

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
February 19, 2015**

Present: Supervisor Arthur Bassin Councilman James Miller
 Councilman Chris Thomas Councilman Hugh Clark
 Councilwoman Madeline Israel Deputy Town Clerk Ruth Wittlinger
 Highway Superintendent James MacArthur

Supervisor Arthur Bassin called the regular meeting of the Ancram Town Board to order at 6:55 pm with a salute to the flag.

Kim Tripp made a presentation to the Town Board for the CAC on the Natural Resources Conservation Plan. The Plan will be available on the town website and in hard copy for \$20.

Assessor

Assessor Ken Leggett is continuing to try and reduce the equalization rate. At this time the rate will continue at 111%. The assessor suggested the town having an in house revaluation with the help of the county and to have it completed by 2016. Letters will be going out from the assessor's office for the property owners to fill out in terms of additions or deletions to the property listing.

A motion was made by councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Clark to approve the Town Assessors plan to complete an in house revaluation with the help of the County Real Property office. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Miller at approve the January 15th Public Hearing minutes and have them placed on the record. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Clark to approve the January 15, 2015 regular board meeting minutes and have them placed on the record. Motion carried.

Supervisors Report

Town Issues

1. Financial Report – The 4Q sales tax check of about \$66,000 arrived last week, along with the \$799,000 property tax payment from Tax Collector Monica Cleveland. While we ended January with about \$ 574,000 in the bank, we currently have over \$1.4 million on hand. Highway spending in January was pretty much normal, but Highway Superintendent Jim MacArthur used up a lot of the stockpile of sand and salt in late January and so far in February, and thinks he will exceed his budget for sand and salt in February.

2. Subdivision Law – We will consider the subdivision law for adoption at the 2/19 TB meeting. We received the County Planning Board approval letter last week.

3. Puppy Mill and Tethering Law – Ann Rader and Tina Aiken plan to present their thoughts on specific puppy mill and tethering law language at the March meeting.

4. Unsafe Building Law – We will discuss draft 4 of the unsafe building law at the 2/19 TB meeting, and decide if we want to schedule a public hearing on this proposed law for March. The proposed local draws a distinction between “unsafe”, which makes a building or structure uninhabitable and subject to condemnation under the NYS Building Code, and “dangerous” to public health, welfare, safety and to adjacent properties, which could be justification to demand the building be secured or demolished. Under the proposed law, if the Building Inspector, an engineer and the Town Board all determine that a building is “dangerous” and needs to be demolished and removed at Town expenses, and following a public hearing, the Town will be able to file a tax lien on the property to recover costs incurred by the Town to secure or demolish and remove the building.

5. Retaining Wall behind Simons – DOT had planned to fix the retaining wall behind Simons that holds 82 in place last fall, but did not get around to it. Repairing the wall is now on the DOT agenda for this spring. If that wall collapses, it could be a major problem, and could close 82 in Ancram for a while.

6. Charter Cable Contract Renewal – We will need to schedule a public hearing on the Charter Cable franchise renewal for the 3/19 TB meeting.

7. Natural Resources Conservation Plan – CAC and Kim Tripp will be presenting the Natural Resources Conservation Plan for TB approval at the 2/19 meeting. The Plan catalogues Ancram's natural resources in detail, and recommends actions that landowners interested in protecting and enhancing the Town's natural resources can take to accomplish conservation goals. The plan does not recommend any additional Town actions to support natural resources conservation.

County Issues

1. Airport – Still waiting for FAA approval to reclassify the airport from D II to B II. FAA has indicated it could be a 60 - 90 day process.

2. Pine Haven – Two private firms interested in buying Pine Haven will be presenting on 2/23 at 6:30 to a public meeting at 401 State Street. If we decide to sell, NYS Department of Health approvals could take up to a year. More important than the financial benefits to the County of a sale to a private operator, a private operator skilled in operating nursing homes will be able to improve the scope and quality of resident services and care. Pine Haven is currently rated 2 stars out of a possible 5 stars, while both firms the County is considering selling to operate multiple nursing homes, all of which are 4 and 5 star rated.

3. County Executive or Manager – The County Government Committee discussed the county manager/executive idea, but took no action to move it along.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Miller to schedule a public hearing to discuss the Charter Cable Franchise Contract prior to the March regular own Board meeting. Motion carried.

Highway Superintendent

The proposed new truck purchase was discussed at the FAC meeting on 2/14/2015. A lease versus purchase option was discussed.

The Town Board's feelings on the subject were that they all feel the truck is something the town needs and that the town has to invest. They hoped that after making the investment, the town will not have to do so again for quite some time. FAC will review the truck purchase again at a special FAC meeting on 2/28.

The culvert study presentation will be given on 3/10 at 7pm at the town hall.

Mr. MacArthur showed the town board the vehicle and road maintenance logs and reports which show the breakdown in costs and repairs for each truck. There is also a companion road maintenance log.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to purchase a new plow for truck #35 at the cost of \$8925. Motion carried.

Mr. MacArthur warned of plenty of mud from the defrosting and snow, He stated that the department cannot fix 28 miles of road in one day. He warned people to beware of the melting snow and ice.

Town Clerk/ Tax Collector

The Tax Collector has collected over \$1.5 million at this point.

FAC - They met on 2/14 and will meet again on 2/28/2015

Camp - The camp has to advertise for a new camp director. The deadline will be 3/15/15. A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Miller to advertise for a new Ancram Camp Director. Motion carried.

Communications

The committee is working on the farm brochure update.

CAC

A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Clark for the Town of Ancram to accept and approve the Natural Resources Conservation Plan, with gratitude. Motion carried.

Building Department

ZEO Edward Feratto has requested to attend a seminar training course from 3/1 to 3/5. A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to allow Mr. Feratto to attend training 3/1 to 3/5, the town paying any expenses incurred . Motion carried.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Miller and moved for adoption. Resolution carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Resolution #11 of 2015:

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN BOARD FOR THE Town of Ancram in the matter of the adoption of the updated Town of Ancram Land Subdivision Regulations

WHEREAS, the Town of Ancram adopted a Comprehensive Plan in April 2010, which is a statutorily recognized instrument under Town Law §272-a for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development in a Town; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Ancram Comprehensive Plan encourages the Town to improve its zoning ordinance and land subdivision regulations to be more effective and efficient; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Ancram Town Board, created the Ancram Zoning Revisions Committee to draft changes to the Ancram Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Regulations Revisions Committee to draft changes to the Land Subdivision Regulations as recommended in the Town of Ancram Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Ancram Subdivision Regulations Revisions Committee, after careful review, prepared a draft amendment to the Land Subdivision Regulations in accordance with the adopted Town of Ancram Comprehensive Plan, with the assistance of a professional planner and attorney; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board adopted the updated Zoning Law in November, 2014; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Ancram has caused to be prepared a Long Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) pursuant to the mandates of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (ECL Article 8 and 6 NYCRR Part 617); and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has duly considered the contents of the EAF and completed Parts 2 and 3 thereof; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has identified the relevant areas of environmental inquiry and taken a hard look at them; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has issued a negative declaration under SEQRA thereby complying with the mandates of the State Environmental Quality Review Act; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has completed requirements of NYS General Municipal Law 239-m by forwarding a copy of the draft plan to the Columbia County Planning Department and waiting 30 days for their response; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has properly noticed and held a public hearing.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS BY THE
TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF ANCRAM, COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK:

THAT THE Town Board of the Town of Ancram hereby adopts the Town of Ancram Land Subdivision Regulations; and

THAT THE Town Board also hereby repeals the Town of Ancram Land Subdivision Regulations dated April, 1994; and

THAT THE Town Board shall enter this law into the minutes of the Town Board and shall publish a summary or abstract of it once in the official newspaper of the Town; and

THAT THE Town Board instructs the Town Clerk of the Town of Ancram to maintain a file in her office in the Town Hall to contain all parts of this law; and

THAT THE Town Board ensure that all parts of the law be posted on the Town's website; and

THAT THE Town Board cause affidavits of the publication and posting of the amendments be filed with the Town Clerk; and

THAT THE Town Board instructs the Town Clerk of the Town of Ancram to file all parts of the law with the New York State Department of State.

A motion to adopt Resolution 11 or 2015 was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Miller and was unanimously approved by roll call vote, whereupon, this Resolution was declared adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Ancram:

Mr. Clark gave full credit of this revision to the ZBA and also the subdivision revision committee. The Planning Board, Zoning Board and Building Department training will be held on 3/2/15.

Pool Planning Robert Wilcox said that the committee has met with the architect and has produced initial findings from the two sites. The committee is currently working on alternatives and costs. The committee plans to have a final proposal at the March meeting.

Unsafe Buildings Law The town board will hold another public hearing to discuss the proposed unsafe building law. A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to schedule a public hearing on the Unsafe Buildings Law for 6:30pm on March 19, 2015. Motion carried. Mr. Clark stated that the hearing is the next valid step.

Sewer Study Grant The committee is waiting for Gerry Fultz to return to look over the two proposals.

Youth Bureau - Mr. Bassin stated that the county is to pay \$690 in reimbursements to the town for Youth Programs. A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Clark to allow Mr. Bassin to sign the contact with the County to receive the reimbursement money. Motion carried.

Employee Handbook - A new version will be completed next month.

Puppy Mill - The board will look at this in March.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the following budget adjustments:

To: Cemetery 8810.4 from Fund Balance (unused 2014 appropriation) \$2,000.00

To: CAC 8020.4C from Fund Balance (unused 2014 appropriation) \$2,000.00

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the warrants as prepared. Motion carried.

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

Mr. Bassin stated that he wanted to form a committee to work on coming up with an idea to honor volunteers. The event would be sometime mid to late summer.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve \$3400.00 to be paid to Hudsonia. Motion carried.

The historic vestibule celebration will take place on 2/22/2015 at 2pm.

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Ruth Wittlinger, Deputy Town Clerk