

Town of Ancram
Town Board
Public Hearing Final Budget 2017
November 17, 2016

Present: Supervisor Arthur Bassin Councilman Hugh Clark
 Councilman Chris Thomas Councilwoman Madeline Israel
 Councilman David Boice Town Clerk Monica Cleveland
 Highway Superintendent James Miller

The regular meeting of the Ancram Town Board was called to order by Supervisor Arthur Bassin with a salute to the flag at 7:05pm.

A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the minutes of the previous Town Board meeting and public hearing on the preliminary budget. Motion carried.

Fire Chief

Mr. Boice reported that it has been a slow month. There have been few calls. He cautioned that it was still rather dry and people should take care with burning.

Supervisor's Report

1. Financial Report – October was another “normal” financial month. Through October, total spending in the general fund was up over the same period in 2015 about \$20,000, caused primarily by \$19,000 of 2016 pool capital improvements, \$8,000 in camp costs, \$13,000 in costs related to removing the old drainage tank and installing the oil/water separator at the town garage, and buying the Houghtaling property (\$3000). These cost increases over 2015 were offset by lower park management/maintenance costs (\$10,000), lower audit costs (\$6,000), lower attorney costs (\$6,000), lower CAC costs (\$8,000) and by higher than expected pool and camp donations (\$11,000). Excluding the \$399,000 truck purchase last year, Highway department spending is flat this year over last, after absorbing the \$84,000 truck bond payment. We had about \$932,000 of cash on hand at the end of September, and about \$138,000 in culvert grant receivables. Assuming we get reimbursed for the culvert grant prior to year-end, we should end 2016 with about \$825,000 in cash. We have been notified that our second mortgage tax check will be \$12,500, which we should receive before year-end. Full year 2016 mortgage tax will be about \$33,000, compared to a budget of \$25,000. And in October we received a \$75,000 3Q sales tax check from the County, up from about \$72,000 last October.

2. 2017 Final Budget – We will hold a public hearing on the 2017 Final Budget at 6:45 pm on Thursday 11/17. The Final Budget indicates a 2017 tax levy that is \$8,500 (1%) lower than the 2016 tax levy, with a \$50,000 contingent (reserve) account. Budgets for health, property and liability insurance are set at 2016 budgeted levels. Property and liability insurance estimates have come in at 2016 levels, and increases in health insurance premiums are offset by two fewer individuals covered. NYS retirement

costs have been estimated by NYS at \$45,000, \$1000 less than the 2016 actual cost and \$5000 less than the 2016 and proposed 2017 budgets.

3. Garage Oil/Water Separator – We have received the permit and are waiting for delivery of the tanks, which the highway department will install.

4. Parcel adjacent to Town Garage – We purchased this .54 acre parcel from the County for \$2500 plus closing costs. The highway department will demolish the trailer on that is in the parcel. We are getting estimates on demolishing the house on the property assuming asbestos.

5. Culvert Grant – Work is done on the Pats Rd culvert. The site has been cleaned up, reseeded and plants have been planted. The road over the culvert will get paved next spring. We will review the plantings next summer to see if more plants are needed to adequately screen the culvert. Highway Superintendent Jim Miller is reviewing guard rail options, including the option of not having guard rails. We have spent \$193,000 of the \$275,000 allocated for the Pats Rd and Hall Hill Rd culverts. Pats Rd accounted for about \$120,000 of the \$193,000. And in the \$193,000, we have already paid \$60,000 for the Hall Hill culvert and about \$20,000 for the basic engineering work on both culverts. We expect the installation of the Hall Hill culvert to cost less than Pats Rd. Overall costs of Pats Rd came in about \$15,000-20,000 over the original estimate. We expect to recover some of this overrun when we do the Hall Hill culvert next summer. The estimate did not cover the costs for cleanup, reseeding and replacing plants, did not have a contingency for unexpected conditions, and underestimated the cost of highway time and equipment needed to install. Lessons learned for next time.

6. 11/13 Veterans Event – On Sunday, 11/13 we had a very successful grand opening of the veteran's exhibit in the Historic Vestibule at Town Hall. Lynne Perrella did her usual magnificent job with the exhibit and organizing the entire event. Over 100 people attended a musical salute to our veterans by Mark Rust. Deputy Supervisor Hugh Clark presented certificates of appreciation to veterans Prope Dietter, Bob Grayson, Gerry Roberts and Ron Van Tassel, and to the family of Frank LaCasse, for Frank's distinguished service in WWII.

7. County Issues – County 2017 budgeted tax levy increase is likely to come in under the tax cap of .68%.

Budget

A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Supervisor Bassin to increase the Library budget line from \$5000 to \$75000. Mr. Bassin asked for discussion.

Councilman Clark felt that there was no doubt that the library merited support. And, he recognised that to draw people in, the library has to go beyond the traditional purpose of said library. He though sees the town as talking about funding a library, not funding a community center. He said that he asked last year for a breakdown of the budget for the library and the community activities. He also felt that he, as a representative for the town, should consider many things. He did not know if it came down to asking people their opinions and taking a "poll" or if he should use his own judgement. He felt this was a lose lose situation in many ways. The board is now called to vote on an issue that has been voted on by the town residents

itself and in a way divided the community. In this way there is a guidepost, 2 referendum votes. He felt that he was conflicted.

Councilwoman Israel stated that it is her judgement that an elected representative represents the entire town. She stated that the entire town did not vote no. She emphasised that the board is not voting on \$35,000 but on \$7500.

Michael Citrin asked the board to define a library. He said that a library in this time is not just books. There are classes for the elderly on using computers, flu shots. It is a place of knowledge. He felt that the town should be proud to support this library.

Bonnie Hundt noted that this is not a city area where there are community centers. She felt that just supporting the books is narrow thinking.

Councilman Boice said that he felt conflicted. He believes it should be funded. He noted that 55% of voters voted against the 414 referendum. He has spoken to people who are upset that both votes were for the same number. Others are angry that when the building was built it was not bid out and came in over budget. He was conflicted on voting with his heart or voting for what people want.

It was noted that this is the age of information and disinformation. It is vital that people have correct information available. Over the long run, this is what is best for the community.

Councilman Thomas said that he has heard a lot of “flack” for increasing last year by \$2500.

Mr. Bassin noted that arithmetic says that 45% of the \$30,000 referendum vote is around \$14,000.

All comments being offered, the stated motion to increase the library appropriation from \$5000 to \$7500 was put to the following roll call vote. Four Yes- Councilman Boice, Supervisor Bassin, Councilwoman Israel and Councilman Clark. One No - Councilman Thomas. Increase passes.

Councilman Thomas made a motion to lower the property tax levy by an additional \$7500. Mr. Bassin asked for comments from the board and the floor.

Councilman Clark asked what the opinion of the FAC was. Mr. Bassin said that the FAC felt that this was not important to lower the taxes and that it would be better to put the money in the bank for a rainy day.

Councilman Boice said that he has received a quote for the new doors needed on the building are going to cost around \$4000 a pair.

Councilwoman Israel felt this was more of a symbolic gesture.

Mr. Bassin called for a roll call vote. Motion was passed by unanimous affirmation.

Mr. Bassin addressed the board concerning a possible new local law which would allow an alternate member of the planning and zoning boards to participate in the process and vote when a member of the said board is absent. Councilman Clark stated that the zoning revisions committee had discussed this issue. He will look at his notes. He cautioned about there being room for abuse. ZBA Chair Bonnie Hundt said that while the ZBA is in favor of this law, she was concerned with the complications that would come from a variance that involved several meetings.

Councilman Thomas asked Mr. Bassin about the cash flow situation at the county. Mr. Bassin said that the drain of Pine Haven has stopped. There is still \$3 million owed to the county from the Pine Haven Corporation. The IGT from the state will need to be paid first. Once that is completed the county will be ahead.

Councilwoman Israel noted that the Neighbors Helping Neighbors should be commended for their work in the community with the weekly food baskets.

Councilwoman Israel showed the board members some preliminary mockups of town gateway signs. She will have costs projections at the next meeting.

Highway

Mr. Miller addressed an issue that has arisen from the state mapping the town roads through GIS. It has cut our total length of road by 3.5 miles. This could cost us \$10,000 annually in State Aid. Mr. Miller asked that the town consider taking on an additional .28 miles Roche Lane Extension as a town road to make up some of the lost mileage.

The department has been cleaning up stumps on Westfall Road. The Oil Water separator is expected to be delivered the week after Thanksgiving. The new truck will be shipped in the early part of 2017. Mr. Miller also said that the town will be needing a new road side mower next year. The NYS bid is \$31,000.

ZBA

The committee has been busy, as stated by chair Bonnie Hundt.

Pool

The new decking has been completed and the new fence installed.

A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to allow Supervisor Bassin to draft a letter to the NYS Broadband Program Office in support of a grant for Fairpoint that would help fund the costs of installing broadband for Fairpoint customers. Motion carried.

The Hall Hill Culvert will be done next summer.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Passed by unanimous vote.

Resolution #39 of 2016: 2017 Budget – Resolved, that the Ancram Town Board adopts the 2017 budget as presented with two changes - a \$2,500 increase to the Library appropriation to \$7,500 and a property tax levy reduction of \$7,500 to \$775,550.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Boice and moved for adoption. Passed by unanimous vote.

Resolution #40 of 2016: Retiree Health Insurance – Resolved, that the Ancram Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with Blue Shield to provide health insurance in 2017 to two retirees using the Blue Shield EF 1 Plan, which is the same plan that is in effect for retirees in 2016 at a premium cost of \$328 per month per retiree, which the Town will pay; it is further resolved that as in 2016, the Town will contribute \$850 to each retiree as partial compensation for out of pocket drug and medical co pay costs, and will reimburse each retiree for medical costs over \$3400 up to the policy OOP maximum of \$5,000.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Passed by unanimous vote.

Resolution #41 of 2016: Employee Health Insurance – Resolved, that the Ancram Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with CDPHP to provide health insurance in 2017 to four eligible employees, two spouses and two children using the CDPHP Bronze 400 Plan, which is the same plan that is in effect in 2016, at a cost of \$417 per person; it is further resolved that the Town will pay 100% of each eligible employee's premium and 50% of each spouse's premium, and 50% of each child's premium under the Fidelis Care program. It is further resolved that as in 2016, the Town will contribute \$750 to each eligible employees' HSA at Salisbury Bank, and will reimburse each eligible employee and spouse for medical costs that exceed \$1500 per individual up to the individual policy OOP maximum of \$7,150.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Passed by unanimous vote.

Resolution #42 of 2016: Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) – Resolved, that the Town Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with CDPHP to provide HRA services to eligible town employees.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Passed by unanimous vote.

Resolution #43 of 2016 Road Maintenance - Resolved, that the Town or Ancram has and will continue to maintain as public roads .2 miles of Crest Lane Extension and .08 miles of Bash

Road, and **it is further resolved** that the Town of Ancram will maintain as a public road an additional .28 miles of Roche Lane.

A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Boice to make the following budget adjustments. Motion carried.

To 7510.1 From FundBalance \$1200

To 1110.4 From 1110.12 \$200.00

To 7310.4 From 1620.21 (\$5,080), 1620.42 (\$400), 1620.41 (\$1,000) Total: \$6,480.00

A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the warrant and pay the bills. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Monica Cleveland

Ancram Town Clerk