

**To: Ancram Town Board**  
**From: Art Bassin**   
**Date: August 13, 2012**  
**Subject: Supervisor's Report**

**July Financial Report:** Spending for the seven months ending July 2012 totaled \$742,000, about \$44,000 better than the YTD budget and about \$112,000 better than YTD July last year. Our spending this year benefits from the mild winter (\$45,000), from moving our Rescue Squad costs to the county (\$84,000) and from having no playground costs this year (\$20,000). Revenues, in aggregate, appear to be tracking slightly above budget. We ended July with \$928,000 in the bank, and assuming no unpleasant surprises, expect to end the year with over \$550,000 in the bank, which is about \$50,000 more than I have been expecting. The \$50,000 improvement is based on a combination of better than budgeted planned revenues and lower than budget spending. The July YTD Financial Summary Chart is attached. The detailed budget reports are available on the home page of the Town website ([www.townofancram.org](http://www.townofancram.org)) as part of the background for the June TB meeting, and at Town Hall, and have been emailed to you separately.

**Garage Loan payment:** We have a garage loan payment coming up in September. We have to decide if we want to pay the \$40,000 contractual 10 year amortization, or more. As you may recall, we budgeted a repayment of \$80,000.

**Package 3 – Zoning Revisions:** We will review Package 3 of the Zoning Revisions at Thursday's TB meeting and consider them for adoption. We have gotten comments back from the County and Town Planning Boards and the CAC, will finalize the SEQRA review at the 8/16 TB meeting, and will hold the public hearing tonight, August 13.

**2013 Town Budget:** The preliminary review of the 2013 Town Budget indicates we will be able to keep taxes flat again in 2013, while we continue to invest in important town priorities. We will discuss the budget at the next few town board meetings before we schedule a public hearing (or two) to secure public input on the budget, which we will do before the September and October Town Board meetings.

**82/7 Intersection:** The State has gotten involved and has proposed a solution for the 82/7 intersection that the County is reviewing. Once the County and State have agreed on an approach, the County will get a state DOT work permit, and can begin the work. Dennis Berry, the owner of the Tin Smith House has agreed to a temporary easement on his property to allow the work to be done. I will be sending around a sketch of the proposed solution once the State and County have finalized it. We will also convene a meeting of the Intersection Advisory Committee before the work is done, to outline the plan and respond to questions.

**Historical and Cultural Resources Survey:** The Historic and Cultural Resources Committee met Saturday with Ruth Piwonka to go over her proposal for a survey of historic and cultural structures in Ancram, Ancramdale and Boston Corner. She will photograph and comment on about 265 historic structures dating back to before 1850. Having a document like this will help the Town qualify for grants to restore historic old buildings. Ruth is the dean of Columbia County historians. She has an excellent reputation, and has published the definitive works on county history, art and architecture. I will send you the final proposal and her background when I get it, which should be before our meeting next week. Her proposal outlines about \$10,000 in costs, but with the need for updating and printing out our GIS maps, the actual cost is likely to be closer to \$12,000. At our meeting Thursday I will be requesting TB approval to seek contributions from the community and grants to cover the cost of this project, with the Town committing up to \$2000, only if necessary. Town Historian Clara Van Tassel has a contractual budget of \$2000, which has not yet been spent. If necessary, we could use \$1000 of her budget this year and \$1000 next year to fund the town's

\$2000 commitment. I don't think we will have any trouble getting community or grant funding for this project, but the Town's support will allow us to get Ruth started by 9/1, so she can be done by mid-next year.

## **County Issues**

**Homeless shelter:** The County is reviewing a proposal from the Galvan Foundation for a 37 room homeless shelter for singles on the corner of State St and 7<sup>th</sup> in Hudson. The County would rent the facility for about \$600,000 a year, with 1.5% increases annually over the next 20 years. The County currently houses its homeless in motels. The proposed shelter would include case management services and food and transportation for residents. The City of Hudson Planning Board will have to review and approved the proposal before it gets built. There are two issues. One is that the county has seen its single homeless population drop in half over the past year to about 25, which is the "breakeven" point where the fixed cost of the proposed homeless shelter equals the variable cost of the County paying for motel rooms. If the number of homeless singles continues to drop, the proposed fixed cost shelter solution could cost the County more than paying for motels on a per night basis. This problem would be avoided if the county were able to use the rooms in the shelter for families or to rent them out as affordable long term apartments for singles. The other issue is there is opposition in Hudson from people who believe it is poor public policy to concentrate homeless people in one location, and from others who believe there has not been enough public communication of what the plan is and what the impacts will be on the Hudson community of a 37 room shelter. Both these issues will be explored over the next few months before the BOS decides on how to proceed with this idea.

**TCI Fire:** The fire last week in Ghent has caused concerns that the County does not have a "reverse 911" system to communicate to any or all County residents with emergency messages to a personal phone in the event of situations which may require evacuation or staying indoors with air conditioning off and windows shut. The County emergency management team is looking into purchasing a reverse 911 system, and should be making a recommendation to the BOS over the next few weeks about this. In the meantime, county residents can sign up for NY Alert, an emergency notification system, by going to [www.NYalert.gov](http://www.NYalert.gov)

**2013 County Budget:** The County has started the 2013 budget process, and will be looking to hold County taxes flat again in 2013, for the third consecutive year.