

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
January 19, 2017**

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

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

Court Clerk Ruth Wittlinger gave the 2016 Town Court office report. She reported that there were 383 cases closed in the year which is up 26% from the previous year. The court collected \$41,000 in fines, 50% went to the state. The office is carrying over 13% of the cases from 2016 into 2017. Mrs. Wittlinger informed the board that the Court Clerk training is mandatory now. She said that the criminal cases are down but that there were mostly multiple tickets per person.

Climate Control Task Force

It was reported that there were six members present at their meeting. The committee explained to the board that once the town meets certain items on the clean energy list, the town will be eligible for up to \$100,000 for clean energy community projects. The committee has asked that the town board look at a proposed Unified Solar Permit. Mr. Ferratto and Councilman Clark will be reviewing this document. Committee chair Doug Brenner also read a statement which is on file in the Town Clerks office.

Minutes

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the minutes of December 15, 2016 and have them placed on the record. Motion carried.

Fire Chief

Mr. Boice reported that the fire department had responded to the several calls. All were car/deer accidents. Mr. Boice said that there is an informational Habitat meeting on the Ancramdale hamlet project to be held at the Fire House on 2/12 at 1 pm. The Fire Company will hold a chicken BBQ on 2/25.

Supervisor

1. Financial Report – Ended the year as expected. Cash on hand was about \$900,000 - \$64,000 higher than forecast because the new dump truck for the highway department was delivered and paid for in early January rather than in December.
2. Taxes – Everyone should have received their tax bills in the mail early in January. They are also available on the town web site at www.townorancram.org.
3. Houghtaling Property – We have delayed any action on demolishing the Houghtaling house until we can secure more attractive bids.
4. Paving - Jim Miller is starting to research the pros and cons of paving the remaining 22 miles of dirt roads in town. Considerations will include environmental impacts, driving safety in snow, ice, rain and dry conditions, drainage and erosion control and long term costs of maintenance.
5. Kids Camp & Pool – I plan to convene the Camp/Pool Board in early February to start the planning process for the 2017 Camp/Pool season.

Board Members

Councilman Boice informed the board that that the new pool fence had been the victim of a falling tree. It was \$100 to repair it. Mr. Boice also said that in his opinion paved roads are better than dirt roads. Mr. Boice said he felt that it makes a difference in an ice storm to have a road paved as opposed to gravel.

Highway

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to accept all bids for highway road materials for 2017 except for Callanan. Motion carried. It was noted that the reason for not accepting Callanan was due to their price being only a delivery price.

Mr. Miller said that the new truck was broke in and did will during the ice storm. He warned that because the ice was so bad, the town had to put salt on the dirt roads and that once the temps go up, the roads will become a muddy mess. Mr. Miller also reported that he has two companies looking to give prices for taking down the house on the Houghtaling property.

Councilwoman Israel commented on the subject of paving the dirt roads. She felt that when four corners was unpaved, the traffic speed was reasonable. Now, the traffic is very fast with the paved road. She also felt that the issue was double edged because the roads would be financially more manageable if they are paved.

Councilman Clark commented that this is a long time frame for this project. Mr. Miller stated that this was correct, that with 22 miles of dirt road, the town could only afford to pave about a mile a year.

Councilman Boice felt that with at this point only doing a few miles a year, the town is constantly catching up.

Mr. Miller said that oil and stone is as good as a paved road. And, he said that at this point he is looking mainly at the heavily traveled roads like Prospect.

Councilman Boice suggested that the town board ride the roads as a group to look at them, as past town boards had done.

Councilman Clark felt that everyone had valid points. He urged that the town board consider the bases of the roads as well.

Councilwoman Israel asked if the owners will have a say. Mr. Miller said that will factor into the decision for sure.

Tax Collector

36% collected at this point with 430 postings.

A motion was made to allow Mrs. Cleveland to attend the Town Clerk Conference for three days in April. Motion carried.

Planning Board

John Lyons has been contacted to look at the local law pertaining to alternative members on the zoning and planning boards. The drawing of the law will cost around \$1200.

Communications

Councilwoman Israel presented two draft town gateway signs to the board for consideration. The signs will cost \$500 each and will include set up. Mr. Bassin will send the agreed sign to the email list for comments from the community. Mr. Brenner asked why the town is spending money on this. Mr. Clark reminded Mr. Brenner that this was part of the Comprehensive plan.

Historical

The department received a grant from Columbia County Historical District to pay for a tube to store the Ancram School banner in.

Historic District

The town will begin working on the Ancramdale district in the summer.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Boice and carried unanimously.

Resolution #7 of 2017: Building Department reimbursable expenses – Resolved, that the Town of Ancram Code Enforcement Officer (CEO), Zoning enforcement Officer (ZEO) and Building Inspector will be reimbursed \$4500 per year in out of pocket expenses related to use of a home office, personal cell phone, personal computer, plus mileage for the use of his personal auto on town business, and be it further resolved, that the CEO/ ZEO/Building Inspector will be reimbursed for up to \$500 annually for the costs related to attending the training necessary to maintain his certification as a NYS Code Enforcement Officer.

Mrs. Israel asked if this was a tax liability for the town. Mr. Bassin said no, that this is a tax liability for the employee, not the town. Mrs. Israel stated that the laws are very strict on this and that the “office” has to be exclusively for work. Mr. Bassin said this was Mr. Ferratto’s responsibility, not the towns.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Boice to approve the warrants. Carried

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilman Clark to pay the bills. Carried.

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica Cleveland
Ancram Town Clerk