

**Town Of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
April 17, 2014**

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

The regular meeting of the Ancram Town Board was called to order at 7:00pm by Supervisor Bassin with a salute to the flag.

A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Miller to approve the minutes as read and have them placed on the record. Motion carried.

David Boice stated that the fire department had gone on 12 calls this month. They are getting ready for their 75th anniversary celebration in July. They thanked those on the board who attended the banquet. They invited people to come to the fire house on May 6th to speak to Central Hudson at a forum brought to Ancram by Didi Barrett.

Supervisor's Report:

Town Issues

- 1. Financial Report** - We ended March with \$1,288,000 in the bank, and pretty much on target in the 1Q in terms of revenues and expenses against plan. Barring any unexpected surprises, we should end the year with between \$750,000 and 800,000 in the bank, which will be slightly better than where we were at year end 2013.
- 2. Fee Schedule** – We will discuss it Thursday, and will consider it for approval. Its attached to the Resolution.
- 3. Town Priorities** – An updated list of Town priorities and issues follows this note. We will review and update this list on Thursday, and make it a part of our monthly routine.
- 4. No burning** - The annual outdoor burning ban continues in effect from to May 15.
- 5. Proposed Ridgeline and Steep Slope Regs** – Public hearing at 6 pm on 4/17. We have some updated maps and lists of affected parcels which I will send around separately.

County Issues

- 1. Airport** – The BOS approved the “Porreca Plan” runway safety area plan on 4/9 by a vote of 3020 for, 305 against. This will allow the County to comply with FAA safety guidelines for the north end of the runway without the need for any land from the Meadowgreens. This is the least cost and least disruptive way to meet FAA safety guidelines while keeping the airport jet-capable. The solution involves adding 450 feet of runway to the south, making the runway 5800 feet long, and “declaring” 800 feet of that longer runway as a safety area. Pilots using the airport think they now have a longer, 5800 foot runway, and they do, but for

FAA purposes, we have a shorter 5000 foot runway, with a 1000 foot safety area. So everyone is happy. Almost.

2. **Pine Haven** – The BOS Chair has halted work on the design on the new nursing home facility pending further review of options, which include selling the nursing home, or outsourcing the management of Pine Haven. While it is important that we keep Pine Haven's 120 beds available in the County, there are organizations that more skilled at managing this kind of facility than the County is. We need to get Pine Haven into the strongest possible management hands we can, for the benefit of Pine Haven's residents and the County's taxpayers.

Town Priorities & Issues

Long Term

1. Blass Field
 - Pavilion
 - New Pool
 - Fix up current pool
 - Support for community septic
2. Repay part or all of garage loan early, or invest in projects
3. Center of Ancram
 - Fix sight line west up 82 from 7
 - Improve turning radius from 82 to 7 north
 - Community septic & water solutions for center of Ancram
 - Parking & sidewalks in center of Ancram
 - Unsafe buildings law - code enforcement
 - Tin Smith, Stiehle & Porter's
4. Comp Plan - 5 year review; right to farm law
5. Heritage Resources Plans – Historic Districts
6. Natural Resources Plan...culvert study
7. Emergency Management Plan, Flood Control
8. Ridgeline & Steep Slope Law; revised zoning law; subdivision law

Annual/Operational Issues

1. Cut or raise taxes
2. Spend more or less on roads and highway equipment
3. Improve salaries & benefits for town employees or hold flat
4. Grant applications
5. Annual Farm Tour

Mr. Bassin asked that the board approve funds that would hold monies for the heritage resources fund, the building fund and the monument funds. A motion to that effect was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Miller. Motion carried.

Mr. Bassin stated that the town had been served with a law suit resulting from Paul Waldorff's accident at the Fire House. The suit was given to the town's insurance company lawyer to handle. The suit incorrectly

claims that the Town had contracted with Ancram Construction to do the demolition work on the tavern, and owns the Fire House. The insurance company lawyer feels this suit will be dismissed.

Mr. Bassin spoke about the resolution of the Airport safety area issue. The County will buy no land from the golf course.

In regards to Pine Haven, Mr. Bassin stated that Mr. Gratten has stopped the work on the drawings for the new building. The County, who had been in planning for 5 years on building a \$32 million dollar nursing home which they had thought would be reimbursed by the state, has found that state reimbursement is not a sure thing. Most County supervisors believe it is important to have the nursing home operate in the County, but that the County should not be running it. Many feel it should be privatized.

Mrs. Hoyt asked if the county gives higher wages and better benefits. Mr. Bassin stated that the nursing home would continue to have the same union but would work at private wages and benefits. But, those working there would have a more stable future.

Mrs. Bassin stated that when ranked by performance, the Pine Haven nursing home is not near the top for quality of service. To fix this, somebody else would have to take over running it. Mr. Bassin stated that Pine Haven does not provide the range of services or care that a private operator could do. Residents are not getting as many services as they could under a private owner.

Mr. Bassin stated that the town is allowed to appoint a summer intern at the County. Mr. Bassin is seeking applicants. Mr. Bassin has received two thus far.

Mr. Clark asked Mr. Bassin had asked the CAC about the flood control plan. Mr. Bassin had and they have asked to form a subcommittee.

Highway

A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to allow Mr. MacArthur to attend Highway School in June. Motion carried.

Planning - Has been quiet with only one applicant.

ZBA - There has been one meeting with training. They need to find another alternate member.

Communications - They are working on round one of the Town of Ancram signs.

CAC - They are working on the draft of the Natural Resources Plan. They will present the plan at a public meeting.

ZRC - The ZRC will be moving to change the ridgeline amendment to reflect the major/minor distinction.

Ag Committee - They are meeting on the 28th to plan a date of the farm tour. The Chaseholm open house was a success and the farm stand is open.

Heritage Resources - On the 26th they will meet at 3pm to talk about Ruth Powanka's report.

On the 26th of April, the Mill will have an open house from 10am to 2pm.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Miller and moved for a roll call vote. Resolution was carried unanimously.

Resolution #6 of 2014: Fee Schedule **Whereas** the attached Town of Ancram Fee Schedule, dated 4/17/2014, which has been developed based on a review of the fee schedules of neighboring towns and has been reviewed by the Town Clerk, the Highway Superintendent, the Building Inspector, the Chairs and Secretary of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, and by the Financial Advisory Council, and **whereas** the attached fee schedule is intended to cover the costs incurred by the Town of Ancram to provide general municipal services to the residents of the Town, and to review and approve proposals requiring review and approval by the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Building Inspector or Town Board, **therefore it is resolved** that the attached fee schedule is approved, and shall be effective as of June 1, 2014.

Summer Camp will begin on July 7th.

Mr. Bassin stated that Building Inspector Ed Ferratto had recommended that the Town Board to adopt an unsafe building law. Mr. Jason Shaw had told Mr. Bassin that by adopting such a law, the building inspector could inspect any buildings suspected of being unsafe, demand that the place be secured and if that is not done, the Town Board could hire an engineer to inspect the building and then, if deemed unsafe by the engineer, the Town could make the building secure or take it down. Under the terms of an unsafe building law, the costs incurred by the town to make the unsafe building secure or to take it down could be charged to the property owner's tax bill. Mr. Miller asked if the engineer could be charged to the owner. Mr. Bassin stated that this could be added to the bill, if the engineer says the building should be taken down. If not, then the town probably could not add it to the tax bill. Gerry Flutz stated that he feels this law fails in many ways. He asked why the town would have the law on the books if not to use it? Bob Wilcox stated that this is a public safety issue and that the same law is used in many towns. Mr. Bassin stated that Mr. Ferratto uses this law in his two other towns. In Ancram, he has no such recourse. Mr. Clark stated that this kind of thing is cited in the Comp Plan many times. To keep with the Comp Plan, the board must think this through. Mr. Bassin asked if the town wants to spend money to look at drawing up a law. Mrs. Hoyt stated that if this is adopted, it needs to apply to everyone fairly.

Mr. Bassin stated that Mr. Feratto will be drawing up a violation list of letters he has sent out. As a first step the list will be public. Then, if they do not comply, they will have to come before the town board. It will be a multi step process. The Board asked that Mr. Bassin get a copy of an unsafe building law for the Board to look at without incurring any legal costs. .

Mr. Bassin spoke about the culvert study. All of the town's culverts will be looked at and decided which ones are acceptable and which need to be replaced.

Mr. Gary Flutz spoke about grants. There are three possible grant opportunities:

The first is a grant to look at the possibility of a community septic system in Ancram. Mr. Flutz stated that the properties in Ancram center were laid out in the mid 1800's, making them small and unable to comply with current septic and well regulations. The town will be applying for a DEC grant for an engineering study in regards to the septic issues. They will need to look at the individual structures and see if it would be better for individual solutions or to start a small municipal system. If the town gets the grant it will be for \$24,000 with the town matching 20% which can be an in kind match.

The second possible grant would be for a water system in Ancram. Mr. Fultz stated that parts of Ancram are built on a slate foundation with some of the lowest water yields in the county. The committee is looking at a possible municipal water system. The Town Hall sits on a large aquifer. Before this would happen, people would have to want it. This is at the beginning stages. The water system will not be mandated. No grant application has been filed for this project.

The third possible grant would be a Transportation Alternatives Grant. There are many possibilities with this grant. There could be sidewalks to make Ancram a safer place for pedestrians to walk and bike through, linking Blass field with a walkway down 82 and across to the Town Hall property. We could focus on the phase 2 of the intersection correction. This could include money to purchase the Tin Smith house and to demolish Porter's store. The main thing with this grant is to determine what the Town wants to do. A grant writer would be brought in for this one. Mr. Bassin stated that this should be broke into pieces. This grant has a max of 2 million with a minimum of \$250,000 with a match of 20%.

Mrs. Donna Hoyt asked where the property would come from for the sidewalks. She stated that the town would be taking their parking lot. She feels that the town is putting the cart before the horse. She cited making business come back to town before putting in sidewalks. She also brought up moving the center of town.

Mr. Bassin stated that the homework done on this was great. He suggested that the intersection committee be resurrected. He felt the phase two of the intersection would be a great next step.

Mr. Fultz stated that the sidewalks play to the intent of the grant. For the intersection, they may want to look at a different grant.

Mrs. Hoyt felt put out by the fact that the town is looking for grant money to take down a building that she owns and pays tax money on. She was angry that they were not included in the talk up to this point. Mr. Bassin asked that if the town could get the money, would she want the building taken down? Mrs. Hoyt stated that the money does not come free. There will be conditions. She cited that when engineers are involved there could be added hardship for the property owners.

Mrs. Sue Bassin addressed Mrs. Hoyt with the fact that she wants more business in town but that this cannot happen with current septic and water issues. New businesses she said, needed an infrastructure system. Mrs. Hoyt stated that she believes the businesses will be out of the immediate center. She stated that the town needs practical businesses. She cited that local businesses are more expensive to patronize.

Mr. Bassin thought this was a tough problem. Mrs. Hoyt asked that if they are looking at the intersection again, have they spoken to that property owner. Mr. Bassin stated that they would. The grant cannot be applied for until June 2015.

Community Clean up will be on May 10, 2014, 9-1 at the Town Garage.

Councilman Miller made a motion seconded by Councilwoman Israel to pay the bills. Motion carried.

Mr. Wilcox stated that there had been several break-ins in town over the last few months and asked that people be aware of their property.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilman Clark to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica Cleveland
Town Clerk