

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
October 20, 2016**

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

The regular meeting of the Ancram Town Board was called to order at 7:07 pm by Supervisor Bassin with a salute to the flag.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Thomas to approve the minutes of the previous meeting and have them placed on record. Motion carried.

Fire Chief

Mr. Boice said that the company had assisted alarm activations, car accidents and a brush fire in Millerton. Mr. Boice stressed that it is still very dry out. He also asked that residents check their chimneys. The Fire District budget hearings have been held and the budget will be staying within the 2% increase.

Supervisor Report

1. Financial Report – September was another “normal” financial month. Through September, 2016, our total spending in the general fund was up over the same period in 2015 about \$15,000, caused primarily by \$18,000 of 2016 pool capital improvements. Camp and pool costs were also up, offset by higher than expected pool and camp donations, and lower park costs. Excluding the \$399,000 truck purchase last year, Highway department spending is flat this year over last, after absorbing the \$84,000 truck bond payment. We have spent \$183,000 of the \$275,000 allocated for the Pats Rd and Hall Hill Rd culverts. Pats Rd accounted for about \$120,000 of the \$183,000. We expect Hall Hill to cost less than Pats Rd when we install the Hall Hill culvert next spring. We had about \$928,000 of cash on hand at the end of September, and about \$133,000 in culvert grant receivables. Assuming we get reimbursed for the culvert grant prior to year-end, we should end the year with about \$825,000 in cash. We have been notified that our second mortgage tax check will be \$12,500. Full year 2016 mortgage tax will be about \$33,000, compared to a budget of \$25,000.

2. 2017 Preliminary Budget – We will hold a public hearing on the 2017 Preliminary Budget at 6.45 pm on Thursday 10/20. The Preliminary Budget indicates a tax levy that is flat to 2016 with a \$56,000 contingent (reserve) account. As we learn more about our “uncontrollable” costs (health, property and liability insurance and the state retirement fund), and work our way through a review of salaries, the numbers will move around a bit, As in the past 6 years, I think we should be targeting a final 2017 tax levy that is a percent or so under 2016.

3. Oil/Water Separator – Permit has been approved, but we have not yet gotten it. We have ordered the tanks and plan to install them in the next month or so.

4. Parcel adjacent to Town Garage – This .54 acre parcel has been taken over by the County in a tax foreclosure. County has offered it to Ancram for \$2500, and the TB has approved this purchase. In addition to the \$2500 we will be responsible for unpaid property taxes which could add another \$1500. This deal should close before year-end. We are getting estimates on taking the buildings down assuming asbestos.

5. County Issues – NYS Comptroller determined the County was not under “fiscal stress” during 2015. This is the first time since the State Fiscal Stress Monitoring System was put into place that the County has not been in “fiscal stress”.

Supervisor Arthur Bassin made a motion to set the library contribution in the 2017 proposed budget at \$7500. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Israel. A roll call vote preceded as follows: 2 votes of approval (Councilwoman Israel and Supervisor Bassin) and 3 votes against (Councilman Boice, Councilman Thomas and Councilman Clark).

Supervisor Arthur Bassin made a motion to set the library contribution in the 2017 proposed budget at \$5000. Motion seconded by Councilman Thomas. A roll call vote proceeded with a unanimous favor.

Mr. Bassin will circulate a final edition of the budget to the Town Board members.

Councilman Boice questioned removing \$10,000 from the highway budget repairs line. Superintendent Miller is not happy with the cut but it is the road repairs line, not the machine repairs line. Mr. Bassin said the town will support the highway department when they run out of road or machinery repair lines and do not have excess funds in other lines to cover needed repairs. At this time, this line item has not run short this year.

The Oil and Water separator should be delivered in the next month or two.

The parcel adjacent to the highway garage is going to closing with the county. The town will pay a total of \$3300 for the piece. The next step will be taking down the burned out house. At this point, the asbestos evaluator felt the house was too dangerous to enter, and said we should assume asbestos and demolish accordingly. Superintendent Miller will get estimates on demolishing the building.

Highway Department

Mr. Miller said that the paving in front of the Sommerhoff property has been completed. The department is working on patching. The pool fence has been taken down and the decking has been paved. The department is working on Westfall road with a rented excavator removing stumps.

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk proposed bringing in a shredding company to help complete a records management/clean out of the back vault room. A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Boice to allow the Town Clerk to expend up to \$500 for this project. Motion carried.

Court

The court would like to host a defensive driving class. The town board members felt this would be a good idea. Colleen will move forward with it.

Ethics

Jack Lindsey is up for reappointment in 2017. He has agreed to continue on as the chair.

Councilman Clark stated that he attended a class on planning commercial solar operations on September 29th. He has a packet from the class for those who wish to read it.

Culvert Grant

The town has completed the plantings. The invertibrates are returning. Erin Robertson has been donating her time. Councilman Boice will be looking at the firepipe that is in the stream bed. The neighbor does not want metal guards installed. Councilman Boice questioned that if the gaurds are not DOT standard and there is an accident, who is then liable.

Mr. Bassin announced the the Simons store has been sold by the APG and that the money will be invested into the Stiehle House. If they can bring it to code, Habitat has indicated an interest to take it over and make it into a Habitat home.

Camp and Pool

The new fence will be going up in the next few weeks.

Alarm System

The town and highway garage have not chosen a new alarm company at this time.

Gmail account

Mr. Bassin stated that he has set up a gmail town account to serve as an archive for all town emails. He asked that all board members begin to cc this account on official emails that need to be archived.

Doors

Councilman Boice has set up an appointment with Herringtons to measure for new front and back doors for the building.

Signs

Councilwoman Israel reported that the welcome to Ancram signs are progressing and that she will have something to report at the next meeting.

Councilman Boice stated that it was his understanding that the flowerbeds are a part of the outside maintenance bids from the past and should be taken care of by the person maintaining the lawn. Highway Superintendent Miller said that he was upfront from the beginning that the highway department would not be taking care of the flowers.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilmwoman Israel to make the following budget adjustment. Motion carried.

From: 7310.4 \$1900.00 and 7020.4 \$800 To 7310.1 \$2,700.00

From Fund Balance to 1355.4 \$500.00

From 5132.4 to 5010.4 \$1,000.00

A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Boice to approve the warrant and pay the bills. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Boice to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica R. Cleveland
Ancram Town Clerk