

**Town of Ancram  
Town Board  
Regular Meeting  
August 15, 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 by Supervisor Arthur Bassin with a salute to the flag.

Mr. Bassin stated that Trout Unlimited was going to attend the meeting but after the Town Highway superintendent had looked over their proposal, there was no need for them to attend the meeting. Mr. Miller felt that the culverts that have been chosen to be reviewed were not in need to be replaced that they are functioning as they should. Mr. Boice asked what the next step is. Mr. Bassin said the next step would be to have an engineer look at them. Mr. Miller reported that these culverts the group is looking at are all under twenty years old. Councilwoman Hundt felt that she would like the board to hear what the group has to say.

Mr. Bassin asked if there were any issues listed on the agenda that any town board member needed to recuse themselves from. There were none.

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

**Supervisors Report**

1. Financial Report – Another normal month. We ended the month with about \$1.2 million in cash. Year- end 2019 cash projection is \$678,000, down slightly from the \$708,000 YE- cash projection we had last month. 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, and if current spending trends continue to year-end, it looks like there may be cost savings in the General Fund and Highway Fund of about \$50,000, and revenue opportunities of another \$50,000, neither of which are part of the current year- end projection of \$678,000.

2. 2020 Tentative Budget - We will have a first look at the “draft” tentative budget at our August Town Board meeting. We will have a public hearing on the Tentative Budget prior to the 9/19 Town Board meeting, will make any adjustments the Board feels is appropriate, hold a public hearing on the Preliminary Budget at our October meeting, and consider the Final Budget for adoption at our November 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 will 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. The total tax levy in the “draft” 2020 Tentative Budget is \$753,00, down about 1% from 2019. Our 2020 total operating expense budget, excluding capital spending which will be funded from the fund balance, not from the 2020 tax levy, is about \$1.46 million, compared to \$1.45 million in 2019. Here is a quick recap of the 2020 “draft” Tentative Budget:

-Sales tax + \$15,000 to \$315,000...2019 expected to be \$345,000

-Salaries +2.5% = \$10,000

-No increases budgeted for Supervisor, Board, Judges

-Library flat at \$17,500

-Health insurance + 10% = +\$5,000

-Property/liability insurance +4%=\$1,000; replacement value

-Retirement system - TBD

-Contingent \$130,000...2019 is \$138,500

- Zoning Revisions & Comp Plan Implementation = \$20,000...flat to 2019 budget
- Minor other changes based on YTD 2019 experience
- Taxable assessed value up \$1 million to \$307 million
- 2020 tax levy = \$753,000, down .92% (\$7,000) from \$760,000 in 2019
- Total operating expenses = \$1.462 million in 2020, compared to \$1.451 million in 2019
- Capital Plan 2020: New plow truck @\$250,000; new HVAC funded by CSSTF grant

Councilwoman Hundt asked if the projector project would go into the capital plan if the town chooses to go forward with it. Mr. Bassin said it could possibly. It would depend on the costs.

Councilwoman Israel asked if the parking lot was being put on the back burner. Mr. Bassin said that the highway department has some ideas on how to do the project cheaper with the new paver.

### **Assessor Department**

Mr. Legget reported that the town has had an article 78 filed against the town by Millerhurst Farm Partners. This will go to the State Supreme court because it is considered a business. Due to this, Mr. Legget has asked the town board to allow him to contract with attorney Ted Gutterman. The town board gave Mr. Legget the go ahead. Mr. Legget said that he also has a hearing at the town hall on September 16<sup>th</sup> about another grievance. Mr. Legget said that the county is willing to contract with the town to do a revaluation in house in a few years. This is much less expensive than hiring a firm.

Mr. Legget retires at the end of September. The town has three applicants and the applicants will be interviewed this coming Monday.

### **Camp**

The camp has closed for the summer. It was another successful year. The pool will remain open through August 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Boice said that the pool motor is making a

squeel. Mr. Clark asked if the motor should be added to the capital account. Mr. Boice said that he didn't think the repairs would be more than \$1,000.

### **Comp Plan**

Councilman Clark reported that the committee is still looking for volunteers for groups: trails, economic development, Boston Corners Hamlet group. The committee will be meeting with the Climate Smart Community Task Force and a CAC to discuss implementation plans.

### **Census**

Councilwoman Hundt gave an update on the LUCA process. She said that the town has added 52 addresses and that 14 are being appealed. The census is hiring people. The jobs are paying between \$17-\$20 an hour.

### **FAC**

The FAC has written and filed with the town their 2018 Audit Letter.

### **Board Member Comments**

Councilwoman Hundt thanked the highway department for welcoming her for a tour of the facilities and she suggested that all board members do this. She said that looking at the maintenance log was very helpful as well.

Councilwoman Hundt spoke about affordable housing and that she has reached out to Habitat and Didi Barrett to look at this issue further. She suggested that the towns all meet to discuss the issue. Mr. Bassin said that Habitat has asked that the town board endorse a grant that would help to subsidize the Ancramdale project. The building would be considered workforce housing and change the top income from \$47,000 to \$80,000.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to allow the Town Supervisor to draft a letter of support from the Town Board in favor of Columbia County Habitat to apply to the NYS Affordable Housing Corporation for grant funding. Motion carried.

Councilman Boice asked about the speed limit on County Route 3 that the town applied for. The town has not heard. Mr. Boice said that the Fire District meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month and all are welcome.

Councilman Boice reported that there was an article in the local papers about a fire in Ancramdale that cited Mr. Boice as the source of the photo in the article. Mr. Boice said that the fire department only takes photos for their own records and they are not for the public. He is disappointed that a photo that was not released by the department was in the paper, credited to him. He has received an apology from the state detectives.

Councilwoman Israel shared that Jane Shannon would like to do computer work for the Communications Committee but would like to be paid for this job. This would include updating brochures and formatting the newsletter. She will give the town a proposal.

Councilman Clark felt that with the remainder of the rail trail coming into Ancram as well as several hiking trails, the town needs to look at parking issues at these places with these groups. He suggested inviting the rail trail to a town board meeting.

### **Highway**

The department is helping other towns right now who have helped Ancram during the summer. The department will be paving a small amount of Prospect Hill road.

There are no prices on the proposed new highway truck. This is in the capital plan.

Mr. Miller said that all of the fire alarm proposals are about the same. Mr. Boice suggested that the town go with Vector. The quote was \$6,950.00.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the installation of fire detectors and alarms in the Town Garage by Vector. Motion carried.

Mr. Miller said that the insurance company insures full replacement cost for the equipment under five years.

Councilwoman Hundt asked the timeframe for the new building. Mr. Miller said the town was told six weeks from start to finish.

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

**Resolution #34 of 2019:** FAC Audit – Resolved, that the Ancram Town Board has reviewed and accepts the July 1, 2019 audit letter from members of the Town’s Financial Advisory Council (FAC) outlining the Fac audit of the books and records of the Town Supervisor (Chief Fiscal Officer), Town Clerk, Town Tax Collector, Town Court and Building and Planning departments.

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

**Resolution #35 of 2019:** Historic Marker Grant – Resolved, that the town Supervisor is authorized to apply for historic marker grants for historic markers for Ancram, Ancramdale and Boston Corner.

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

**Resolution #36 of 2019:** Tentative Budget public hearing – Resolved, that the Ancram Town Board will hold a public hearing on the 2020 Tentative Budget at 6.45 pm on September 19, 2019 at the Ancram Town Hall to solicit public comments on the proposed 2020 Tentative Budget, and it is further resolved that the Town Clerk will publish a public notice of this public hearing in the Town’s papers of record.

The following budget adjustment was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Motion carried.

To 5132.2S from Fund Balance \$10,000; To 8010.11 from 8010.41 \$5,000.

The following budget adjustment was offered by Councilwoman Hundt and seconded by Councilman Boice. Motion carried.

To 5130.2 from 5110.4 \$15,000.00

A motion was made by Councilwoman Hundt and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to approve the warrants 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 R. Cleveland  
Ancram Town Clerk