

**Town of Ancram  
Year End Meeting  
Regular Meeting  
January 2, 2014**

**Present:** Supervisor Arthur Bassin                      Councilman James Miller  
                 Councilman Hugh Clark                      Councilwoman Madeline Israel  
                 Town Clerk Monica Cleveland                      Absent: Councilman Thomas  
                 Highway Superintendent Jim MacArthur

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The Year End Meeting was called to order at 7 pm by Supervisor Bassin with a salute to the flag.

Mr. Bassin stated that the town has a little under \$750,000.00 in the bank to date. He is expecting the last quarter sales tax to be about \$60,000. The CHIPS check came in at \$33,000.00, and the Highway budget came out about \$18,000.00 ahead of budget. The General Account came in about \$75,000.00 better than what was expected in expenses and \$50,000.00 better in revenue.

Mr. Bassin cited the following six 2014 Town priorities for consideration by the Town Board, and his recommended seven priorities for the County to consider:

**Proposed 2014 Town Priorities**

1. Complete zoning & subdivision revisions (2013)
2. Continue building financial reserves (2013)
3. Keep taxes flat for 6<sup>th</sup> year (2013)
4. Improve 82/7 intersection safety – part 2
5. Explore grant opportunities to support Heritage Resources & Natural Resources planning efforts
6. Monitor wind turbine noise problems

**Proposed 2014 Columbia County Priorities**

1. Improve the County's financial situation by cutting costs and improving management and reporting processes, at all management levels and across all departments
2. Improve county management processes across all county department, by setting annual financial, quality and service goals for managers and supervisors and tracking

results, doing annual manager and supervisor performance assessments, and figuring out how to reward exceptional performers with exceptional financial and non-financial recognition

3. Improve communications with supervisors, managers, employees, the unions and county residents about all issues and all the options facing the county

4. Develop a consensus about whether we should build a new Pine Haven Nursing Home, or whether we should to explore privatizing it

5. Develop a consensus about what to do with the County Airport

6. Decide whether to expand or privatize the County solid waste department

7. Develop a County Comprehensive Plan, which would "integrate" the existing Comp Plans of each town in the County and the City of Hudson, with a County Overview outlining the county's long term vision for what kind of county we want to be in 10 or 20 years.

Mr. Bassin also presented suggested supplemental 2014 Town priorities from Hugh Clark:

1. Complete review and any recommended revision of the Town Fee Schedule. *Background: from Comp Plan 9.6—"Establish a fee schedule that adequately covers expenses related to the normal review of a project..."*
2. Adopt a local "Right to Farm Law." *Background: from Comp Plan 1.1—"To reinforce the importance of agriculture in Ancram, adopt a local 'Right to Farm Law.'" By the way, this is not already included in zoning revisions, because it is not properly a zoning matter. It is its own separate, stand-alone subject and should be its own stand-alone law.*
3. Review Local Law #1 of 1990 (Flood Damage Prevention). *Background: As noted in the 3 December 2012 ZRC Minutes and elsewhere, "The ZRC recommends that Local Law #1 of 1990 (Flood Damage Prevention) be reviewed in 2013 as an action related to, but separate from, the zoning revisions project."* Charging the CAC or a separate panel to accomplish this review in and make recommendations appears to be the best course to accomplish this action. Increasingly erratic, extreme, wet weather suggests that such a project ought not to be delayed.
4. Consider holding a non-business annual or semi-annual town meeting day. *Background: from Comp Plan 3.2—"Improve the Community's dialogue with Town government by establishing an annual or semi-annual town-meeting day to talk about longer term issues and concerns no suitable for discussion at monthly Town Board meetings."* Yes, to a degree, we may already have done this somewhat. One example is the dialogue about appointing or electing the Highway Superintendent. Perhaps another example might be the use of the FAC and other advisory panels. However, the Comp Plan calls for such a forum and the TB ought to discuss whether to do it, not do it, or do it in a different manner.
5. Install enhanced community gateways. *Background: from Comp Plan 3.12—"Enhance the community gateways or 'welcome' signs, with landscaping lighting, and special signage. Gateways can establish a theme and can include signs, sculptures, or historic objects."* From financial management to communications means/community dialogue to protection of agriculture/open space, Ancram has

established that it is different from its neighbors. It's time to reinforce that distinction and let the world know that we exist and where we are.

The Town Clerk suggested that with the price of stamps increasing, the town purchase a large amount of them for the offices at this time. A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to allow the town clerk to order a bulk amount of stamps for the offices. Motion carried.

Mr. Bassin stated that Mr. Powell picked up a dog today.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to make the following Highway budget adjustment: From 5110.1 \$500.00 to 5130.4 \$500.00. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to make the following General budget adjustment: From: 1010.4 \$250.00; 1620.42 \$50.00; 9050.8 \$350.00 to 1680.4 \$250.00; 1620.41 \$50.00; 9030.8 \$350. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Miller and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to pay \$250.00 to Robin Massa for 2013 ½ year of being the deputy Historian.

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

Respectfully Submitted by,

Monica Cleveland  
Ancram Town Clerk