

**Town of Ancram  
Town Board  
Public Meeting  
August 15, 2013**

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

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Supervisor Bassin called the public meeting to order at 6:32. Mr. Bassin informed those gathered that this is not a public hearing but an open meeting to discuss whether to plan a public hearing on a referendum to change the Highway Superintendent from an elected to an appointed position. Mr. Bassin stated that an elected superintendent is decided on through the party caucuses and then the election where an appointed superintendent is appointed by the town board following an interview process.

Highway Superintendent James MacArthur stated that either way the position is, the budget for the highway department is not affected. Most appointed positions are two year positions and the Town Board cannot terminate the person while in a term without bringing it to court. Mr. MacArthur stated that he prefers the elected superintendent as he likes the people making the decision. He stated that in towns where the position is appointed, the town board makes the decisions on road work compared to the elected position where the work decisions are made mainly by the superintendent. A good elected superintendent works well with their town board.

Mr. Ron Brant stated that he feels the residents have more control of the choice when the position is elected. He felt control was lost when only the Town Board makes the decision. He felt that this works fine as it is now and wondered why the board would want to change it.

Adriene Citrin stated that if the highway person is elected, the board would have to have a real cause to "get rid" of him.

The question was raised as to what guidance the Highway Superintendent has to go by. Mr. MacArthur stated that the position is defined by the Highway Law.

It was stated that the voters, if this changes to an appointed position, would lose the right to choose who they wished to pay for with their tax money.

Mrs. Donna Hoyt stated that there was a time when the Town Board controlled the money too closely. Now, that is different and the Superintendent is allowed enough money and is allowed to set priorities and can fix

the roads. She felt there are already many checks and balances and wondered why we would want to change this.

Leonard Annis stated that he agrees with Mr. MacArthur and it is best to fill the position by what the voters think.

Mr. Bassin stated that this was brought up because Mr. MacArthur is retiring at the end of 2015 and that the board is gathering information from the public.

A straw vote was taken of the opinion on whether to go through with a public hearing, and it was unanimous to leave the position as is for now.

It was noted that 90% of the State's Highway Superintendent's are elected.

Mrs. Hoyt stated that this is the highest paid job in Ancram and it should remain a resident.

The meeting was closed at 6:55pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica Cleveland  
Ancram Town Clerk