

**Town of Ancram  
Town Board  
Regular Meeting  
July 18, 2019**

<b>Present:</b>	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 at 7:00pm by Supervisor Arthur Bassin with a salute to the flag.

Mr. Bassin introduced Mr. Paul Richardi of the Ancram Opera House. Mr. Richardi reported to the board that the Opera house is in the beginning stages of possibly taking over possession of the Stiehle House from the APG. The Opera house would use the building to house their interns and their administration offices. Before this can happen, there are many steps, the first being an application for a Technical Assistance Grant through Main Street NY. It is a \$20,000 grant. The grant would allow a feasibility report to be generated. If feasible, the Opera House, which is a Not For Profit, could then take up to a year to apply for a \$500,000 grant to revitalize the house and make it livable. The APG would turn over the house in stable condition and with the septic issue resolved. The Opera House is at this time looking to get a resolution of support for the initial grant application. All board members felt that this was something that the town board would like to show support FOR.

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

**Resolution #33 of 2019:**

Resolution by the Town of Ancram approving and endorsing Ancram Opera House Theater, Inc. in its application to NYS Homes and Community Renewal for funding under the New York Main Street Technical Assistance program.

WHEREAS, the Ancram Opera House Theater, Inc. desires to apply for financial assistance in an amount up to \$20,000 through the 2019 Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) under the New York Main Street Technical Assistance program; and

WHEREAS, the application proposes funding to support site studies, architectural designs and development of construction plans for the complete building renovation to the property, known as the Stiehle House, located at the intersection of Route 82 and Route 7, at the center of the hamlet of Ancram, NY; and

WHEREAS, the proposed funding will contribute to ongoing community revitalization efforts of the hamlet of Ancram, recognized as an Historic District on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, the grant application requires that the applicant obtain the approval and endorsement of the governing body of the municipality in which the project will be located.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Ancram approves and endorses the 2019 New York Main Street Technical Assistance program proposal prepared and to be submitted by Ancram Opera House Theater, Inc.

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

A motion was made by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Clark to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as read and placed on the record. Motion carried.

### **Supervisors Report**

1. Financial Report – Another normal month. We ended the month with about \$1.3 million in cash. Year- end 2019 cash projection is \$704,000, up about \$100,000 from the \$609,000 YE cash projection we had last month based on postponing the paving of the parking lot and any major renovations at Town Hall. Sales tax receipts are running about 5% better than the \$330,000 we received in 2018, which could result in 2019 sales tax revenues coming in around \$45,000 over the 2019 budget of \$300,000. Jim Miller reports that we will receive about \$26,000 in unbudgeted winter emergency highway reimbursements.

2. 2020 Budget Process - We will start the 2020 Budget process in August with a first look at the “draft” tentative budget. As in past years, we will conduct public hearings in September, October and November on the tentative, preliminary and final budgets, and will consider the budget for adoption at the November Town Board meeting. As part of the budget process we will review and update the 5-year Capital Plan and determine how much of a cash reserve we want to maintain for “unexpected” revenue shortfalls or emergency spending needs. As in prior years we try to develop a budget that lowers taxes by at least 1% while funding our contingent account at the \$130,000 level and adequately budgeting all our departmental operating accounts. We have already been advised by CDPHP that they have requested a 10% increase in health insurance premiums, which could cost us about \$6,000 if approved by NYS. Our total tax levy in 2019 was about \$760,000, so we will be looking for a tax levy of about \$750,000 in 2020. Our 2019 total operating expense budget, excluding capital spending, is about \$1.5 million, which includes about \$140,000 in the contingent account, which funds our reserve account, and allows us to invest in needed capital projects without borrowing.

3. Comp Plan Implementation Process – The Comp Plan Implementation Committee met on 7/13 to continue the implementation process. The major near-term priority is still to recruit people interested in serving on and/or chairing the various implementation committees. Hugh Clark will walk us through a summary of the zoning changes that the ZRC will consider, and we will discuss the roles of FAC, CAC and the Communications Committees in the Comp Plan communications process.

4. Ancram Opera House Grant Support – The Ancram Opera House has requested Town Board support for a \$20,000 technical assistance grant to do a feasibility study of the Stiehle House to determine what will be involved in making Stiehle House habitable again. We will consider a resolution of Town Board support for this grant at our meeting Thursday.

#### Comprehensive Plan Revisions

The town will be seeking volunteers to serve on focus groups for the implementation.

A conversation was started on the subject of affordable housing. It was concluded that there needed to be a committee of volunteers to look at this issue in depth. The committee would need to have on its members a diverse part of the community, but most especially those young families that want to live and work in the area.

Mr. Bassin announced that Sid Karmali will be taking over as chair of the Broadband Committee from Gerry Fultz.

Mrs. Boice gave an update on the town pool. She said that the summer is going well and that the lifeguards are almost all new and are learning. Councilman Boice asked that all Board Members take a moment to go to the pool and see how it works and benefits the town.

Mrs. Cleveland reported that the first few weeks of camp have been good. The staff is working together well and all of the kids seem to be enjoying themselves.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Hundt and seconded by Councilman Clark to approve a letter of support be sent to Ten Mile River in support of finishing their water plan.

The town hall will be open this coming weekend as a cooling station as the heat index is to rise over 100 degrees.

### **Board Member Comments**

Councilwoman Hundt stated that there was an email that was sent out regarding the Roejan library and a 414 vote that had incorrect information included in it and she asked for more caution when sending out emails. Mrs. Cleveland stated that the initial email from the library seemed to suggest that the 414 vote was for this coming election season and that it was caucus time. She was asked to get information, which she did not know the answer so she forwarded the email on to the board of elections. They responded with the petition time frame for this years' election. Ms. Hundt stated that it was the emails after this that were unnecessary. Mr. Bassin stated that he did not feel his asking a question in the emails about the 414 was wrong. A disagreement ensued. Councilman Boice felt that he did not understand the sheer volume of emails and the list of people they go to. He felt that people tend to go by the supervisors notes as being fact and do not look at the approved minutes. He pointed out some discrepancies with the power line email that went to the town email list. And he felt that the town should not be approaching the mill on behalf of the Opera House, the Opera House should do this on their own. Mr. Bassin responded that he felt that it was appropriate to arrange a meeting between the two. He felt the town needs to support businesses and economic development as outlined in the Comprehensive

Plan and that a \$500,000 renovation of Stiehle House would be good for the Opera House, good for the town and contribute to the local economy. A question was raised from the floor if the town was going to offer the same help to all small businesses. Mr. Bassin said that the town should be encouraging all businesses in town. He said that the Comp Plan directs the town to do so. Councilwoman Hundt pointed out that they, the Opera House, are a not for profit.

Councilman Boice encouraged the town board members to ride the town roads and talk to the neighbors.

Councilman Clark announced that Nan Stolzenburg will set up a training program for the ZBA and the Planning Board. The boards need to express their needs. Some possible suggestions have been training on SEQRA, the Ancram Zoning Code, Research Maps. Mr. Clark seems to think SEQRA and updates are a possibility.

### **Highway**

Mr. Miller reported that the department has repaved Four Corners and part of Snyder. At this time they are working on dirt roads and ditches.

Mr. Miller said that he has found a paver for sale for \$15,000. It has 3500 hours on it. The purchase would be financed out of the highway budget. For the paving the town did this year the cost of renting a paver was \$13,000. The machine would pay for itself in two years. It could also be used to redo the parking lot at the town hall. Councilwoman Hundt felt uncomfortable with the equipment purchases that keep popping up that are not on the capital plan. She felt that the town needed to stick to the equipment plan. Mr. Miller said that if the town was to buy this piece of equipment new, it would be a \$200,000 purchase.

A motion was made by Supervisor Bassin and seconded by Councilman Boice to allow the highway department to inspect and if in good shape, purchase a used paver for \$15,000. Roll Call Vote: Voted Yes: Councilman Boice, Councilman Clark, Supervisor Bassin, Councilwoman Israel. Voted No: Councilwoman Hundt. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark asked about the progress on County Route 3. Mr. Miller said that the shoulders and lines should be going in soon.

Councilwoman Hundt asked where the radar signs are at this time. Mr. Miller reported that they are on Wiltsie bridge and by the cemetery.

Councilman Boice felt that in light of a recent fire in a neighboring town, at a building that held large equipment, he stressed that the town garage needs a fire alarm system. Mr. Miller will make some phone calls.

**Town Clerk**

The town clerk reported that she had issued \$154 in licenses this month.

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

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica Cleveland  
Ancram Town Clerk