

To: Ancram Town Board
From: Art Bassin 
Date: 4/19/2011
Subject: Supervisor's Report – April 2011

Financial Report: Revenues and expenses came in as expected during the first quarter. In terms of revenues, we have received all \$933,000 in town, highway and lighting district taxes, and, based on information from the County, expect both sales and mortgage tax receipts this year to be slightly better than budget and last year. Total revenues for the first quarter were \$956,000. Based on the first quarter results, it looks like we are on track to achieve the full year operating budget. We have identified about \$160,000 in un-budgeted capital projects, including a new loader, the salt shed and two used plow trucks, which we should be able to fund by spending less in certain budgeted operating accounts, and from unbudgeted revenues.

Expenses for the first three months of 2011 were \$379,000, basically on budget, despite the higher than expected costs of snow removal. Cash in the bank as of 3/31/11 was \$1.3 million. We expect to receive an additional \$440,000 in sales and mortgage tax revenues, state highway aid and town fees over the rest of the year, and incur budgeted expenses of \$1.1 million. This will leave us with a year-end 2011 cash reserve of \$636,000. We also expect to receive FEMA aid for the December 26 storm, and there may be FEMA aid to deal with the costs of the March storms, but the timing and amount of this aid is still uncertain.

2011 Projects and Priorities: A Brief Update

1. **New playground** at Town Hall: Work started on site prep Monday 4/18. Volunteers wanting to assist with the assembly of the playground on April 29, 30 and May 1 should contact Bob Wilcox at rbwilcox@hotmail.com.
2. **New Ethics Law:** The Ethics Board held five ethics law orientation sessions at Town Hall over the last month, and is dealing with two issues.
3. **Convert the Milk Factory building into a salt shed:** The Garage Committee continues to explore converting the Milk Factory into a salt shed for under \$50,000 using concrete silo blocks. Final plans and a recommendation will be coming to the Town Board in the next month or two.
4. **Highway equipment:** We have purchased a new Case Loader for \$82,000 cash, which is a 5% reduction over the price had we financed it. We expect to take delivery in May or June. The Highway Department will "borrow" the money from the town for the purchase, and will repay the loan over the next 4 years with a \$25,000 per year reduction in the highway budget. We also plan to buy two used plow trucks from Copake for a total of \$40,000, but timing is uncertain.
5. **Town laws on the internet:** General Code has started the process of adding all town laws to the web site. We may have something to look at in the next 60 days.

6. **Develop an employee manual:** Jack Lindsey, Jim MacArthur and I continue to work on this, and should have a draft for the Town Board to review this month or next.
7. **Complete and adopt zoning revisions:** Hugh Clark and the ZRC are likely to have the first part of the proposed revision to zoning ready for adoption before mid-year, and anticipate having the entire zoning revisions process completed and presented to the Town Board by the end of the year.
8. **Adopt the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan:** The Town Board public hearing on the Ag & Farmland Protection Plan was held 3/17/11 at 6 pm. The TB will decide at the 4/21 meeting if it wants to make any changes to the Plan prior to considering the Plan for adoption as an addendum to the Comp Plan.
9. **Emergency preparedness plan:** We will incorporate “lessons learned” from our March 6-7-8 experience in the emergency preparedness plan, and have a draft for the TB to review by mid-year.
10. **Better Cell service:** No new news on cell tower activity. But ATT has just launched a program to offer subscribers in areas where there is poor ATT cell reception a free “mini-cell tower” which plugs into your DSL line, and gives you cell coverage at your home or office.
11. **Review and revise town fees:** John MacArthur and Madeleine Israel have agreed to lead this effort, and will be reporting on progress over the next few months.

County Issues

1. **County Manager:** The County continues to work on developing a proposal for the County Manager position. The County Manager proposal will go to the Board of Supervisors in June for a vote. The County Manager committee is developing a document outlining the “case” for the county manager, which should be available to the supervisors and the public before the middle of May.
2. **Walmart Consolidation:** The chair of the County Board of supervisors recently announced a plan to buy the Walmart building in Greenport and consolidate most of the health, human services and administrative functions of the County there. There are no estimated costs for this consolidation yet. The expectation is that the consolidation will make sense because the Walmart build out will be relatively inexpensive and partially offset by selling three or four excess empty buildings. In addition, there will be a significant reduction of rent and utilities at other sites, and possible operational efficiencies from having everyone in one place. The next step in this process is to have the Board of Supervisors approve funds to do the preliminary space planning and architectural work to develop costs and timetables for the build out and move.