. Clark suggested a sub committee be set up to look at the flood laws of 1990 and the 1984 map.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Clark and moved for adoption. Resolution carried by unanimous vote with the reclusal of Councilman Miller

Resolution #45 of 2015 Revision - Employee Health Insurance – Resolved, that the Town Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with CDPHP to provide health insurance to Ancram employees eligible for Town health insurance, and be it further resolved that the Town of Ancram will contribute \$750 to an employee Health Saving Account for eligible employees, and that the Town will pay or reimburse out of pocket costs incurred over \$1500 up to the out of pocket of pocket maximum per employee and covered family member, at which point the health insurance policy will cover 100% of eligible costs.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Clark and moved for adoption. Resolution carried with one recusal by Councilman Miller.

Resolution #46 of 2015 Revision - Retiree Health Insurance – Resolved, that the Town Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with Blue Shield to provide a Medicare Advantage Program for eligible retirees, and be it further resolved that the Town of Ancram will contribute \$850 to each eligible retiree to reimburse out of pocket costs not covered by the insurance, that the Town of Ancram will further pay or reimburse each eligible retiree for any out of pocket health care expenses incurred over \$2550 up to the policy out of pocket maximum of \$5000.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Clark and moved for adoption. Motion carried with one recusal by Councilman Miller.

Resolution #47 of 2015 Highway Superintendent-elect transition – Resolved, that in order to facilitate a smooth highway department leadership transition, the Town Supervisor is authorized to compensate the highway superintendent-elect for time worked during November and December 2015 at the rate of \$20 per hour.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Miller and moved for adoption. Motion carried.

Resolution #48 of 2015 Assessor's clerk additional compensation – Resolved, that the Town Supervisor is authorized to compensate the newly appointed Assessor's Clerk effective October 1, 2015 at \$16 per hour plus \$437.50 per quarter, as approved in the 2016 budget

Budget Adjustments

The following General Fund budget adjustments were offered by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Clark and moved for adoption. Motion carried.

To: 1620.4 \$1500 from 1620.1 \$500 and Building Committee Fund Balance \$1000

To 7020.4 camp from 7020.1 Camp \$600.00

To 7310.1 Pool from 7310.4 Pool \$500.00

The following Highway budget adjustments were offered by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Miller and moved for adoption. Motion carried.

To: 5110.4 Repairs From 5140.4 Brush and Weeds \$6256.00

To: 5130.4 Machinery From 5140.4 Brush and Weeds \$3837.00

To: 5130.2 Machinery From Fund Balance \$6,000.00

A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Miller to approve the December warrents with the additional vouch for \$150 to Hugh Clark for training compensation. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to pay the bills. Motion carried.

Before the meeting closed, Mr. Miller gave thanks to everyone for their support over the last six years he has been a town councilman. He said he was proud to have been a part of the many changes and that he looks forward to serving as the Highway Superintendent.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Miller to close the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica R. Cleveland