

**Town of Ancram  
Town Board  
Regular Meeting  
December 20, 2012**

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

---

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

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the 10/15/2012 ZRC Package 4 Public Hearing Minutes, 10/18/2012 Town Board Meeting Minutes, 10/18/2012 Budget Public Hearing Minutes and the 11/15/2012 Town Board Meeting Minutes as read and placed on the record. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the minutes of the 11/15/2012 ZRC Package 4 Public Hearing as read and placed on the record. Motion carried.

**Fire Chief's Comments:**

Mr. Boice stated that it had been a slow month. He announced the Mr. John Ingram had been elected to the Board of Fire Commissioners, and the fire house expansion bond vote passed with a vote of 106 for and 18 against. Mrs. Sue Bassin asked about the question that had been raised regarding the modifying the appearance of the building. Mr. Boice explained that Elaine Levy had looked at the plans and suggested a color scheme. He stated that this would require more money than planned on. Councilwoman Israel inquired about a cushion that may be available to change the color. Mr Boice stated that this cushion is to repair fire trucks if needed. Councilman Thomas asked about the reason for the \$30,000.00 tax increase. Mr. Boice stated that this money was to be used for preparation for the new building.

**Supervisors Report:**

**Financial Report:** Town financial results continue to be good. We ended November with \$737,000 in the bank. December bills will total about \$60,000, which suggests we will end up the year with over \$650,000 of cash in the bank, which is about 20% better than the \$529,000 budget. We are starting 2013 with about 50% of our 2013 spending plan already in the bank, in reserve. This cash reserve serves as insulation from any unexpected deterioration in Federal, State and County aid, which totals about \$350,000 of the Town's 2013 revenue budget of \$1.3 million. The November YTD Financial Summary Chart is attached. The detailed financial reports will be sent to you via email, and are on the town web site at [www.townofancram.org](http://www.townofancram.org).

Revenues continue to track above budget – we are at \$1,335,000 through November, \$30,000 above the full year 2012 budget. It is looking like the full year revenue number will exceed budget by almost \$100,000, through a combination of higher than expected sales taxes (about \$37,000 better than the budget), the \$26,000 insurance settlement for the garage siding, about \$20,000 in unexpected FEMA reimbursements and about \$15,000 of higher than budgeted contributions and miscellaneous income.

Spending for the period ending November 2012 totaled \$1,218,000, about on budget, and about \$238,000 under November 2011 YTD. Our lower spending this year results from the mild winter's impact on salt, sand and gas (\$57,000), lower garage and salt shed construction & maintenance costs (\$21,000), lower equipment purchase & repair costs (\$42,000), moving our Rescue Squad costs to the county (\$84,000) and lower youth program and playground construction and maintenance costs (\$34,000).

**Employee & Retiree Health Insurance:** The current MVP plan would have cost \$6100 per employee and \$6400 per retiree in 2013 for a total of about \$60,000. We are planning to switch to CDPHP, which will cost between \$4200 and \$5200 per employee, and \$5000 per Medicare eligible retiree. We will save between \$900 and \$1900 per employee and \$1400 per retiree with the new plans, while our employees and retirees receive comparable benefits at no cost increase to them. Two Town employees have opted for the \$3600 health insurance buy out. In aggregate, this new set of health insurance programs will save the Town between \$9000 and \$14,000 in 2013. Our budget for health insurance in 2013 is \$60,000, but based on the new CDPHP programs, we could have actual costs of about \$50,000, which is about what we will spend in 2012. I have reviewed with all eligible employees and retirees the proposed switch from MVP to CDPHP. Our three retirees who are Medicare eligible will be on a CDPHP Medicare Advantage Plan. Our four eligible Town employees will switch to a CDPHP \$2500 deductible plan. As part of the employee program, the Town will contribute \$750 to each eligible employee's HSA, and will provide an additional \$1000 in a Health Reimbursement Arrangement for deductibles over \$1500. If this \$1000 HRA is not used, it stays with the Town. One retiree who is not yet eligible for Medicare will also participate in this employee high deductible plan.

**Green Purchasing Policy:** I will circulate a revised draft of the proposed Green Purchasing Policy later in the week, which incorporates comments I have received since last month. The proposed Green Purchasing Policy encourages but does not mandate that we buy green, and proposes a limit of spending no more than 5% more to buy green.

**Zoning Revisions:** We will get an update on ZRC Package 4 at the TB meeting. As we discussed last time, we will do the SEQRA on Package 4 after we have had a chance to review Package 4, and will schedule another public hearing on Package 4 after it has been finalized and presented to the TB.

**82/7 Intersection:** The County has developed a way to protect the wall perpendicular to 82 from further deterioration, and plans to proceed with the project. Weather concerns have caused the County to decide to postpone work until next spring. The County and State DOT are also looking at the stone wall behind the Simons General Store, which is leaning dangerously and may collapse, weakening the 82 road bed.

**Dog Law:** Please review the draft of the proposed new dog law for discussion at next week's meeting. The proposed law will allow our Animal Control officer to issue appearance tickets without going through the Town Court, and will allow the ACO to represent the town in court without an attorney. The major problems continue to be to define what constitutes a barking violation, and how to establish "proof" of a barking violation. After our review, I will send the draft on to our attorney to develop a formal local law.

**2013 County Budget:** The County approved a \$155 million budget last week. This is a "business as usual" County budget which does not provide any contingencies for the possible impact on County reimbursements from State & Federal sources from whatever is decided (or not decided) in Washington as part of the "fiscal cliff" problem. This budget does not alert tax payers, County employees, the unions or members of the BOS to the financial risks and management challenges we face in 2013 and over the next few years.

Revenues to support the \$155 million spending plan include \$42 million in current and prior year property taxes, State and Federal payments of \$40 million, a \$5 million increase in sales tax to \$33 million (which is the actual amount we expect to receive in 2012), \$15 million in new debt (to pay for capital spending and construction projects), \$9 million in departmental revenues, \$6 million in special fund revenues (solid waste fund, machinery fund, highway fund), mortgage tax revenue of about \$1 million and \$1 million of intergovernmental revenue. In addition, the county is budgeting \$7 million of fund balance "reserves", which has reduced the County's financial reserve funds to uncomfortably low levels.

2013 County property taxes are budgeted to drop about .4% (about \$160,000) to \$40 million. This will be the third year of flat property taxes. Prior year tax receipts make the total property tax number about \$42 million.

The anticipated \$40 million from State and Federal sources may be optimistic, as we are already seeing a slowdown in the pace of Federal and State reimbursements, which could get worse. We currently have about \$7 million of receivables from Federal and State sources from 2012. It is not clear how the County would deal with a 5% or 10% drop in State and Federal program reimbursements, which would total \$2 to \$4 million.

The 2013 budget projects salary cost growth of over 16%, with pay raises up 2.5%, retirement cost increases of about 10% and health insurance increases of about 4%. Going forward, we should probably expect 15%-20% staff cost increases annually if raises, retirement system costs and health insurance costs continue to grow at current rates, and we do not take measures to reduce staff to offset these cost increases.

There are no major cost cuts proposed as part of the 2013 budget, but the BOS is talking about requiring a 60 or 90 day delay in replacing staff members who leave, and there is talk about a hiring freeze if necessary to deal with unexpected deteriorations in revenues in 2013.

The County is going into 2013 with low reserves, employee costs growing at over 15%, and State and Federal reimbursements likely to be cut as "entitlement reform" kicks in. The County will face some very tough financial and management problems in 2013, needs to recognize and communicate better about these problems, and needs to start working on near term and longer term solutions.

Councilman Clark made the suggestion that there be a committee formed that would handle the town's subdivision regulations. This would be a possible five person committee who have planning or zoning experience.

The intersection 82/7 work will continue in the spring.

Mr. David Boice stated that a portion of the fence around the town pool needed to be replaced. He had an estimate of \$5,000.00 Mr. Bassin will look into if this is a biddable project.

Communications - The committee had 4 publications in 2012. They will be meeting in January.

CAC- The CAC is looking at flood mitigation and did a report on road salt. They will be working with Ruth Piwanka on landscape history. Two members have completed GIS Training.

ZRC- The committee is looking at all of the comments on Package #4. Sue Bassin had questions on the ridge lines. She also suggested zoning that supports historic and cultural resources. Mr. Clark stated that there are references of them in the new zoning.

Mr. Bassin stated that the County Ag Planning Committee would like to hold one of its public hearings in Ancram

Mr. Bassin spoke about the proposed draft dog law. He would like to take it to an attorney. A motion was made to this affect by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Clark and moved for adoption. Motion carried.

Cell Phone - The tower will be built on Wilmer road. It will be ready in June.

Wind Turbines: Mr. Bassin stated that there has been a lot of activity. There were some fixes made on the Gershon turbine. Mr. Crocco's tower now seems to be the one of concern. There seems to be no commitment from the company. Mr. Bassin suggested telling the company that the town will put a moratorium on new turbines and request that the existing ones be shut down.

Green Purchasing Policy: Mr. Bassin stated that some changes have been made to the purchasing policy based on the CAC comments. These changes will ask that green products be purchased as long as they are not 5% more than the regular products. A motion was made to approve the proposed adjusted policy by Councilman Miller and Councilwoman Israel and moved to adopt. Motion carried.

Highway Bids:

The following companies gave bids for the 2013 road materials: A. Colarusso & Son Inc., Century Acquisitions, Amenia Sand and Gravel, Red Wing Properties Inc., Package Pavement Co. Inc. and Callanan Industries Inc.

Highway Superintendent MacArthur suggested that the town accept the bids from A. Colarusso, Century Acquisitions, washed gravel from Red Wing and High performance from Package Pavement. A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Israel to accept the bids as chosen. Motion carried.

The following General budget adjustment was offered by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Motion carried.

To: 7510.4 \$700.00, 5110.4 \$1,000.00 and 7110.4 \$2,400.00 From Fund Balance \$700.00, 5132.4 \$1,000.00 and 7030.4 \$2,400.00.

The following Highway Budget Adjustment was offered by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Motion carried.

To: 5130.4 \$6,000.00 from 5130.2 \$6,000.00.

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

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

**Resolution #36 of 2012: Health Insurance Program:** Resolved that the Town of Ancram will offer health insurance to all qualifying full time employees through a CDPHP High Deductible EPO Plan with a \$2500 per person deductible, which will in total, cost the town less than \$5500 per employee, will include a \$750 per employee health savings account contribution, and payments not to exceed \$1000, if necessary, through a health reimbursement arrangement to cover employee's out of pocket costs between \$1500 and \$2500. It is further resolved that qualifying highway department retirees and their spouses will be offered either a direct pay CDPHP Medicare Advantage Plan or the regular employee CDPHP Plan with a cost to the Town not to exceed \$5500 per retiree, which will include covering the cost of the insurance policy premium, the cost to close the Medicare drug "donut hole", and co pays related to the Plan. It is further resolved that that any qualified employee or retiree who declines health care insurance will be given a health insurance buyout payment of \$3600 per year.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Miller and moved for adoption by roll call vote. Motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution #37 of 2012: SEQRA Package 4 Lead Agency Declaration:**

**Resolution of the Town of Ancram Town Board  
Intent to be Lead Agency and Identification as a Type I Action  
Action: Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Package 4**

Date: December 20, 2012

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Ancram adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2010 pursuant to Town Law 272-a; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Board appointed a Zoning Revisions Committee and tasked them to draft amendments to the Town of Ancram Zoning Ordinance consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan, and

**WHEREAS**, the Zoning Revisions Committee developed such language with the aid of consultants and legal counsel, and subsequently submitted such language to the Town Board for review and adoption; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Board has reviewed the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) 6 NYCRR Part 617 and has determined that the action is subject to SEQRA; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed action will not require permits and approvals from any other local, regional and State agencies prior to adoption of the plan and is therefore not a coordinated review; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town Board has determined that proposed action is a Type I Action, pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) 6 NYCRR Part 617.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, pursuant to the applicable standards of SEQRA 6 NYCRR Part 617, the Town of Ancram Town Board concludes that it is the appropriate agency to serve as, and declares itself lead agency for the environmental review of the proposed Type I Action; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Town of Ancram Town Board hereby authorizes development and circulation of a copy of the Full Environmental Assessment Form pursuant to the requirements set forth in SEQR 6 NYCRR Part 617.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Town Supervisor is authorized to sign the Full Environmental Assessment Form.

**WHEREUPON**, this Resolution was declared adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Ancram.

The 2012 Year End Meeting and the 2013 Organizational Meeting will be held on January 3, 2012 at 7:00pm.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to adjourn to executive session to discuss a matter which could lead to a disciplinary action. Motion carried.

### Executive Session

The town board returned from the executive session.

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

Respectively Submitted by:

Monica Cleveland  
Ancram Town Clerk