

January 1 Swearing-In Ceremony brought together all elected town officials (left to right): Justice Bob Wilcox, Councilman John MacArthur, Highway Superintendent Jim MacArthur, Clerk Monica Cleveland, Councilman Jim Miller, Supervisor Art Bassin, Councilwoman Madeleine Israel, Councilman Chris Thomas, and Justice George Wittlinger.



New Town Board Addresses 2010 Budget

At the February town board meeting, Supervisor Art Bassin distributed his Supervisor's Financial Summary for 2010. (Copies are available at town hall and on the website.)

Art notes that the Town had \$739,999 on hand at the beginning of 2010 – before the \$921,000 of 2010 property taxes were deposited in the bank.

2010 revenues in total are budgeted to be \$170,000 less than 2009. Of this, property taxes are expected to be flat from last year, while the large part of the revenue decline is from sales tax, mortgage tax, and state & federal highway aid, about \$150,000 lower in total.

2010 expenses are budgeted to be \$24,000 higher than last year.

The town highway department spending in 2010 will be \$931,000, 67% of the total budget.

The town board has identified possible savings for the year near \$80,000 –

funds that will be used to plan for the new town garage and cover the town's share of the solar panel installation at town hall. (The largest share of the cost of the solar panels is coming from a grant.)

Art says the major financial issue facing the town is how best to provide needed facilities and equipment for the town Highway Department.

“The Board's goal is to meet these challenges without going into debt,” he says, “and without raising taxes. To do this, we need to develop a detailed capital plan over the next few months that will carry us through the next few years.”

The basics of this plan will include:

- Generating cost savings from our current budget,
- Seeking grant monies,
- Taking advantage of the existing garage site

to build a new facility that meets our needs at the lowest possible cost,

- Expanding our practice of sharing, purchasing or leasing new highway equipment with nearby towns and the County,
- Exploring options to avoid spending \$100,000 on a salt shed through cooperation with other towns and the County.

Ancram 2010 Budget

Starting cash	\$739,000
Revenue	
Property tax	\$930,000
Sales tax	\$175,000
Fed/State aid	\$124,000
Fund carryover	\$85,000
Town fees	\$35,000
Mortgage taxes	\$30,000
Other	\$9,000
Total Revenue	\$1,388,000
Expenses	
Highway	\$931,000
Town government	\$192,000
Ambulance	\$132,000
Building mgmt.	\$51,000
Planning + zoning	\$50,000
Youth + parks	\$32,000
Total expenses	\$1,388,000
Ending cash	\$739,000

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To report any highway-related problem, contact Highway Superintendent Jim MacArthur at 518-329-6190.

High Costs to Repair Roads

At the January town board meeting, Highway Superintendent Jim MacArthur (left) explained why some town roads are in such poor condition.

“From experience,” Jim said, “I know what’s required to fix our roads the right way, unfortunately, the town can’t afford it.”

Jim noted it would take about \$450,000 a mile to

fix a road effectively, plus he would have to shut the road down for five to six months to get the job done.

“I know you wouldn’t stand for that,” he added.

This year, Jim plans to finish work on Poole Hill, work on Cottontail and widen it, and complete drainage work on Maple Lane and Town Road.



Capping off a good visit – Congressman Scott Murphy (left) receives an Ancram Community Days baseball cap from Supervisor Art Bassin. Ancram resident Bob Roth, pictured at right, wants cell phone coverage sooner, rather than later.

Rep. Scott Murphy Visits

“No cell phone ring tones were heard and no one talked on a cell phone, but there was much talk about cell phone service,” noted Diane Valden, *The Columbia Paper*, describing the February 8 meeting with Scott Murphy at town hall.

Murphy described how a lack of high-speed internet access in his district forced an area cheese business to opt out of the Williams-Sonoma catalog because

they couldn’t process orders fast enough. He hopes to improve technology for our area.



To the Ancram Community from Emily Miller

Words cannot even begin to express the overwhelming support that was bestowed on my entire family during the tragic loss of our son, Mikey, on Dec. 12.

I don’t even know where

to start as far as thanking people, and for fear of leaving someone out, I will not even try to list individuals – you know who you are – and from the bottom of my heart, I thank each and every one of you.

I would like to thank the Ancram Fire Company for their efforts the night of the accident and for the reception after the funeral. It was incredibly heartwarming. I feel honored to be part of such an incredible community.

Best wishes for a Happy New Year.

Emily Miller and the entire Miller Family

Looking Ahead to a Good Year *Town Supervisor Art Bassin*

Ancram is off to a great start in 2010. The Comp Plan will be adopted, and the new Zoning Revisions Committee has started work. Experienced leaders chair the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. We are planning for Agriculture and Farmland Protection, a new garage at the existing site, and emergency preparedness. We are studying the property tax assessment process. We

passed increased senior, low income, disability and veteran's property tax exemptions. This spring, volunteers will paint the town hall, under the direction of Ancram painter Jane Moore. Thanks to Bob Murphy, we got a large grant to help pay for solar panels on the town hall, and I bet Bob Roth will get us a cell tower in 2010. Our new Conservation Advisory Council is helping with environmental matters.

Ancram Community Days will be August 14-15. The Youth Commission plans a dozen events. The Ethics Board will update the town's Ethics Law. The Communications Committee has improved this newsletter and will revamp the town website to be more informative. The Community Grants Committee is looking for funds to support our priorities. Together, we are all making Ancram a better place.



Clara Receives 2009 Angel of the Year Award

"Clara represents the eternal aspect of Ancram," says Lynne Perrella, president of Ancram Angels, which honored Clara Van Tassel (right), town historian, at the group's holiday party last December. "She keeps track of the people and places that have always been true of

Ancram, and any encounter with her is always happy and upbeat," Lynne continues.

"I was extremely honored to receive this award," Clara says. "Lynne called to tell me and to let me know B. Docktor and Robin Massa were going

to create what became a wonderful video to introduce me at the party."

Each year, the Angels host a party to raise money for the Community Rescue Squad. This year's holiday party brought in \$1,500.



Libby McKee Brings Grant Money to Town

The Community Grants Committee, chaired by Libby McKee (right), meets monthly on the second Thursday at Town Hall.

This new committee was formed in January with the merger of the town's Grants Committee and the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Committee.

Their first success, thanks

to special efforts by Committee member Bob Murphy, was a \$123,000 grant from NYSERDA for the lion's share of the Town Hall's solar panels.

The committee has three other projects they hope to fund in part through grants:

- improving highway safety at the intersection of Routes 82 and 7 in Ancram,

- constructing a town garage, and
- upgrading the town pool and playground.

"We're available to help town-sponsored committees explore funding options," Libby says.

For more information, contact Libby at lookouts4@aol.com or 518-329-3921.



**For more, visit:
www.townofancram.org**

Get news faster, and help the town save money by receiving this newsletter via email. Send your name and mailing address so we can take you off the print mailing list. Contact Madeleine Israel at misrael@townofancram.org.

Communication Committee: Sue Bassin, Nancy Bryant, B. Docktor, Mary Murfitt, and Jane Shannon.

**Comments?
Suggestions?
News to report?
Want to help?**

CONTACT:
Madeleine Israel
329-7483

Ancram Town Council,
Chair, Communication
Committee

misrael@townofancram.org

Opportunities to Serve Your Town

Conservation Advisory Council seeks volunteers with background and training in science and environment. Currently working on wetland buffer. Contact Chair Jamie Purinton, 329-2337.

Clerk for Zoning Revisions Committee – this paid position takes minutes at weekly Monday meetings 7-9 pm at Town Hall. Contact Chair Hugh Clark, 329-2926.

Community service organizations invited to make money – Set up coffee, tea, and food sales at town board meetings to benefit your organization. Board meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month. Call Art Bassin to sign up your group: 329-6512, extension 6, and leave a message.

Civil service exams for county positions – New jobs are listed each month; see postings in town hall.

Help paint town hall – help build community spirit and save the town money! Call Jane Moore, 329-3423, to volunteer.

Upcoming Events

- Apr 11 Youth Commission’s Scholastic Book Fair, 12:30 to 3 p.m., Town Hall.
- Apr 17 Town Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m., Town Hall, refreshments available.
SPECIAL NOTE: Saturday Board Meeting.
- Apr 24 “Speak to the Frogs”, Youth Commission Special Program, Joseph Hoyt, Jr., 6 p.m., Town Hall.
- May 20 Town Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Town Hall, refreshments available.
- Aug 8 Ancram Fire Company Golf Tournament, call 329-4444 to reserve for golf and dinner or just dinner
- Aug 14 Ancram Community Days, food, tractor pull, and more, Town Hall.
- Dec 4 Ancram Angels Holiday Party, Town Hall

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1416 COUNTRY ROUTE 7
TOWN HALL
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