

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
January 17, 2019**

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

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

Mr. Bassin asked if there were any items on the agenda that any member of the town board wished to recuse themselves from. Mr. Bassin stated that he wished to recuse himself from the vote on the 284 agreement as the agreement includes maintenance to his road.

Supervisors Report

1. Financial Report – Another normal financial month in December. Cash on hand as of the end of December was \$845,000, \$109,000 better than the YE budgeted cash number of \$736,000. After adjusting for our expected 4Q sales tax revenues due in the 1Q19 and known payables, our adjusted cash position will be about \$857,000. The improvement verses budget in YE cash was primarily caused by better than budgeted sales tax receipts (\$50,000), higher than budgeted bank interest, fees for the Court, Building Department and Highway Department, coupled with a handful of lower than budgeted expense categories in the GF and Highway. About \$816,000 of our cash is on deposit with TD Bank in their liquid investment account, which currently earns 2%.

2. Houghtaling House – This building adjacent to the Town Garage was finally demolished early in January. Cost was about \$33,000, which was part of our yearend 2018 cash projection.

3. Comp Plan Review Process – The Comp Plan Review Committee will schedule a public hearing on the Draft Updated Comp Plan at some point in the next 6 weeks. Following the public hearing, the Committee may make final changes to the Plan prior to presenting the Plan to the Town Board. The Town Board will also conduct a public hearing on the Plan, and will submit the Plan to the County Planning Board for comment and approval prior to considering the Plan for adoption.

5. OSC Audit – The NYS Office of State Comptroller (OSC) is almost done with their “risk assessment”. The auditors have been with us for about three months. Once they have completed their onsite work, it may be another few months before we see their report. They have identified a handful of control issues that we have or will correct, and have indicated a concern that our fund balance may be too big. They have suggested that we consider allocating part of the fund balance to the Highway Department or to special allocated reserves, like for highway equipment. I have explained that our preference has been to leave the fund balance under the control of the Town Board until the Town Board decides to approve a specific use, as

this approach gives the Town Board the most control over Town funds, and the most flexibility to respond to unexpected financial situations.

6. Document Review – Please review the Employee Handbook, Financial Process Manual, Purchasing Policy and Fee Schedule one final time prior to Thursday’s meeting and come prepared with any final comments or suggested edits. We will consider these documents for approval at the Board meeting. The Fee Schedule has two changes from the last version you saw: 1) Mass gatherings are defined as gatherings of more than 500 people, and 2) Fireworks Permits are noted to be required for professional fireworks displays.

7. Climate Smart Community Task Force (CSCTF) – The CSCTF is finalizing their plans to invest the \$80,000 grant we received to improve energy efficiency in Ancram. The plan includes a free exchange program which will allow residents to trade incandescent lights for LEDs, and a survey of Town buildings to determine how to make town buildings more energy efficient. The CSCTF is also finalizing a plan to upgrade street lights in the Ancram Lighting District with LEDs. As you may recall, we looked into this opportunity a few years ago and decided to defer implementation until 3000 kelvin lights were available, which apparently they now are. CSCTF will be reporting to the Town Board on these initiatives over the next few months.

Comp Plan Review Committee - The committee will hold a public hearing on the 9th of February to present the revisions for public comment. They are at this time looking at the priorities for strategies to achieve the goals set as well as their implementation. The next meeting of this committee will take place on January 26th at 9:30am.

CAC - Kim Tripp of the CAC gave the following year end report on behalf of the committee.

2018 ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Biodiversity Map and Work: Hudsonia has updated the Ancram Biodiversity Habitat Map on the basis of field notes from the Ancram CAC and interpretation of recent aerial photo images. Some field work is needed this winter to complete the map and then the final version can be posted on the town website.
2. Planning Board: Erin Robertson provides monthly updates on activities of the Planning Board and seeks our advice on environmental issues. The Planning Board has started the process of sending us applications to review and CAC has provided environment-related recommendations on two applications.
3. The Natural Resource Conservation Plan brochure has been prepared by Claire Arnold. The brochure is nearly completed with some final graphic refinements suggested by Sue Bassin.
4. The Climate Smart Committee Task Force: Doug Brenner regularly attends our CAC meetings, keeping us informed about the CSC activities and seeks our recommendations on particular actions. David Dembo comments on their draft reports and is in regular contact with the Chair.
5. The Doodletown Wildlife Management Area: This summer we walked the site in order to become familiar with the proposed area of clearing. We also attended the DEC late summer presentation and asked questions about the environmental impact of their proposed clearing. Community members reach out to us for our opinion and support.

6. Roe Jan Watershed Association: Choral and Jamie conduct sampling for eight sites on the Roe Jan from Hillsdale to Milan, testing for enterococcus. Results were sent to the Ancram-wide email list. Although condition of Roe Jan is considered overall very good, some of the test sites in Ancram included high enterococcus readings and temporary swimming advisories.
7. Participated in the CLC Columbia County CAC Roundtables providing leadership to new CACs and reporting back to our CAC about significant undertakings by other CACs in the county.
8. The Ancram Town Board requested our input on these topics:
 - Sawchuck Road septic permit and environmental sensitivities of that land. Prepared natural resource maps of the site and met on May 7, 2018 with neighbors to hear their concerns. Prepared memo of environmental concerns to Town Board.
 - Attended Comp Plan Vision Statement review public meeting and submitted final comments.
 - Responded to public concerns about dangers of Hogweed and how to differentiate from Wild Parsnip.
9. CAC Ongoing Training: The majority of our members attended the Fall Sexual Harassment town wide training. Members also attended Climate Change lectures at Cary Institute.
10. CLC Overmountain Conservation Area- Jamie represents Ancram at ribbon cutting ceremony to thank CLC and Gilmores for this awesome conservation area.
11. Prepared public memos on: Giant Hogweed and Wild Parsnip and Friendly Night Sky Lighting.
12. February 5, 2018: Reviewed the Ancram Road Stream Crossing and Replacement Plan with DEP, DEC and Trout Unlimited representatives. Colleen and Jamie attended culvert field visit assessment with Trout Unlimited, Hudson River Estuary Program staff and Jim Miller.
13. In November, Jamie presented Ancram's biodiversity map work as part of a presentation at the New York Botanical Garden.
14. In November, Jamie provided consult to the Long Lake community on the conservation of their kettle shrub pool.

PLANS FOR 2019

1. Prepare public education memos on reducing lawn chemicals and invasive earth worms.
2. Prepare public memo with Climate Smart Committee on projected impacts of climate change on the region and how Ancram has been addressing these issues and can better prepare for anticipated climate changes.
3. Post the biodiversity map on the Ancram website—even if still in progress.
4. Circulate the NRCP pamphlet and have it available at Town Hall.
5. Reach out to the town about the health of the Roe Jan watershed, providing recommendations on how we can improve the river water quality.

6. Continue to prepare advisory memos to the Planning and Zoning Board on applications sent to us for review.

Board Members

Councilman Boice asked if the board members had thought about what will happen to wages at the town when the increase to minimum wage occurs in 2020. Mr. Bassin said he will look at what the County intends to do in regards to their employees as well as other employers in the county.

Councilwoman Hundt reported that the advertisement for the hiring of Census takers has been released.

Highway Department

Mr. Miller reported that the previous month has been quiet. The Houghtaling house has completely been taken down. The new radios work great.

Mr. Miller presented the 2019 284 agreement. It includes repaving of 4 corners and 2.5 miles of Snyder. Work will be done on Simons road between Wiltsie Bridge and County Route 7. Work will also be completed on Prospect Hill Road.

Mr. Miller addressed the parking lot at the town hall. He stated that the companies who have come to look at it suggest that the town take up the parking lot, re-slope it and lay a new top. He has received quotes of \$118,000 and \$88,000. Mr. Bassin and the board suggested that the town have engineer Pat Pendergast look at it. Mr. Miller will have him do so.

Mr. Miller reported that the new pickup will not be built until this summer if the town goes with the original truck. The dealer has offered the town a truck that is already on the lot for \$1400 more than the original on agreed on. There is not much difference between the two trucks. The final cost will be \$38,369.00. A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilman Clark to allow for the purchase of the Dodge Ram pickup truck at a cost of \$38,369.00. Motion carried.

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk gave a report on the dog licenses issued for January thus far. 328 recycle permits have been sold. As of this meeting 35% of the town taxes have been collected.

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

Resolution #7 of 2019: Over and Under Property Tax Payments: Resolved, that the town of Ancram Tax Collector is authorized to accept overpayments and underpayments not to exceed \$1 which are made by property owners as part of their annual property tax payments.

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

Resolution #8 of 2019: Sheriff's Department Use of Town Hall- Resolved, that the Columbia County Sheriff's Department is authorized to use a designated room in the Ancram Town Hall as

a “satellite” office, and to provide all deputies a key to access the Ancram Town Hall and their designated office.

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

Resolution #9 of 2019: Opt Out of Paid Family Leave Program- Whereas all town employees who have been participating in the Paid Family Leave Program have requested that their participation be cancelled, therefore, it is **Resolved** that the Town Supervisor is authorized to arrange for the Town of Ancram to opt out of the Paid Family Leave Program for 2019.

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

Resolution #10 of 2019: Employee Handbook- Resolved, That the Town of Ancram Employee Handbook with the inclusion of the Town’s revised Discrimination and Harassment Policy, which was adopted on October 18, 2018, be approved.

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

Resolution #11 of 2019: Financial Processes Manual- Resolved: that the town of Ancram Financial Process Manual be approved as presented.

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

Resolution #12 of 2019: Purchasing Policy- Resolved: that the Town of Ancram Purchasing Policy be approved as presented.

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

Resolution #13 of 2019: Fee Schedule- Resolved: that the Town of Ancram Fee Schedule be approved as presented.

A motion was made by councilwoman Hundt and seconded by Councilman Clark to make the following General Budget Adjustments. Motion carried.

From: Fund Balance to 5132.4 Garage (Houghtaling House Demo) \$35,000.00.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilwoman Hundt to approve the warrants and pay the bills. Motion carried.

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

Respectfully submitted by,
Monica R. Cleveland
Ancram Town Clerk