

**Town of Ancram  
Town Board  
Regular Meeting  
May 15, 2015**

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

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

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Miller to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as read and placed on the record. Motion carried.

**Fire Chief**

Mr. Boice stated that although the official burn ban has been lifted, he advised that people still remain cautious when burning as it continues to be dry and windy. The Memorial Day parade will take place in Copake this year. Step off is at 11 am.

**Supervisors Report**

**Town Issues**

**1. Financial Report** – We ended March with \$1.2 million in the bank. Revenues and spending through the end of April were normal, and slightly under the first four months of 2014. Highway spending this year through April was about \$12,000 under last year, and general fund spending was about \$8,000 under the same period last year. Assuming no extraordinary financial events, we are on track to come in pretty much on budget for 2015.

**2. Government efficiency plan** - In order for taxpayers to receive County and Town property tax rebates in 2016, Towns and Counties have to submit a plan by 6/1/15 to save 1% of the 2014 tax levy. For Ancram, the saving is \$8,000 per year. We will submit our plan, which is below, as part of the County Plan.

**County Issues**

**1. Airport** - Nothing new to report.

**2. Pine Haven** – Nothing new to report. We are still working on the contract of sale.

**3. CEDC** - The Columbia Economic Development Corporation was the subject of a recent State audit, and was criticized for conflicts of interests and a lack of transparency. While the CEDC is not part of County Government, it receives about \$450,000 a year from the County, and the County Commissioner of Economic Development is the CEDC executive director. The County is reviewing the situation and will decide what actions to take, if any, after its review.

Mr. Bassin introduced to the board a draft town efficiency plan:

## Town of Ancram Efficiency Plan - DRAFT

| Action Taken   | Date implemented | Annual Cost Savings |               |               |               |               |
|--|------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|  |                  | 2015                | 2016          | 2017          | 2018          | 2019          |
| 1. Eliminate deputy building inspector position  | 2015             | \$5300              | 5300          | 5300          | 5300          | 5300          |
| 2. Reduce lawn maintenance costs by having highway department do the work rather than outsourcing                                    | 2016             | 0                   | 5000          | 5000          | 5000          | 5000          |
| 3. Reduce truck maintenance by replacing a 1993 and 2003 with two 2015 trucks  | 2015             | 0                   | 10,000        | 10,000        | 10,000        | 10,000        |
| 4. Reduce assessor clerk hours and costs by using county resources via inter municipal agreement & better scheduling of appointments | 2015             | 2500                | 5600          | 5600          | 5600          | 5600          |
| 5. Retain local kennel for lost dogs @ \$25 per night to avoid \$305 per night fee at ASPCA  | 2014             | 840                 | 840           | 840           | 840           | 840           |
| 6. Reduce highway costs by buying leaf blower to eliminate outsourcing leaf blowing costs  | 2016             |                     | 2,000         | 2,000         | 2,000         | 2,000         |
| 7. Prepay \$240,000 garage loan  | 2014             | 8,640               | 5,980         | 4,784         | 3,588         | 2,999         |
| 8. Complete zoning revisions   | 2015             | 5,000               | 5,000         | 5,000         | 5,000         | 5,000         |
| 9. Highway inter-municipal agreement   | 2015             | 9,000               | 9,000         | 9,000         | 9,000         | 9,000         |
| <b>Total planned savings</b>   |                  | <b>29,816</b>       | <b>48,720</b> | <b>47,524</b> | <b>46,328</b> | <b>45,739</b> |
| 1% of Ancram Tax Levy  |                  | 8,000               | 8,000         | 8,000         | 8,000         | 8,000         |

## **Assumptions & calculations supporting action plans**

1. Eliminate deputy building inspector - \$5300 is budgeted in 2015.
2. Highway Lawn maintenance – 16 hours/wk for 28 weeks \$20 per hour PT help = \$9000; least cost bid in 2015 was \$14,000. Savings are \$5,000/yr.
3. Truck maintenance - \$5,000 less maintenance per truck annually...under 5 year warranty. Savings \$10,000
4. Reduce assessor clerk hours – 2015 budget = \$12,000 based on 750 hours (15 hrs/wk for 50 weeks @ \$16/hr); planned workload is 8 hours/wk for 50 weeks @ \$16 per hour for \$6,400. Savings \$5,600/yr.
5. Local kennel - \$915 budgeted for dog control kennel for 3 dogs @ \$305; estimate is \$75 - \$25 per night for 3 dogs. Savings \$840/yr.
6. Leaf blowing - \$2,000 per year costs for outside contractor saved.
7. Prepay loan – 2.99% interest saved on loan balance of \$240,000, \$200,000, \$160,000, \$120,000.
8. Complete zoning revisions – 2014 Budget \$12,500; 2015 budget \$5,000...savings \$7,500.
9. Highway inter municipal agreement – 4 men for 40 hours @ \$30/hr is \$4,800; 4 vehicles for 40 hours @ \$30/hr is \$4,800. Total savings – \$9,600 per week

Mr. Bassin said that the Accountant Firm was continuing working on the town audit. The report will be ready to be reviewed by the FAC on May 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Bassin said that Assessors Clerk Mary Boice has handed in her retirement. The town will be looking to replace her and will advertise for this position.

### **Highway**

Mr. MacArthur said that there was no news on the two new trucks.

Colleen Lutz is continuing to work with Mr. MacArthur on the culvert study grant.

Mr. MacArthur presented to the board for consideration the break down of the Highway Department maintaining the lawns and parks for the town. The list did not include the health benefits or the flowerbeds.

Mr. MacArthur said that the leaf machine that was discussed at the previous meeting was a very large industrial leaf blower that could be hooked to a three point hitch on the tractor.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Miller to allow the \$5,200.00 purchase of a leaf blower for the Town Highway Department. Motion carried.

**FAC-** The committee will meet with the auditors on May 30, 2015.

**Youth Commission-** The Youth Commission will not be taking the trip to the Zoom Flume this year. They are discussing making this a bi yearly trip.

**Communications-** The committee announced that Sue Bassin has stepped down from the committee.

**CAC-** They are working with the Culvert committee on the grant as well as setting up some activities for the summer Kids Camp.

**Historian-** The department is continuing to work on the historic district.

**Pool Planning-** The committee will meet again later in the summer.

**Kid's Camp-** At this time there are 10-15 kids enrolled. The applications have begun to come in in the past week.

**Volunteer Event-** The event will recognize the ZRC. Councilwoman Israel suggested waiting until April as that is volunteer month.

Mr. Bassin asked the Board's opinion on the Chris Gibson resolution. Mr. Clark stated that passing the resolution is the least the town can do. Mrs. Israel felt that it was about awareness. Mr. Miller felt that it was a campaigning strategy.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Miller to allow some caution suggested yellow speed signs for 25 mph on Roche Drive and 15 mph on Crest Lane. Motion carried.

Mr. Bassin said that he had received a request that the town take over the maintenance of Birch Lane, a current private road. Mr. Bassin said that he told the requester that the town is not in the habit of taking roads over. Mr. MacArthur said that before the town could even consider this, the owners would have to bring the road up to specs and all of the surrounding property would have to be surveyed at the owners expense. Then, the road would have to be deeded to the town.

Mr. Bassin announced that the town has received back about 800 of the 1260 property cards that have been sent out for the interior reval process.

The following resolution was offered by Supervisor Bassin and seconded by Councilwoman Israel:

#### **Resolution #21 of 2015**

**Climate Change:** A resolution of the Town Board of the Town of Ancram, NY regarding Climate Change:

WHEREAS an overwhelming majority of credentialed scientists, in the United States and abroad, support the findings that climate change is happening and that human activities are a key contributor to it;

WHEREAS the U. S. National Academy of Sciences and the U. K. Royal Society have stated, "It is now more certain than ever, based on many lines of evidence, that humans are changing Earth's climate. The atmosphere and oceans have warmed, accompanied by sea-level rise, a strong decline in Arctic sea ice, and other climate-related changes;" (<http://dels.nas.edu/resources/static-assets/exec-office-other/climate-change-full.pdf>)

WHEREAS the 2014 National Climate Assessment, reviewed extensively by the National Academy of Sciences and a Federal Advisory Committee, states that in the Northeast "Heat waves, coastal flooding, and river flooding will pose a growing challenge to the region's environmental, social, and economic systems... [which] will increase the vulnerability of

the region's residents, especially its most disadvantaged populations;"

(<http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/report/regions/northeast>)

WHEREAS the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review of the U.S. Department of Defense states that the effects of climate change are "threat multipliers that will aggravate stressors abroad such as poverty, environmental degradation, political instability, and social tensions – conditions that can enable terrorist activity and other forms of violence;"

(<http://climateandsecurity.org/2014/03/04/climate-change-and-national-security-in-the-2014-quadrennial-defense-review/>)

WHEREAS the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change has reported "Impacts from recent climate-related extremes, such as heat waves, droughts, floods, cyclones, and wildfires, reveal significant vulnerability and exposure of some ecosystems and many human systems to current climate variability ... and "All aspects of food security are potentially affected by climate change, including food access, utilization, and price stability;"

([https://ipcc-wg2.gov/AR5/images/uploads/WG2AR5\\_SPM\\_FINAL.pdf](https://ipcc-wg2.gov/AR5/images/uploads/WG2AR5_SPM_FINAL.pdf))

WHEREAS New York State "Executive Order No. 24 set a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in New York State by 80 percent below the levels emitted in 1990 by the year 2050;"

(<http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/80930.html>)

WHEREAS the Union of Concerned Scientists has called "for government and corporate decision makers to reduce the threat of global warming by:

- Expanding the use of renewable energy and transforming our energy system to one that is cleaner and less dependent on coal and other fossil fuels.
- Increasing vehicle fuel efficiency and supporting other solutions that reduce U. S. oil use.
- Placing limits on the amount of carbon that polluters are allowed to emit.
- Building a clean energy economy by investing in efficient energy technologies, industries, and approaches;" ([http://www.ucsusa.org/global\\_warming/global\\_warming\\_101#.VPIobUvYkpE](http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/global_warming_101#.VPIobUvYkpE))

WHEREAS if left unaddressed, the consequences of climate change will adversely impact all Americans, hitting the most vulnerable populations--children, the elderly, the sick and the poor—hardest, and saddling future generations with the costly burden of a damaged planet; and

WHEREAS most faith traditions recognize a moral obligation to care for the most vulnerable peoples and to be responsible stewards of the Earth;

WHEREAS global warming and resultant climate instability are broadly considered issues requiring correct and sustained actions by nations, states, and communities;

WHEREAS local, state and federal governments are incurring increasing costs to repair damage from severe climatic events, and these costs are only expected to increase and will ultimately be borne by taxpayers;

WHEREAS addressing climate change through increased energy efficiency measures and increased development of renewable energy sources could provide benefits in terms of employment and sustainable economic activity;

WHEREAS the region has experienced multiple 100 year storms in the past 10 years; now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Town Board of the Town of Ancram:

1) urges the County of Columbia, the State of New York, and the Congress and President of the United States of America to take prompt and effective measures to rapidly address climate change by promoting and encouraging a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels and their associated infrastructure, improvement in the efficiency of energy systems, and the development and installation of renewable energy systems; and

2) stands ready to work with any level of government to achieve these goals, that will in the process create safe, sustainable jobs and provide real, clean energy solutions for generations to come.

Vote was taken by roll call vote as follows:

Councilman Clark- Yes

Councilwoman Israel- Yes

Supervisor Bassin- Yes

Councilman Miller- No

Councilman Thomas- No

Motion carried.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption:

**Resolution #22 of 2015: Government Efficiency Plan:**

**Whereas** the State of NY has required each unit of local government to develop a plan to save 1% of the municipality's 2014 tax levy in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and

**Whereas** the Town of Ancram is required to develop a plan to save \$8000 per year in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and

**Whereas** the County of Columbia has developed a county-wide plan, will be lead agency for all towns in the County, and will file a county-wide savings plan that will include the Town of Ancram,

**Therefore it is resolved that** the Ancram Town Supervisor is authorized to develop a Town of Ancram efficiency plan that identifies savings of at least \$8,000 per year in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and

**It is further resolved that** the Supervisor is authorized to work with the County to include the Town savings plan to be included in the County plan, and to execute the certifications necessary for the Town of Ancram to become part of the County plan, and

**It is further resolved that** the Town of Ancram commits to using best efforts to implement its portions of the County plan, and to support the implementation of the County plan in its entirety.

Resolution was adopted by a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Miller to allow the town to apply for a grant for culvert repairs and upgrades not to exceed \$750,000. Motion carried.

The following budget adjustment was offered by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Thomas and carried by unanimous vote: transfer \$5200 from the fund balance to 5130.2 for the purchase of a leaf blower for the Highway Department. Funds are from the unbudgeted sale of the plow truck for \$17,600.

The following budget adjustment was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and carried by a unanimous vote: transfer \$5000 from the fund balance to 8020.4 CAC to pay for the balance due on the work on the Natural Resources Conservation Plan. These funds were part of 2014 budgeted grants and appropriations that were not used in 2014.

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

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica R. B. Cleveland  
Ancram Town Clerk