

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Board Meeting
November 16, 2017**

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

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

Habitat for Humanity

A presentation was given regarding the Habitat project in the hamlet of Ancramdale. The project will begin solicitating families this winter through an application process which will last approximately for a month. The applicants, once chosen, will apply for a 3rd party loan with 2% or less interest with a 30 year loan. The minimum amount a family can earn to qualify for the home is \$18,700 a year and \$44,800 maximum for a family of four. A rough estimate of the monthly payment is approximately \$700-\$800 a month. The home will be a duplex and will be built to use 90% less energy to heat and cool, costing the homeowner \$300 a year to heat. The current timeline for construction to begin is tentatively set for April or May 2018. Councilman Boice asked what the garrentee is that preference will be given to Ancram families to getting the houses. He was told that although preference cannot be given, most times it is local families who apply for the homes because they want the school systems and their families live in the town. Mr. Jack Lindsey said that Neighbors Helping Neighbors care for 12 families in the town and asked if the group provides some sort of a financial safety net, would this help in the application process. This will be looked into.

Porters Store

Donna Hoyt shared that she is in the process of applying for a grant to take down the building. She stated that at this point, the pieces of roof in question had been removed and that they had a contractor look at the building and that the interior of the building is in stable shape. It is the exterior "skin" that is the issue. Mr. Bassin offered that there was interest in helping the Hoyts taking the building down. Mrs. Hoyt said that they would handle the situation themselves. Mr. Bassin suggested that when the Board came to it, it withdraws the resolution in regards to this issue authorizing an engineering study of Porters.

In addition to this structure, the Town was concerned with two others. In regards to them, the Tin Smith house has been boarded up and the loose wood removed. The house at 73 Cottontail Road is not near enough to a road or neighbor to allow the usage of Local Law #2 of 2015.

Councilman Clark mentioned to Mrs. Hoyt that if it is needed, the Town Board would be supportive of the grant application for the demolition of Porters Store.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to withdraw the resolution listed as #5 on the resolutions page. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilman Clark to approve the minutes of the 10/16 regular board meeting and the 10/16 Public Hearing on the Preliminary Budget. Motion carried.

The minutes of the November 4, 2017 forum will be read and approved at the next meeting.

Mr. Bassin asked the board at this time if there were any items on the agenda of which any board member may wish to recuse themselves. There were none.

Supervisors Report

1. Financial Report – We received about \$80,000 in sales tax revenues from the County in September, compared to our quarterly 2017 budget of \$63,750 and \$75,000 received this time last year. YTD through October we have received about \$221,000 in sales tax, compared with our YTD budget of \$191,000 and \$207,000 through October 2016. We expect to receive about \$21,000 in mortgage tax payments in November, which will bring our 2017 mortgage tax total to about \$68,000 compared to a budget of \$30,000. Spending was normal again this month. Our year-end cash is projected to be about \$736,000, about \$50,000 above the YE budget for cash of about \$685,000 (after adjusting the cash budget for the truck loan prepayment of \$242,000). Our better than budgeted YE 2017 cash position results from better than budgeted 2017 sales tax and mortgage tax receipts.

2. Community Rescue Squad 2018 Budget – The rescue squad has proposed a 2018 budget of \$101,000, about \$1000 higher than 2017. We will consider this budget for approval at our 11/16 Town Board meeting.

3. Zen Point Media – Zen Point Media has presented a proposal to take over the design, development and hosting of our web site. They host about 40 sites in the area, and have been very easy to work with during the last month as we have discussed various changes to the site. The initial start-up cost for them to redesign and take over managing our site will be about \$2500.

4. Taconic Engineering – Code Enforcement Officer Ed Ferratto has recommended that we have an engineering study done of our deteriorating buildings. We have received a proposal from Taconic engineering to do these studies at a cost of \$1600 to \$2400 per building. Because Porters may be the first structure to become a threat to

public safety, I suggest that we consider authorizing Taconic Engineering to evaluate Porters Store in the center of Ancram to determine if it is or is likely to become a threat to public safety under the provisions of Local Law # 2 of 2015, and what actions should be taken by the owner to mitigate any threats to public safety that may develop or may already exist.

5. Community Planning & Environmental Associates Contract - We have received a contract from Nan Stolzenburg regarding the previously approved project to provide planning support for the 2018 review of the Comprehensive Plan that we will need to approve.

6. New Grader – Highway Superintendent Jim Miller will be requesting TB approval to order a new John Deere grader costing about \$240,000.

7. Employee Health Insurance – The proposed 2018 employee health insurance program is basically the same as what we have in place in 2017. The Town will pay 100% of an eligible employee's premiums, contribute \$750 to an eligible employee's HSA, pay 50% of family premiums and cover out of pocket medical costs over \$1500 per family until the out of pocket maximum of \$7150 per person is met. We are staying with CDPHP again in 2018. The CDPHP plan we plan to use has a slightly lower premium but higher deductibles and out of pocket maximums than our 2017 policy. The policy we plan to use in 2018 has the lowest combination of premium, deductible and out of pocket maximum. The budgeted cost for health insurance in 2018 will be the same as in 2017 at \$65,000. Our program covers two retirees, 7 employees, three spouses and two children. Two of the eligible employees have opted to take the health insurance buyout.

8. 2018 Final Budget – The public hearing on the Final Budget will be held prior to the 11/16 TB meeting. We are budgeting a 1% (\$7,800) drop in the tax levy with a contingent (reserve) account of about \$130,000, about \$76,000 higher than the budgeted contingent account in 2017 of \$56,000. The Budget has a 2.5% salary increase for all employees except TB, Supervisor, Judges, Animal Control & Building Manager. I will be circulating the proposed budget and a more detailed budget summary separately.

Mr. Bassin said that the Health Insurance program for the town will remain the same in 2018 as in 2017.

The 2018 Columbia Greene Humane Society fees structure will remain the same as 2017.

Mr. Bassin spoke about the Energize NY program at the county level. This will allow corporations to borrow for clean energy investments and pay the loan via the property tax.

payment. The county has also voted to expand the property tax exemptions to include cold war veterans.

Board Members

Councilman Boice brought up the new LED lights on the Kingston Bridge and commended them for their good lighting choice and stated that those interested should go and see them. He also had seen two stations where there were Tesla charging stations, He asked questions and learned that they would charge the cars in 20-30 minutes and had been provided by the Tesla company.

Councilwoman Israel said that she received a note regarding a thank you letter that was sent to Columbia Memorial Hospital from Johanna Skoda for a donation received by the Ancram Pool. The donation was for a large box of first aide supplies. Mrs. Skoda had sent the hospital a note of thanks from the town.

Highway

The Department has been working on the dirt roads and ditches getting ready for the winter. The new tractor and mower has been delivered. The Pats Road 35 mph and Sawchuck Road 40 mph speed signs have been put up.

Bonnie Hundt asked why the town is purchasing a new grader. Mr. Miller explained that the old grader is getting very expensive to fix and the parts harder to find. There were only two places that had the last part we needed and the one we purchased came from overseas, and got stuck in customs.

Jack Lindsey noted that the Ethics Board had gotten a few inquiries about where old machinery goes once it is replaced, and how this is tracked. Mr. Miller explained that the big machinery is traded in for the new purchase, if possible. If not, it is placed on an auction site and sold outright. The scrap metal dumpster is picked up by the company periodically and once weighed, the town is paid by check, made payable to the town, not in cash. The department also keeps an inventory list, which will keep items on it for a year or so after it has been disposed of, with that fact noted and where it went.

Mr. Bassin drew the Board's attention to a capital equipment plan put together by the Highway Superintendent. Bonnie Hundt asked if the 2018 items were figured into the budget. Mr. Bassin said they were not, that they would come out of the fund balance. Donna Hoyt asked if there was any chance in the town blacktopping Skyline Road. Mr. Miller felt he would like to finish Cottontail first. Mr. Bassin suggested that Mr. Miller draw up a road paving plan much like the capital equipment plan, with a list of priorities.

Ethics

Mr. Lindsey noted that the Board will be losing Bonnie Hundt as a member and that while there are two people they have interviewed in the past and have on reserve, he would like to replace

her with another female. He noted that the board needs to be politically diverse. Mr. Lindsey will send Supervisor Bassin the language to use.

ZBA

With ZBA Chair Bonnie Hundt leaving the ZBA, an email will go out looking for new members and a new chair. Ms. Hundt will send Supervisor Bassin the language to use.

Camp/Pool

Mr. Bassin felt that the Camp & Pool Forum was successful. Jenn Boice stated that she felt it was open and she was hopeful for a good year next year. Councilman Clark made many notes at the meeting. He strongly felt that this board needed to be very active, with a mission statement, set dates for items to be completed, and a structured board of not more than seven members.

Communications

The new website is moving ahead and is ½ the cost of the other proposal.

WinterFest

WinterFest will be held at the town hall on December 10th.

Comp Plan

Nan is ready to sign the contract

CAC

The DEC will hold a meeting at the Copake Pavilion on December 4 to talk about the Young Forest Initiative. Jack Lindsey said if the speakers are selected by DEC to support the YFI and are not independent, that could be a conflict of interest.

Paid Family Leave

The Highway Department employees met to learn about the Paid Family Leave program and they all are opting in. It will be cost approximately \$1 per week, and be paid for by payroll deduction. The Supervisor will brief all other employees on the program to see who else interested in participating.

LUCA

Mr. Bassin said that the County will be taking on this responsibility electronically.

Zoning Revisions

Councilman Clark said that the committee will be looking at smaller items which will be able to be gone through quickly. Other larger items will have to be held off until the Comp Plan Review is complete.

The following Resolution was offered by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Resolution Carried unanimously:

Resolution #37 of 2017: Adopt 2018 Budget – Resolved, that the 2018 Final Budget for the Town of Ancram be approved as presented with a total tax levy of \$767,719, which represents a tax decrease of \$7,831, or 1.01%.

The following resolution was offered by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Boice and moved for adoption. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #38 of 2017: Approve 2018 Rescue Squad Budget & County Chargeback Agreement – Resolved, that the 2018 Community Rescue Squad budget of \$100,476 be approved, and that the Town Supervisor is authorized to enter into a chargeback agreement with the County of Columbia to authorize the County of Columbia to pay the Community Rescue Squad \$100,476 in 2018.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #39 of 2017: Approve Zen Point Media to design and host the Town Website – Resolved, that the Town Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with Zen Point Media to design and arrange to host the Town of Ancram website. Initial development costs shall not exceed \$3000, and annual hosting and maintenance fees shall be consistent with what is customary for this kind of support based on fees to be agreed on annually.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #40 of 2017: Approve Contract with Community Planning and Environmental Associates to review Comp Plan – Resolved, that the town Supervisor is authorized to enter into a contract with Nan Stolzenburg and Community Planning and Environmental Associates at a cost not to exceed \$16,300 to provide support for the Town of Ancram Comprehensive Plan Review Committee to review and revise the 2010 Comprehensive Plan.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #41 of 2017: Authorize Highway Superintendent to order John Deere grader – Resolved, that the Town of Ancram Highway Superintendent is authorized to order a John Deere grader for delivery in the spring of 2018 for a cost not to exceed \$241,000.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #42 of 2017: Approve 2018 employee health insurance program – Resolved that the Town Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with CDPHP through Apollo Partners to provide the CDPHP Bronze HD EPO Plan #423 to eligible Town employees and families, and it is further **Resolved**, that the Town of Ancram will pay 100% of the CDPHP premium for this Plan for eligible employees and 50% of the premium for wives and children who participate in the Town health insurance plan or in the Fidelis Plan for children, and it is further **Resolved**, that the Town of Ancram will contribute \$750 to a Health Savings Account for each eligible employee, and will reimburse eligible employees for any unreimbursed medical costs incurred over \$1,500 up to the policy out of pocket embedded maximum of \$7,150 per person or \$14,300 per family.

The following resolution was offered by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Clark and moved for adoption. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #43 of 2017: Local Update of Census Addresses – Resolved, that the Town of Ancram wishes to participate in the US Census Bureau’s program to review local addresses prior to the 2020 census, and that the Town Supervisor is authorized to register the Town of Ancram to participate in this Census Bureau process.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Boice and moved for adoption. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #44 of 2017: Paid Family Leave - Resolved, that the Town of Ancram wishes to “opt in” to the NYS paid family leave program and will offer participation in that program to all employees who are eligible and agree to pay for the program out of payroll deduction at a cost determined by the State of NY, and that the Town Supervisor is authorized to register the Town of Ancram for the paid family leave program and take steps to enroll employees who wish to participate.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #45 of 2017: Animal Control – Resolved, that the Town of Ancram designates the Columbia Greene Humane Society of Hudson NY and Fraser Kennels of Pine Plains, NY as approved shelters to impound stray dogs in 2018 until they are recovered by their owners, and it further Resolved that the Town Supervisor is authorized to enter into contracts with both the Columbia Greene Humane Society and Fraser Kennels to provide shelter services for dogs impounded by the Town of Ancram Animal Control Officer.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to make the following general budget adjustment. Motion carried.

From 1620.41 Building Propane to 1620.42 Building Electric \$1,000

From Fund Balance \$6,000 to 1680.4 Central Data \$3,000, 7550.4 Celebrations \$1,000, 1410.4 Clerk \$2,000.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Boice to make the following Highway budget adjustment. Motion carried.

From 5140.4 Brush and Weeds \$14,500 to 5130.4 Machinery repairs \$10,000, 5142.4 Snow Removal \$4,000, 5112.2 Chips \$500.00.

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

The Board decided that due to the December board meeting being close to the Christmas holiday, and to make sure the checks all go out before the holiday rush, the regular December meeting will be held December 14, 2017 at 7:00 pm. The change will be noticed in the papers.

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica R. Cleveland
Ancram Town Clerk