

**Town of Ancram  
Town Board  
Regular Meeting  
December 15, 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

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

Supervisor Bassin welcomed Denise Dreeber of Kestral Farms to the meeting. Denise has been working on preliminary designs for town gateway signs. She presented to the board several images, which the board viewed and discussed. Mr. Bassin asked that a sub committee meet to discuss the signs and report back to the board with possibly two designs to choose from.

The town board approved the draft of a letter to be sent to the Faber family for condolences on the passing of Mrs. Faber.

Mr. Bassin informed the board that he had a request for a proclamation for school choice. Mr. Bassin stated that he has spoken to Dr. Handler of the Pine Plains school who expressed concerns that the support for the school choice proclamation would result in taking money from the public schools. Councilman Clark stated that the state school board experts he knows agree with Dr. Handler's opinion. The board decided unanimously to not support the proclamation.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the signing of the Columbia Greene Humane Society contract for 2017. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Clark to approve the minutes of the previous meetings. Motion carried.

**Fire Chief**

David Boice reported that the department had responded to a bad car accident at the intersection of County Routes 7, 27 and Four Corners. He asked that all residents remember to have their chimneys cleaned. The fire district elections for commissioners was held and Will Lutz was voted into office for an additional 5 year term. Mr. Bassin added that the county supervisors voted on a fire works law and that it was voted down.

## Supervisor Report

1. Financial Report – November was another “normal” financial month. November YTD 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. 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 \$813,000 of cash on hand at the end of November, and about \$190,000 in culvert grant and Chips receivables. Assuming we get reimbursed for expenses related to the culvert grant & Chips prior to year-end, we should end 2016 with about \$835,000 in cash, which is what we have been anticipating.

2. Garage Oil/Water Separator – Was installed last week.

3. Parcel adjacent to Town Garage – Have removed the trailer, and are waiting for additional estimates on demolishing the house on the property assuming asbestos. The one estimate we have for taking down the house assuming asbestos is \$20,000.

4. Climate Smart Communities Task Force – Doug Brenner has volunteered to Chair the CSCTF. In addition, we have 7 people who have expressed interest in serving on the CSCTF committee. Next meeting will be 12/17 at 9/30 at town Hall.

5. Monument Committee – Jim MacArthur has agreed to chair the Monument Committee.

6. Broadband Committee – We have four people who have volunteered to serve as Ancram reps on the Connect Columbia broadband committee.

7. 2017 Holiday Party – Lynne Perrella has suggested that we consider holding a holiday party at Town Hall in December 2017. Mark Rust, who did the Veterans Event last month, apparently has a holiday party sing along show that we could use as the basis for the holiday gathering.

8. County Issues – County 2017 tax levy will be about flat to last year...up .68%

Mr. Bassin asked about the board’s feelings on drafting a law to allow alternate members of the zoning and planning boards to participate and vote when regular members are absent for reasons other than recusal. Councilman Clark said that if this was asked for by the ZBA and if there are no objections from the board, he would support going forward if Nan Stolzenburg and John Lyons were involved with the process. Mr. Bassin stated that he will be in contact with Nan throughout the process. A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to allow Supervisor Bassin to move forward with the drafting of a preliminary law which would allow alternate members of the zoning and planning boards to vote on applications of which they were assuming the seat of an absent member. Mr. Bassin will be in contact with Jhon Lyons the attorney and Nan Stolzenburg, planning consultant. Motion carried.

Bonnie Hundt, Zoning Board Chair, asked that if an alternate is used throughout a project, could they please be allowed to vote in instead of the regular member who missed the discussion.

Councilman Boice also commented that there is a similar law in Copake and that there has been misuse of it.

Mr. Bassin requested any final comments or suggested edits on the draft organizational meeting resolutions, the Purchasing policy, the Financial Control Policy, the Fee Schedule and the Employee handbook. There were no final comments or suggested edits.

### **County**

Mr. Bassin said that the budget had passed with a .68% tax levy increase. Total county spending is the lowest it had been in many years because of the sale of the Pine Haven nursing home.

### **Town Board Members**

Councilman Thomas announced that he will be closing on the sale of his house in the next few weeks and that once the paperwork is completed he will be tendering his resignation from the town board. He stated that it was a pleasure to serve the town and that he was proud of the many accomplishments made during his tenure. This included the building of the garage, the upgrading of equipment and making the pool and camp free to the community.

Going forward, Mr Bassin asked how the board would like to proceed with the vacant seat. Councilwoman Israel was in favor of waiting. She felt that it did not feel right to have people applying to be a board member. Councilman Clark felt that he was inclined to appointment but that if this was the decision, the town board cannot wait on it. Councilman Boice noted that if the board decides to go ahead with an appointment, it will not happen until March or April. The caucuses for the election happen in July. Mr. Bassin stated that he will look into what all the options are and will come back to the board.

### **Highway Department**

Mr. Miller reported that the department had been out for four snow calls this month. The new truck is at Hudson Valley Truck and Trailer and should be delivered soon. The oil, water separator has been installed and is working.

The department has removed the trailer off of the Houghtaling property. Mr. Miller has received prices for demolition of the house ranging from \$22,000 to \$28,000. Mr. Bassin

suggested waiting until spring and continuing to look for a less expensive way to demolish the building.

Mr. Miller asked the board to allow the department to purchase a roadside mower for the John Deere tractor. This will be funded out of the 2016 fund balance. A motion was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Boice to allow the expenditure of up to \$31,000 to be funded from the 2016 fund balance for the purchase of a road side mower. Motion carried.

Mr. Miller presented the board with the 2016 284 agreement, which will be considered for approval at the January 5 Organizational meeting.

### **Court**

The court offices are looking to install new computers, which will be paid for the NYS Office of Court Administration.

### **ZBA**

ZBA secretary Colleen Lutz reported that the ZBA is going over some variance applications.

### **Historian**

The town historian Clara VanTassel has asked to step down and become the deputy historian. She has asked the town to appoint the deputy historian, Robin Massa, to the position. The board will do this at the 2017 organizational meeting.

### **Building Maintenance**

The building deputy manager David Boice was quoted from Herringtons \$3,700 a door for the front and back doors on the building. They will be commercial grade fiber glass. He will also look at Lowes. A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Clark to allow the expenditure of \$7,400 or less for exterior doors for the town hall. Motion carried.

### **Culvert Project**

Culvert committee chair Colleen Lutz reported that the culvert committee will be meeting next Wednesday.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption:

**Resolution #44 of 2016: Road Maintenance Resolution Pertaining to Bash Road, Crest Lane Extension and Roche Lane**

Whereas the roads identified above are Town Roads open to the traveling public without restriction, and

Whereas the Town has maintenance responsibility for the roads identified above, and

Whereas the Town is legally responsible for the roads identified above, therefore be it resolved,

That the Town of Ancram has and will continue to maintain as public roads .08 miles of Bash Road beginning at Hall Hill Rd and ending at the end of Bash Road, .20 miles of Crest Lane extension beginning at Crest Lane and ending at the end of Crest Lane extension and an additional .28 miles of Roche Lane beginning .3 miles from Roche Drive and ending at the end of Roche Lane for a total of .58 miles.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to set January 5, 2017 at 5:00 pm as the time of the 2016 year end and 2017 organizational meeting. Motion carried.

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

To 1620.4 Buildings (3000.00), 1110.4 Justices (200.00), 7310.4 Youth Programs (2,000.00), 1620.21 Pool Building Labor (5,000.00), 7510.4 Historian (700.00), 9030.8 Social Security (1,500.00), 1410.4 Clerk (700.00)  
From Fund Balance \$13,100.00

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

Mr. Bob Wilcox had some comments. He thanked Chris Thomas for his time on the board and that Mr. Thomas was always willing to ask the hard questions. M. Wilcox thanked the board for recognizing Doris Faber and asked that the town think of something more to commemorate the Faber family's donation of the land on which the Town Hall is built. Councilwoman Israel suggested naming the meeting room for them. Mr. Wilcox also said that he will help with the signage.

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica Cleveland  
Ancram Town Clerk