

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
September 15, 2011**

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

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

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to accept the August 18, 2011 minutes as read and placed on the record. Motion carried.

Mr. Bassin stated that he has handed the town clerk the tentative budget and numbers, which he has also given to the board members for review. He stated that the preliminary budget should be done by the October meeting. He asked the board for any questions. Councilman Miller asked if there was money in the budget for the ZRC. Mr. Bassin stated that there was a preliminary amount of \$6500.00. Councilwoman Israel asked if the town could increase the amount given to the library, as the amount has not gone up in many years. Councilman MacArthur agreed. Mr. Bassin asked each member to schedule time to go through the budget.

Mr. Bassin announced that the mortgage tax check was \$18,000.00 and that the town will be ahead of the \$40,000.00 earmarked in the 2010 budget.

Assessment Cases

Mr. Bassin stated that Jason Shaw is looking at the cases at this point.

Supervisors report

August Financial Report: *Revenues and expenses continue on budget for the first seven months of 2011, in both the Highway Department and Town Government. Ancram's total spending for the first eight months was \$1,020,000, including \$123,000 for two new "used" plow/dump trucks and a front end loader for the Highway Department. Cash in the bank as of 8/30/11 was \$890,000. Major financial commitments over the next few months include paying the first installment of our ten-year garage loan (\$52,000 in principal and interest) and the completion of the conversion of the Milk Factory building to a salt shed. We have decided not to replace the roof on the salt shed building, as it seems to be tight, despite the heavy hurricane rains we have had over the last month. This will save us about \$20,000, and reduce the cost of the salt shed to about \$50,000. Based on forecast revenue and spending for the rest of the year, we still expect we will end the year with about \$500,000 in the bank.*

Town Projects, Activities & Issues

1. **Zoning Revisions Process:** *We had the public hearing on the second package of proposed zoning amendments (Site Plan Review and Open Space Conservation Subdivisions) to the 1972 Zoning Ordinance last night. We will consider the proposed amendments for adoption at the 9/15 Board meeting, but because we have not yet heard from the Ancram Planning Board and because there will be modifications to the draft amendments, we may want to postpone adoption of these two amendments until our October meeting. We will review the long form EAF as part of the SEQRA process on Thursday, and will determine if we make a negative declaration. .*
2. **2012 Budget Process:** *Please review and plan to discuss & comment on the 2012 Tentative Budget at the 9/15 TB meeting.*
3. **Eagle Scout Project:** *Carl Jamison has received financial support for his Eagle Scout community service project totaling over \$955, which he has deposited in the town bank account.*
4. **Highway Employee Manual:** *Legal review is underway. We will spend some time talking about whether we want to create a full time Highway Deputy position, as suggested by Taffy Blass in her recent letter to the Town Board.*
5. **Financial Policy Document:** *Legal review is underway.*

County/State Issues

1. **County Manager:** *This idea appears to be on hold until after the 2011 elections.*
2. **DSS Space/Walmart Project:** *The County has extended the option to purchase the Walmart Store until early November. Based on some revised numbers which were presented to Supervisors at the last County Board meeting, I have concluded that moving to Walmart is too expensive, and we would be best served by leaving DSS at 25 RR Ave, where they are now, and buying that building. Over the next five years, buying and staying at 25 RR Ave could cost \$300,000 to \$500,000 a year less than a purchase and renovation of Walmart. There are some concerns about environmental issues at that site which will need to be resolved before the county could buy 25 RR Ave, and there is still no consensus among supervisors as to what the best solution for DSS is. The DSS lease ran out at the end of last month.*

Mr. Bassin stated that the CAC recommends not moving the trees along the building but trimming them back. Mr. Bassin also announced that the trees had been planted at the Town Barn.

Highway

The blocks for the salt shed will be delivered on the 22nd. Then the floor will be blacktoped.

Mr. Bassin stated that the board received last month a letter from Highway Employee Anna Taffy Blass. The issue that was raised was whether to have a full time deputy Highway Superintendent. Highway Super MacArthur stated that the deputy position does not have to be full time or paid. They only need to be used when the Highway Super is unavailable to certify the payroll or sign the bills. Councilwoman Israel asked if the deputy can be the same as the supervisor. Councilman Thomas asked how many employees there were. Mr. MacArthur stated four. Mr. Thomas questioned whether

there needed to be another supervisor position. Highway Super MacArthur suggested a foreman, but questioned if Ancram was big enough for this.

Mr. Lennord Annis stated that Ms. Blass was not looking for a deputy. She stated that she has been called numerous times when Jim is unavailable that she has used her own vehicle and not been paid. Mr. MacArthur stated that the law reads that once the position is created the Highway Super has five days to fill it and if not filled in that time, the Town Board must do so. This must be done following each election.

Councilwoman Israel asked if Mr. MacArthur wanted a deputy. He stated that he did not care.

Mr. MacArthur stated that the town finished the paving but that it was gone after the Hurricane. The Highway department has been giving mutual aide to the Town of Windam in Greene County. He said it was amazing damage.

A motion was made by Councilman MacArthur and seconded by Councilman Miller to approve the following resolution. Motion carried.

Resolution # 37 of 2011: Allowing the Town of Ancram Justice Court Apply for a JCAP Grant:

WHEREAS: The Town of Ancram Justice Court plans to apply for a JCAP Grant in the amount of \$6,6600 to pay for the acquisition and installation of a video surveillance and "panic button" system for the Court facilities, hall and the immediate exterior, it is therefore RESOLVED that: The Town Board of the Town of Ancram does hereby approve the Ancram Justice Court application for a JCAP Grant with the Office of Court Administration.

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

Resolution # 38 of 2011:

WHEREAS: The court records and dockets of the Ancram Town Justice Court have been reviewed by Supervisor Arthur Bassin and Councilwoman Madeline Israel and appear to be satisfactory, and whereas this audit was conducted on February 12, 2011 for the year ending December 31, 2010, and whereas the audit papers used are attached, there for it is RESOLVED: The Town Board of Ancram does hereby accept the audit report of the Town of Ancram Justice Court records for the period of January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010.

Mrs. Ruth Wittlinger announced that she and her son Daniel will be walking a Juvenile Diabetes Research 5K.

Mr. Bassin commented that the Public Hearing for the second packet of Zoning Revisions was well attended with very constructive comments. None of the changes are material but because there are a lot of revisions, he would like the town board to take the next 30 days to look at them. Mr. Clark agreed that it would be helpful for them to be looked over and then comments to be given.

The Town Board then reviewed the Long Form EAF as part of the SEQRA review for the second package of zoning amendments. Mr. Bassin asked if there were any questions on the form. Mr. David Dembo asked how the EAF could be reviewed and approved before the zoning amendments were final. Mr. Bassin stated that none of the changes proposed to the zoning package are material, but that he would check with the town's lawyer working on the zoning package to see if we needed to do the EAF after a final set of changes had been made to the zoning package. (Note: Attorney John Lyons expressed an opinion via email that if the changes proposed did not materially change the intent or scope of the proposed amendments, the EAF could be done based on the draft of the proposed amendments). The Town Board reviewed the EAF page by page, item by item, to give the environmental issues a hard look, and concluded that the proposed zoning amendments would have a material positive impact on the environment if adopted.

The following resolution was offered by Supervisor Bassin and seconded by Councilman Thomas and moved for adoption. Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Resolution #39 of 2011: SEQRA Negative Declaration

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Ancram ("Town Board") duly appointed a Zoning Review Committee to implement, in part, the Town Comprehensive Plan through zoning ordinance amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Review Committee developed a set of proposed amendments to address the recommended strategies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan related to site plan review and use of open space conservation subdivisions, and subsequently submitted them to the Town Board; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board will submit the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments to the Columbia County Planning Board as required by NYS General Municipal Law 239-m and the proposed action does not require any other permits or approvals from other State and Federal agencies prior to adoption; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board declared itself Lead Agency and conducted an environmental assessment according to SEQRA, 6 NYCRR Part 617; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board, after consideration of the Full Environmental Assessment Form Part I and Part II finds that the proposed amendments will benefit the environment and not cause adverse impacts as they:

Establish site plan review procedures and criteria for commercial uses, major subdivisions, and minor subdivisions; and establishes a simplified review process for single and two-family dwellings as well as some agricultural buildings and agri-tourism uses.

Contain guidance for commercial site plan review that includes sketch plan, site plan submission requirements, and timeframes.

Contain criteria for the Planning Board to use when reviewing and deciding about commercial site plans including criteria designed to protect natural resources, historic and cultural resources, agriculture, visual resources, air and water resources.

Establish a requirement that all major subdivisions will require design as an open space conservation subdivision that preserves 60% of the parcel for open space and agriculture.

Establish a simplified process that allows Planning Board review of single and two-family dwellings when certain environmental features exist on the parcel, thus allowing oversight and enhanced planning to protect environmental resources.

Establish process and guidelines to control open space conservation subdivisions including a 4-step process to identifying primary and secondary conservation resources on the property and designing the new subdivision to protect those resources.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Ancram Town Board hereby declares that adoption of the Zoning Ordinance Amendments described herein, will not have any significant adverse environmental impacts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board hereby authorizes filing of a negative declaration (attached hereto), according to SEQRA, 6 NYCRR Part 617; and

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

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

Mr. Bassin stated that he is still in discussions about the Highway Employee Manual.

Cell Tower:

Mr. Bassin announced that Mariner Towers will be meeting with the planning board on October 6, 2011. At this point they have not submitted anything formal. The neighbors who own the property immediately adjacent to the proposed cell tower site are very upset and opposed to it. They feel it is an intrusion on their property, where they have lived for 20 years.

Planning Board

Chair Coleen Lutz stated that they are adapting to all of the new changes. They are very busy.

Youth Commission

Coleen Lutz announced that the pool brought in a revenue of \$2,288.10 this year, close to last year's number. For July the average daily swimmers were 26, for August the number was 10. She gave a thank you to David and Jen Boice.

Mr. Bassin announced that Roger Snyder gave a \$1,000.00 donation for the pool and park.

Communications

Councilwoman Israel stated that there will be a newsletter soon. Sue Bassin announced that there will be an updated Ancram directory coming out. The Ag Advisory board has composed a brochure on the farms in Ancram with a map that includes 21 farms, 5 recreational areas and 4 eateries. She stated that they will be available at local farms and stands.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman MacArthur and seconded by Councilman Miller and moved for adoption. Resolution passed by unanimous vote.

Resolution #40 of 2011: Municipal Agreement Between Ancram and Greene County.

WHEREAS the Ancram Highway Department provided staff and equipment to assist in the clean up in Greene County from Hurricane Irene, and whereas an intermunicipal agreement is necessary between Greene County and the Town of Ancram for the town of Ancram to get reimbursed for its work in Greene County, THEREFORE the Ancram Town Board authorizes the Ancram Town Supervisor to enter into an intermunicipal agreement with Greene County for the purpose of getting reimbursed for highway department services provided.

There will be a presentation on the Civil War in the area at the Roeliff Jansen Historical Museum on September 20, 2011 at 7:00pm.

Councilman MacArthur stated that there will be a fire safety day at the town hall on Saturday the 24th from 9am to 1pm.

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

A motion was made by Councilman MacArthur and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Meeting closed at 8:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Monica Cleveland
Ancram Town Clerk