

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
March 18, 2010**

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

The regular town board meeting was called to order by Supervisor Bassin at 7:00pm with a salute to the flag.

Mr. Bassin introduced Ned Shnedier from the Roe Jan Library. Mr. Shnedier stated that the library is close to be finished and is planning to be opened around June 1, 2010. At this time the library is having tours of the new building. He stated that the building is built to last 100 years. The library has had a basement added to the original plan for added space. The building has been built green and has the largest porous asphalt driveway in the capital district. The library has raised from the community 1.5 million dollars and is over target on local money. The library continues though to still be short about \$400 - 500,000.00 and are having a cash flow crisis. They are in the process of selling the current library building to the Town of Hillsdale for \$240,000.00.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Thomas to approve the minutes of the previous town board meeting on 3/18/2010. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting on 3/30/2010. Motion carried.

Supervisors report-

Mr. Bassin stated that the first two month of the year have been very good for the Town ad that financially the financial results are better this time this year-to-date then the same time last year. But, Mr. Bassin stated that the year is shaping up to be difficult financially. He stated that the town has a lot going on. He stated that the board had considered imposing a cost freeze in hopes of trying to save money. The board decided to ask the departments to not spend what they not need to spend. Mr. Bassin stated that the board does not know what the sales tax and mortgage tax revenues may be. Mr Bassin stated that there is over a million and a half in the bank at this time.

Mr. Bassin spoke about an idea that has come up to elect a county legislature to replace the Board of Supervisors. He stated that this idea would require county voters approval in a county-wide referendum. Mr. Bassin stated that the Kohl's has resubmitted for approval to the IDA for a 15 year PILOT, and will be voted on by the IDAS next month.

Highway Report-

Highway Superintendent MacArthur gave the following report. He stated that he hopes that spring is here. The Highway staff will begin sweeping the roads this week. A crew is to start work on Poole Hill Rd. The department is beginning to get ready to pave and they are going to grade the dirt roads. Mr. MacArthur stated that he has found a used grader which he would like to purchase. The machine is being traded in by the Town of Chatham. The grader is a 1994 and is at 6,000 hours. The dealer wants \$46,000.00 for it and will give Ancram \$14,000.00 for the current grader making the price \$32,000.00 with the trade. Councilman MacArthur stated that he feels it is time for a newer grader. Councilman Miler stated that this will buy a lot of time for the town. Mrs. Bassin asked if it was true that the town can no longer get parts for the current grader. Mr. MacArthur stated that this was true. Libby McKee asked what the book value is close to this price. Mr. MacArthur stated that the book price for this model is around \$38,000 and \$40,000.00. Mr. MacArthur stated that the machine has top of the line new tires. Mr. MacArthur stated that he knows the equipment from the Town of Chatham and he knew this was being traded in.

A motion was made by Councilman MacArthur and seconded by Councilman Miller to purchase the 1994 used Grader as per the recommendations of the Highway Superintendent. Motion carried.

Comp Plan SEQRA Assessment Form-

Mr. Bassin stated that the Comprehensive Plan has been reviewed by the Conservation Advisory Council and the County Planning board has approved the plan. At this time in the meeting the Town Board reviewed the Comp Plan SEQRA assessment document page by page and concluded there were no negative environmental impact caused by the Comp Plan.

ATT cell tower proposal-

Mr. Bassin stated that the proposed locations for the cell tower are at the Town Hall and the Firehouse. The Fire District feels that there is not enough room on the Firehouse property. Mr. Bassin stated that the Town Board has not officially discussed this issue. Mr. Bassin stated that the response for the cell tower came from Pyramid and that they won't give the Town any more info unless the Town plans on signing the lease for the tower. Mr. Bassin stated that the Cell Tower Committee Chair Bob Roth was out of town, and had requested that the Town Board wait until his return next month before dealing with

the ATT proposal. Mr. Bassin indicated he (Mr. Roth) expected to get more information from ATT before the next Town Board meeting.

Bev Ditto addressed the board about the Neighbors Helping Neighbors cat program. She is asking the town to fund 50 cats at \$30.00 a cat. She explained that this is a catch, neuter release program. She feels that there is a great need for this in Ancram. She stated that she has taken care of 35 her first year at the project, 50 cats next year and 65 cats this past year. She stated that she has 27 cats at this time to take care of and that she has people looking for help.

Mr. Bassin asked for questions or comments- Councilwoman Israel stated that she thinks it is an admirable project, but she feels that it should be considered for next year consider. She feels that the board has enough projects to fund this year, and there is no money in the budget for this effort. Councilman Miller stated that although this is a worthwhile cause, but the town is strapped for money. Councilman Thomas questioned what the town is going to cut to do fund this project. Councilwoman Israel questioned if people who have the problem pay towards the costs. Bev Ditto stated that yes they do. Jennifer Berne made a suggestion of a donation drive. Councilman MacArthur started the donation drive by offering \$10.00 and asked others in the audience to contribute. Over \$300 was raised before the end of the meeting.

New Matthews proposal-

Mr. Bassin stated that at the end of February Mr. Mathew gave im a note offering to sell te paint ball facility and 8 acres on Roche Lane to the Town for \$480,000.0. Mr. Bassin stated that he spoke to Bob Mathews and gave him three points. The first is that the \$480,000.00 amount proposed is still above the fair market value of the property, which makes it illegal for the town to buy it. Second is that the garage committee is planning on putting the new building at the current site for less than the Mathews' site, building and roads and when you add in the loss in property taxes resulting from buying the Mathews' property. Three is that the location of the Mathews' site in a residential area is inappropriate and destructive to those who live near the site of Matthews property. Mr. Bassin asked for comments. Councilman MacArthur stated that he had no comments. Councilwoman Israel stated that she would like to see the garage stay at the current site. Councilman Miller felt that the garage can be completed at the Ancramdale site for less money. Councilman Thomas stated that he had no comment. A motion was made b Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to allow Supervisor Bassin to write a letter thanking Mr. Matthews for his continued interest, but letting Mr. Mathews know that the Town Board was not interested in pursuing his proposal. Motion carried. Ayes- Councilman Miller, Councilman Thomas, Councilwoman Israel and Supervisor Bassin. Abstained Councilman MacArthur.

Donna Hoyt asked if the board is planning to spend \$412,000.00 at the existing garage site. She stated that she does not see how spending money at the current site can work, since the existing site is not big enough for a garage and the needed room for storage. Mr. Bassin stated that the garage committee is still talking to Mr. Slott about the adjacent acre. Mr. Bassin stressed that for 60 years the highway

department has made the existing area work and there should not be any difference in next 60 years. Mr. Bassin stated that all but one of the garage sites he and the Highway Superintendent MacArthur looked at were on three acres or less, and not all of the other Town garages are on five acres or more. Donna Hoyt stated that the town farms out a lot of material for storage. Councilman Miller stated that it makes sense to pile stone where the highway department is paving the roads. Mr. Terry Boyles questioned the \$ 480,000.00 number and why the property is worth less. Mr. Bassin reminded the people that the town and Mr. Citrin both had appraisals done in 2009 which came in with numbers suggesting the Mathews' paint ball building and 10 acres was worth around \$250,000.00 - \$300,000.00, and market values have been dropping since those appraisals were made in mid-2009. A question was raised as to why Roche drive residents are more important than those on Maple Lane. Mr. Bassin stated that the people on Town Road bought their homes knowing that the highway garage was there. The residents of Roche lane thought they were buying in a rural area. Lynn Miller stated that it has been said that the people on Roche Lane are against the property being bought and that she lives on the road and is not opposed to the purchase. Mr. Jack Lindsey stated that if people still have questions about this issue they need to go to the garage committee meetings. He stated that the board want to get town business done at the Town Board meetings. Mr. Lindsey stated that this board has made more progress on this issue in the past few months than the last board did in two years. Donna Hoyt stated that she would like the board to put the decision to a town vote. She stated that then the question is answered. Mr. Bassin stated that he felt the vote was taken last November. Councilman Thomas stated that he ran on platform which stated that the town garage will stay where it is. He stated that the board is now waiting for the committee presentation. Councilman MacArthur stated that he does not care where the garage goes at this point. Councilman Thomas suggested that the town let the committee propose something.

Ethics Committee-

Jack Lindsey, Chair, stated that the board is up to four members and have a fifth member to propose. The current members are as follows: Chair Jack Lindsey, Bonnie Hunt, Linda Pulver, and Ron Brant. Richard Wheeler is the proposed member fifth member, who will be present and voted on by the Board at the next meeting. The committee will present a draft law at the next meeting.

Grants Committee-

Libby McKee stated that the Town has sent a packet to Sen. Saland for the 82/7 grant. She stated that Mr. Molinaro would like a proposal on about the garage project. The CDBG grant for the Ancram Opera House. Resolution for the board. Will include with a pre submission. Jim 1 mad 2 carried. John abstained

Communications Committee-

Madeline Israel stated that the communications committee has begun the process of putting together a newsletter but that it is going to be costly to mail them on a monthly basis. She feels that it will cost about \$800.00 for each mailing. She suggested e-mailing to those who have e-mails and then having

hard copies available at various locations throughout the town including the post offices, the town hall, the Firehouse Deli and the Farmers Wife.

The following letter from the Town Historian, who could not be in attendance, was read by her request by the Town Clerk. Mrs. VanTassel asked that the letter be in the minutes. The letter is as follows:

As Ancram Town Historian I would like to go on record that I am in disagreement of the way the Milk Factory has been compromised without me being informed before this was done. As historian I should have had the opportunity to take pictures and measurements for documentation of the building. I feel this has been disrespectful to me as the historian.

I presented a letter to Mr. Basin from William Krattinger, Historic Preservation Program Analyst, in which he wrote: I would like to take this opportunity to offer some observations regarding the former Borden Milk Factory in Ancramdale, which is currently utilized in association with town maintain activities. Established in post-Civil War period, when the railroad reached this region, I believe this building is of no small significance to the history of that area and its agricultural traditions. While partially denatured in association with modern uses, I nevertheless am of the opinion a thorough examination of its remaining physical features should be undertaken, in order to evaluate just how much of the historic building survives. Given the important historic associations with Ancram's agricultural history, the building could potentially qualify for listing on the State and National Registers, and potentially grant monies for restoration and reuse. Hopefully you can share these observations with the right people at the municipal level.

I also presented Mr. Basin from the book "Looking for Work" by Peter H. Stoot, where he writes, The Ancramdale Milk Receiving Plant, built in 1896, is the only milk plant known to survive in this section and only one of two in the county. The other is a deserted plant in North Chatham. It represents an era, lasting nearly a century, in which small dairy farms throughout the Northeast grew to maturity. The Ancramdale plant closed in 1954. An earthen ramp leads up to the former receiving room, which projects from the main block of the plant. Inside are the scale originally used to weigh the vats of milk, wall cabinets, and echoes of nearly 60 years of operation. This earthen ramp and scale of which Peter Stoot wrote has been removed from the building, by whom and by what authority I don't know but I do know this isn't the way to preserve our historic buildings and the history of the Town of Ancram.

Mr. Terry Boyles asked if the scales are gone. Councilman Miller stated that they were on the first floor of the building now. Mr. Boyles asked if the Town Board will proceed with placing the town barn on the property now that this may be a historical building. Mr. Bassin noted that the Milk Factory building has important historic memories for the town, but had been used as a garage for 60 years, had had major structural changes made to it over the years, was no longer in its original condition, and was not a historic building of any significance. Mr. Jack Lindsey stated the same NYS representative Mrs. VanTassel mentioned in the letter was the person who ruled that the Steele house was also historic. Mr. Bassin stated that the board had not intended to be disrespectful to Mrs. VanTassel by the actions taken at the current garage site.

Animal Control-

Mr. Gary Dietch stated that he took Level two training last year and that Level One training is being given this year. He stated that it cost \$525.00 and that he would like to take the course. Councilman

Miller stated that the board had passed a resolution making it necessary to have town board approval before sign up for courses. Mr. Dietch stated that he has brought in \$500.00 in fines this year. Councilman MacArthur stated that Mr. Dietch is \$200.00 over budget this year already. Mr. Bassin stated that Mr. Dietch has picked up 3-4 dogs this year. Councilman Thomas asked if the board doesn't send Mr. Dietch to the training, does he lose the money? Mr. Dietch said he does. Nancy Bryant made a point that the town sends everyone else for training and that she doesn't see how Gary is any different. Councilman MacArthur stated that the board didn't know what they were getting into in regards to animal control. A motion was made by Councilman MacArthur and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to allow the Animal Control Officer to take training at a cost of \$525.00. Ayes- Councilman MacArthur, Councilwoman Israel and Supervisor Bassin. Abstained- Councilman Miller and Councilman Thomas.

Old Business

Ancramdale Polling Place- Mr. Bassin stated that he has met with the Board of Elections and that they will go along with a lift chair for handicapped access.

Alander trail- Mr. Bassin stated that he will know more next week.

New Business-

Mr. Bassin stated that in regards to a question raised by Councilman MacArthur about the possibility of residents paying their taxes on a payment plan, the County stated that the taxes can be paid in 3 payments, must be paid by April and have to have the penalty.

A motion was made by Councilman MacArthur and seconded by Councilman Miller to allow deputy ZEO Bill Hunt to attend training at a cost of \$275.00. Motion carried.

Resolution #38 of 2010:

RESOLVED: That based on recommendations of the current Ethics Board, Bonnie Hundt and Linda Pulver be appointed to the Ethics Board.

Motion made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Thomas. Motion carried.

Resolution #39 of 2010:

RESOLVED: That based on the recommendations of the Board of Assessment Review interview Committee, consisting of Baxter Stickle, Chair of the BAR, and Town Board members Jim Miller and

