

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Workshop Meeting
July 6, 2009**

Present: Supervisor Thomas Dias
Councilman John MacArthur
Councilman James Miller
Councilman Robert Mayhew
Councilwoman Donna Hoyt Deputy
Town Clerk Ruth Wittlinger

Supervisor Dias called the workshop to order at 8:05pm with a salute to the flag.

Mr. Dias gave an update on the 2010 budget activity. He stated that the departments were given budget worksheets and some have already been returned. The board will use these worksheets to make the budget.

Mr. Dias stated that the DEC visited the Town Highway Garage and that some issues were cited. The DEC was not upset but they did make recommendations on how to correct the problems. A letter has not yet been received stating the recommendations, and example of which is the storm runoff. Mr. Dias stated that there may be a need for an engineer. The board stated that the two existing buildings will have to come down before another building can be built.

Mr. Dias stated that Mr. Bob Murphy brought in a person to discuss solar panels for the Town Hall building. Mr. Murphy stated that the consensus was that the Town Hall is ideally situated for solar panels. The town hall has a new roof so no reinforcements will be needed. NYS will give a rebate for about 78% of the costs of the projects. The board will have to authorize \$1000.00 for the initial paperwork and certificate to begin the project. When completed, the panels will provide about 85% of the Town Hall's heat.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller seconded by Councilman Myhew to make an exception to pass a motion at the workshop meeting. Motion carried.

Resolution #16 of 2009:

RESOLVED: That the Town Board of the Town of Ancram does hereby allow \$1,000.00 to be spent to have Hudson Valley Clean Energy bring together all paperwork and drawings needed to file for a grant from NYSERTA that would help fund solar panels placed on the Town of Ancram Town Hall Building.
Resolution proposed by Councilman MacArthur and seconded by Councilman Miller.
Carried.

A resolution will be written and proposed at the July Town Board meeting that will allow the current snow removal contract with Columbia County to be extended.

Mr. Dias stated that there was a letter in their packet regarding low volume roads. The letter also discussed legislation regarding this. The wording would state if the road was low volume, seasonal, low maintenance, etc. If this was to happen, those living on the roads would receive letters letting them know the status. The roads considered for seasonal would be Over Mountain Road, Crest Lane Extension, Shepards Road, Rothvoss Road, Kens Road, School House Road, Altenburg Road and Rabbit Tail. Sawchuck Road, abandon it to 4/10 mile into the Floods Sanitation Field. Stewarts Road, abandon it.

Mr. Dias stated that there is an MVP Health Insurance comparison in the packets. There are listed three or four different quotes. Councilman MacArthur suggested the board looking at different companies. Mr. Dias stated that he will contact CDPHP, on Mr. MacArthurs suggestion, to get a quote.

Mr. Dias stated that there are two order to remedy violations from the building department in the boards packets. The first one is for a Pavel Hillel on Tompkins Road. The property has an expired building permit for a pool. The second is for Bryce Birdsall on Tims Road for a pool without a building permit.

Mr. Dias state that the board received a copy of a letter addressed to Mr. Willard Palmer of Town Road from the Department of the Army, the Corps of Engineers. The letter stated the *“However, this office would strongly recommend that you take into consideration that, because of changes over time to the hydrology of the general area, your property is currently an important part of the drainage pattern from the adjacent wetland, and it would be best if you were to provide some pathway for the flow of water from the wetland on the one side of the property to the culvert on the other side of the property. High flows will inevitably occur during some periods of the year, and failure to consider them at this time could eventually prove very detrimental to the structures on the property.”* Mr. Dias stated that he will follow up with the Corps.

The Ancram Opera House submitted a request for \$2,500.00 in funding to run a public dance party on the ball field.

Mr. Dias stated that there is a letter from Molinaro’s office that stated that the STAR rebates for 2009-2010 may happen and will be only for the traditional and enhanced STAR.

Mr. Dias stated that there are updates on the 3 appraisals on properties in town. He stated that the board must keep these confidential until the next meeting.

Mr. Dias stated that the board needs to begin thinking about appointing people to a Zoning Revisions Committee. It was suggested to put an ad in the paper. The board has upwards to 18 months to do the revisions. Mr. Dias stated that the revision contract from

Nan Stolzenburg is in the packets. Mr. Dias stated that the board will also advertise for a consultant for this.

Mr. Dias stated that there is a letter in the packet that pertains to the JCAP grant for the court offices.

Mr. Dias stated that he met with the DOT about the County Route 7 and State Route 82 intersection. Since that meeting they have put out traffic counters to see how much traffic goes through the intersection. The board, he suggested, should contact the schools, fire departments and contactors with heavy equipment who get hung up on the intersection, and have them give testimony to their experiences.

Mr. Dias stated that the board received a letter from the Community Rescue Squad about setting up an ambulance district for taxes. Councilwoman Hoyt stated that the Town of Ancram should have a seat on the Board of Directors.

Councilman Mayhew asked if the board passed a resolution for people over 65 to be exempt from having dog licenses. He suggested a maximum of two dogs. This has not been done yet.

The board stated that they would like to have a member of the different town departments at the workshops in case the board has questions for them.

The board raised questions about Mr. Legget, the Town Assessor. It was asked how the town stands at a 93% ration town wide. They also wondered why the Houghtaling properties assessment was decreased from \$170,000.00 to \$90,000.00 with no one grieving the property.

Councilman Miller stated that there is no disaster plan in place for the Town of Ancram and that there are grants that can be used to underwrite this. He stated that Joanne Dwy wrote a plan for the county.

Privilege of the Floor

Mr. Mike Citrin asked if there was a way for the board to compare budget to actual figures at the end of the year or the end of each month. Councilwoman Hoyt stated that this has been done for the expenditures. Mr. Citrin questioned the same for the income. Mrs. Hoyt stated that this was done as well.

Mr. Citrin asked about the appraisals of the properties. Mr. Dias stated that the board is not done negotiating with the property owners so the appraisals have to be kept confidential. Mr. Dias stated that Mr. Citrin could call attorney Jason Shaw if he had questions about this procedure.

Ms. Suzanne Bressler recommended that the town can get further with state agencies in getting things done if letters are written to officials up the line.

Mr. Ron Brant wanted to know if the meeting with the DEC was a follow up meeting or a new call. Mr. Dias stated that the DEC was contacted by a concerned citizen but that the town was going to call anyway for a follow up visit. Mrs. Jean Brant wanted to know why the citizens were not notified of the visit. Mr. Dias stated that she called one day and then was there the next and that it is very hard to get even just the board members at the meeting.

Mr. Brant asked a question about combining all of the Town Highway Departments into one department run by the county. Mr. Dias stated that this may be a option at some point, but not now.

Mrs. Lynn Miller stated that she lives near the Mathews property and that the DEC was at the property and that they approved it. Mrs. Miller stated that by staying at the current spot is a quick fix and she felt it was in the towns better interest to move on to a property that will cover into the future. Mr. Dias stated that the original town barn would have to be torn down because it is not large enough.

Mr. Mike Citrin stated that there are 159 parcels in the town on State and County roads, of which 35 are vacant. Mr. Citrin stated that these property owners should be contacted via letter to see if the properties are for sale. Mr. Dias asked if Mr. Citrin had a letter formed and could he send it out. Mr. Citrin stated he would and would follow up with phone calls.

Mrs. Miller stated that on Roche Lane there are four homes after the town road ends. Two are for the proposed highway garage and two against. She wondered where that left it.

Mr. Avery Dietter stated that he is worried about the health conditions on his property with the drainage and the possible septic problems. He thought that the town board is responsible for this. Mr. Dias stated that when the county Health Department was established, this was taken away from the town board.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Monica Cleveland
Town Clerk

Notes Taken by Ruth Wittlinger, Deputy Town Clerk