

**Town of Ancram  
Town Board  
Regular Meeting  
April 18, 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

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

Mr. Bassin welcomed Dr. Handler, the School Superintendent of the Pine Plains School District, to the Town Board meeting. Dr. Handler gave a presentation on the proposed 2019-2020 School District Budget. Mr. Handler pointed out that the auditorium project is well under way and they are planning on completion around the first part of 2020. Dr. Handler reported that the school is in the middle of an Energy Performance Project which includes solar panels at the High School, LED lights throughout all of the buildings and converting the High School and Cold Spring buildings to propane heating. Dr. Handler walked the town board through the proposed budget.

Mr. Bassin welcomed Pete Mercer and Bill Mulrein from Consolidated Communications. There being no questions about the cable franchise agreement at this time, a motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the following resolution. Resolution carried by unanimous roll call vote.

**Resolution #23 of 2019: Consolidated Communications Cable Franchise**

WHEREAS, the Town Board has before it a proposed franchise agreement with Berkshire Cable Corp. I/k/a Consolidated Communications (hereinafter "Consolidated") for a term ending May 15, 2020, and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has had discussions and negotiations with Consolidated in connection with such agreement, and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has determined that the services to be provided by Consolidated will improve cable television service for the residents of the Town of Ancram and that the franchise agreement complies with the standards and requirements of the New York State Public Service Commission, and

WHEREAS, Consolidated has committed to working with the Town of Ancram to address any issues or concerns raised by the residents of the Town so as to provide the best possible cable television services, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held in connection with the proposed franchise agreement at the Ancram Town Hall, 1416 County Route 7, Ancram, New York on March 21, 2019 at 6:45 p.m. at which members of the public appeared and made comments in connection with the proposed agreement, and\

WHEREAS, the Town Board has determined that the execution of the franchise agreement, as negotiated between the Town and Consolidated, is in the best interest of the residents of the Town of Ancram,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Board of the Town of Ancram that the franchise agreement between the Town of Ancram, Columbia County, New York and Berkshire Cable Corp. I/k/a Consolidated Communications be and the same is hereby in all respects approved in such form as filed with the Town Clerk as the final draft of the franchise renewal agreement, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Supervisor be and hereby is authorized to execute the franchise agreement on behalf of the Town of Ancram and to take any further action which may be necessary in order to finalize this matter.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Hundt and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the minutes of the 3/9 Comp Plan Public Hearing, the 3/21 Consolidated Public Hearing and the 3/21 Regular Town Board Meeting. Motion carried.

Mr. Bassin asked at this time if there were any items on the agenda that any town board members needed to recuse themselves from. There were none.

## **Supervisors Report**

1. Financial Report – Normal month. We ended the month with about \$1.4 million in cash. Year- end cash projection is \$715,000 assuming we spend a total of \$405,000 on projects that were not in the 2019 budget and not taxed for in 2019. These projects are listed on the YE Cash Position report. Sales tax receipts are still running about 3-4% better than 2018 which may result in a 2019 sales taxes coming in \$30,000 over the budgeted \$300,000 amount. The major risk to the Town’s 2019 financial situation is the financial condition of NY State, which may result in the State reducing or eliminating general and highway aid to towns. So far it appears we will lose about \$26,000 in highway aid and \$6,000 in AIM funding, which will offset the possible sales tax benefit.

2. FAC Audits – FAC has completed all audits except the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, which will start 4/13 and should be done over the next few weeks.

3. Comp Plan Review Process – A second Town Board public hearing on the Updated 2019 Comprehensive Plan will be held at 6.45 on 4/18. During the 4/18 Town Board meeting we will review the Comp Plan SEQRA you all received last month, and consider a SEQRA negative declaration resolution. We will then consider the Updated 2019 Comp Plan for adoption. .

4. Cable Franchise Application - We should have a final version of the proposed cable franchise agreement from Berkshire Cable dba Consolidated Communications prior to our 4/18 meeting. Assuming the agreement is satisfactory, we will consider it for approval at the 4/18 meeting.

5. Traffic Safety Board Appointment – Steve Williams has resigned as Ancram’s representative on the County Traffic Safety Board after serving 7 years. Many thanks to Steve for his service. I recommend we appoint our alternate representative, Bill Gillers as our TSB representative, and seek an alternate to back Bill up.

6. Camp/Pool Board –The Camp/Pool Board met in March and will meet again in early May. Communications materials about the kids’ camp and pool have been developed by Sarah Mason and Johanna Skoda and have been circulated to the email list and posted on the Town website. I will be recommending that the Board appoint Jane Plasman as a co-chair of the Camp/Pool Board. Ellen Langton is the other co-chair.

7. Highway shed – Ray Jurkowski from CPL engineering should have plans for the shed by the meeting next week, so we may be in a position to approve the development of a bid package. We also will need to approve a lot adjustment so we can combine Houghtaling House with the garage to avoid any zoning issues.

8. Special guest – Martin Handler, Superintendent of the Pine Plains Central School District will be joining us at 7 pm review the 2019-2020 Pine Plains school budget.

### **Board Member Comments**

Councilwoman Hundt gave a report to the board on the three-town community meeting at the RoeJan Library. She said that some of the topics that the group discussed were affordable housing, jobs, firefighters, divisions in towns, the lack of young people, diversity. Councilwoman Israel and Clerk Cleveland also attended the meeting and all came away pleased with the discussion. More meetings will be held throughout the next several months in other areas with other groups. Councilman Clark asked if at the end of the process would there be a product produced with the findings. Councilwoman Israel answered that there would be a report available to everyone. Councilman Boice said that there was also a meeting at the firehouse that he attended and that the main issue was definitely affordable housing.

Councilwoman Hundt asked if the town has ever discussed sidewalks in Ancramdale. Councilman Clark said that the purpose of a sidewalk is to get from point A to B and that in Ancramdale there is no such thing. Also, it was noted that there is not the space in the hamlet to have both sidewalks and parking.

Councilman Clark reminded everyone that roadside cleanup will be taking place April 26<sup>th</sup> through May 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Highway Department**

Mr. Miller reported that the department has been working on grading dirt roads, cleaning ditches and clearing brush. He said that the RFP for the new highway building should be ready by next meeting. Councilman Boice questioned if the department could possible use locally sourced gravel for the project. Mr. Miller will look into this. Mr. Miller reported that he had met with Pat Pendergast about the parking lot and was told that a solution would be installing a dry well under the parking lot. Councilman Boice felt that this was not a good idea that the area

is to wet and would not allow for water to run out as it should. Mr. Miller said that the town hosted a culvert seminar and that the group looked at the Pat's Road culvert. Councilman Boice asked about guardrails along the culvert.

### **Town Clerk**

The Town clerk reported that she had processed one dog license and three recycle tags this month. The taxes are 89% collected.

### **Pool**

The pool is in the process of hiring two new lifeguards.

### **Census**

Councilwoman Hundt spoke about the ongoing census project. She said that the current portion focuses on homes built March 2018 through April 2020. She said that she plans on sitting with John Hoffman and looking through the paperwork and possibly having him complete the paperwork.

Councilman Boice reported that he has spoken to several law enforcement officers and they all feel that the radar signs are slowing people down in the hamlets.

Councilwoman Hundt asked where the idea for installing projectors in the town hall came from. Mr. Bassin said that it was an idea brought up by Steve Olyha during a FAC meeting and that he plans on talking about it at the next town board meeting.

Councilman Boice reported that Central Hudson will be doing an energy audit of the Firehouse.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Hundt and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

### **Resolution #24 of 2019: Comp Plan SEQRA Negative Declaration - TYPE I ACTION**

WHEREAS, the Town of Ancram Town Board identified a need to update its long-range plan to guide growth and development in Town; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board appointed a steering committee to study the Town, solicit public input, make recommendations for updating the vision, goals and long-term actions as part of a draft updated plan; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan Committee conducted a careful study of the Town that included a full inventory and analysis of the environmental, agricultural, economic, housing, demographic, cultural and historical resources in Ancram; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan Committee solicited and utilized the input of the public through a written survey, open public meetings, focus groups, and public hearings to formulate the plan; and

WHEREAS, the drafted Plan includes updated long-term vision, goals, objectives and strategies to guide the future growth in the Town and to address the identified needs; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan Committee held a public hearing pursuant to Town Law 272-a and subsequently submitted the draft plan for consideration by the Town Board; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has reviewed the draft Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board held a public hearing pursuant to Town Law 272-a; and

WHEREAS, adoption of a comprehensive plan pursuant to Town Law 272-a has been determined to be a Type I action, pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) 6 NYCRR Part 617.4, and the Town Board declared itself Lead Agency; and

WHEREAS, the proposed action will not require permits and approvals from any other local, regional and State agencies prior to adoption of the plan; and

WHEREAS, the Columbia County Planning Board is required to review the Town Comprehensive Plan pursuant to the applicable standards of New York State General Municipal Law 239-m and this review is considered an advisory opinion under SEQRA and the agency is not considered to be eligible for lead agency status in this action; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has reviewed Part 1, 2 and 3 of the Full EAF, along with a Section F Narrative, and has discussed and set forth the following:

1. The plan is a guidance document for future decision making and makes recommendations on ways the Town can maintain its environment which includes historic, agricultural and cultural areas, its' rural and small-town character, open spaces, clean water, clean air, and its natural resources while allowing for future growth and development that is consistent with that environmental setting. The Plan establishes that these features are primary components of the community and a critical part of the environment in the Town of Ancram.
2. Implementation of the plan will positively assist Ancram, not cause adverse impacts. The Plan will aid the Town in reaching goals of maintaining open space, rural landscapes, and protecting the environment through a variety of programs, projects, capital improvements, future studies, or updating or establishment of new land use policies and regulations.
3. The plan recognizes the need to protect natural features and sensitive environmental areas and establishes recommendations to protect those features.
4. The plan includes an inventory of environmental resources and recommends future actions to protect those resources.
5. The plan was developed with significant public input throughout the process.
6. The intent of the plan is to promote the safety, health, and well-being of the residents of the Town, and to protect and enhance the Town's natural environment and character while simultaneously promoting growth and economic development.
7. The Plan promotes renewable and efficient use of energy.
8. It is recognized that growth will continue to influence the environment in Town, but the Plan is oriented to helping manage development in a manner which reduces impacts to the environment. The Town finds that the Plan offers mechanisms to reduce environmental impacts compared to conditions that would occur if no plan was adopted.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Ancram Town Board hereby declares that the Town of Ancram Comprehensive Plan described herein will not have any significant adverse environmental impacts, and that an environmental impact statement will not be required; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board hereby authorizes filing of a negative declaration (FEAF Part III, attached hereto) and a notice in the Environmental Notice Bulletin, according to SEQRA, NYS 6 NYCRR Part 617.

WHEREUPON, this Resolution was declared adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Ancram.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Hundt and passed unanimously through a roll call vote.

**Resolution #25 of 2019: Adoption of the Town of Ancram Comprehensive Plan**

WHEREAS, a Comprehensive Plan is a statutorily recognized instrument under Town Law §272-a for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development in a Town; and

WHEREAS, a properly crafted comprehensive plan assists with the protection of the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of the Town; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Ancram Town Board identified that an updated comprehensive plan was needed to properly plan for growth and development, protect the environment and enhance the health, safety and welfare of the community and residents; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan Committee conducted a study of the Town of Ancram that included a full inventory and analysis of the environmental, economic, housing, demographic, cultural and historical resources in Ancram; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Plan includes updates to the long-term vision, goals, objectives and strategies to guide the future growth in the Town; and

WHEREAS, the Committee solicited and utilized the input of the public through a written survey, open public meetings, focus groups, and a public hearing to formulate the plan; and

WHEREAS, the Committee has submitted the Plan to the Town Board and they have reviewed the draft Plan and held a properly noticed public hearing pursuant to Town Law 272-a; and

WHEREAS, adoption of a comprehensive plan pursuant to Town Law 7-722 has been determined to be a Type I action, pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) 6 NYCRR Part 617.4, and the Town Board declared itself Lead Agency; and

WHEREAS, the proposed action will not require permits and approvals from any other local, regional and State agencies prior to adoption of the plan; and

WHEREAS, the Columbia County Planning Board is required to review the Town Comprehensive Plan pursuant to the applicable standards of New York State General Municipal Law 239-m and their approval is considered an advisory opinion under SEQRA and the agency is not considered to be eligible for lead agency status in this action, and

WHEREAS, the Town submitted the draft plan to the Columbia County Planning Board; and

WHEREAS, the Town received approval from the Columbia County Planning Board; and

WHEREAS, the Town declared that the Town of Ancram Comprehensive Plan described herein will not have any significant adverse environmental impacts, and determined that an environmental impact statement will not be required; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board filed a negative declaration and Environmental Notice Bulletin, according to SEQRA, NYS 6 NYCRR Part 617.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS BY THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF ANCRAM, COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK:

THAT THE Town Board of the Town of Ancram hereby determines that the Comprehensive Plan and all its Appendices dated April 18, 2019, attached hereto and made a part hereof, is hereby adopted as the Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Ancram; and

THAT THE Town Board shall file a final copy of the Town of Ancram Comprehensive Plan with the Town of Ancram Town Clerk and with the Columbia County Planning Department as required in 272-a; and

THAT THE Town Board shall cause a full copy of the adopted Comprehensive Plan including all associated documents and maps included in the Appendices be placed and maintained to be accessible on the Town website.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Hundt. Resolution carried unanimously.

**Resolution #26 of 2019: Appointment to Columbia County Transportation Safety Board** - Resolved, that Bill Gillers be appointed to the Columbia County Traffic Safety Board as the representative from the Town of Ancram.

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

**Resolution #27 of 2019: Appointment of Co-chair of the Camp/Pool Board** – Resolved, that Jane Plasman be appointed as a co-chair of the Town or Ancram Camp/Pool Board.

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

**Resolution #28 of 2019: Houghtaling House Lot Line Adjustment - Resolved**, that the Town Supervisor is authorized to take the steps necessary to file a lot line adjustment that will combine the Houghtaling property with the Ancram Town Garage.

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

**Resolution #28 of 2019: Energy Efficiency Study RFP - Resolved**, that the Chair of Climate Smart Community Task Force (CSCTF) is authorized to arrange the

publishing of a request for proposal to conduct an energy efficiency study of town buildings, and be it further resolved that the date of publishing and date of response to the RFP shall be determined by the CSCTF.

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

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica R. Cleveland  
Ancram Town Clerk