

**Town of Ancram  
Town Board  
Regular Meeting  
November 21, 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	

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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 members of the board wished 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 meetings as read and to place them on the record. Motion carried.

**Supervisors Report**

1. October Financial Report – We ended the month with \$823,000 in cash. Year- end 2019 cash projection is \$797,000, the same as last month's estimate. We received \$91,000 in 3Q sales tax early in November which puts us on track to hit about \$340,000 in 2019, about 5.6% over 2018 actuals and \$40,000 over the 2019 budget of \$300,000. Based on current trends, it looks like there may be cost savings in the General Fund and Highway Fund of about \$75,000-\$80,000.

2. 2020 Final Budget - We will hold the Final Budget a public hearing at 6.45 on 11/21, make any adjustments the Board feels is appropriate and consider the Final Budget for adoption at our November 21 meeting. The total tax levy in the 2020 Final Budget is \$752,00, 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 \$1.49 million, compared to \$1.45 million in 2019. Here is a quick recap of the Final 2020 Budget:

The Town tax levy in the 2020 Final Budget is \$752,000, down about 1% from the 2019 tax levy. Our 2020 total operating expense budget is about \$1.49 million, compared to \$1.45 million in 2019. Taxable assessed value is up about \$1 million in 2020 to \$307 million.

The 2020 Capital Budget totals \$310,000 - \$209,000 for a new plow truck, \$60,000 in Town Hall energy efficiency investments (new lights, heating/air conditioning) and pool repairs, \$31,000 for a new boom mower, \$5,000 to equip the town hall with a smart TV system and \$5,000 for a fire alarm system for the new garage shed.

5 Year Capital Plan projects \$490,000 of capital spending in the 2021-2024 period, including another new plow truck, a new pay loader and a new bucket truck.

Fund balance at year end 2020 is projected to be \$708,000, down \$89,000 from \$797,000 at year-end 2019. This reduction in fund balance is caused by spending \$89,000 more on capital projects in 2020 than we are adding to fund balance. Fund balance at year-end 2024 is projected to be \$838,000 based on adding \$130,000 per year to the capital fund, grants and the highway department self-funding a portion of the planned capital investments.

Except as noted below, General Fund and Highway spending and revenues in the Final Budget are about flat to the 2019 budget or 2019 actuals.

1 - Sales tax is budgeted at \$325,000, up from the \$300,000 budgeted in 2019, but \$15,000 less than the \$340,000 we expect to receive in 2019 and \$32,000 less the \$357,000 we would receive in 2020 assuming another 5% increase in sales tax in 2020.

2 - Mortgage tax has been cut to \$25,000 from \$35,000 to reflect 2019 results.

3 – Donations have been increased by \$8,000 to \$21,000 to reflect actual 2019 results.

4 – Kids camp counselors and cost of supplies is budgeted at \$46,250, about \$1,000 above 2019 budget and actuals.

5 – Pool costs are budgeted at \$40,500, about \$3000 over 2019 actuals to cover higher lifeguard salaries and expected pool repair costs.

6 – Planning/ZBA Clerk costs have been increased \$2,000 over expected 2019 actuals to cover additional project responsibilities (Historic Markers, Census, training coordination, website, Ancramemail)

7- Property and liability insurance programs are budgeted up \$4,000 to \$30,500 to reflect the new highway shed and normal price increases. Insurance could increase more if we decide to insure all our major equipment at replacement cost.

8-Salaries and related social security expenses are up 2.5%, about \$10,000. Salary increases averaging 2.5% are budgeted for all staff except the Supervisor, Town Board and Judges.

9-Health insurance is up \$2,500, reflecting price increases.

10 – 2022 Reassessment – Assessor operating costs have been increased by \$7,500 to fund the 2020 portion of the reassessment project that we have asked the County to undertake on our behalf. Total cost over 3 years will be about \$22,500, compared to over \$100,000 if we were to contract with an outside assessment firm.

11 - Unexpended Balance, has increased by \$10,000 from the 2019 Budget to \$50,000 in the 2020 to reflect estimated 2019 tax levy money that will not be spent in 2019 and is being carried forward to 2020.

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

**Resolution #49 of 2019:** Adopt 2020 Budget – Resolved, that the 2020 Final Budget for the Town of Ancram be approved as presented with a total tax levy of \$752,182, which represents a tax decrease of \$7,921, or 1.04%.

Councilman Clark reported that there had been a Comprehensive Plan implementation meeting on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Four people attended.

Mr. Bassin announced that the harrassment training has been completed for the year. Councilwoman Hundt questioned if there was a social media portion of the policy? Mr. Bassin stated that there was.

A question has risen regarding reinstating the retiree health insurance policy. A decision was made in 2011 which disbanned the carrying of retirees on the insurance policy. Since this change was made, only one eligible person has retired.

The zoning board and the planning board will have a training session with Nan Stolzenburg within the next month. This will help the members accumulate hours of training. Colleen Lutz also suggested webinars.

A question was raised as to the lowering of the speed limit on County Routes 3 and 8. The town had previously sent in paperwork for the lowering of County Route 3 but has not received an answer.

### **Board Members**

Councilwoman Hundt spoke about an October 25<sup>th</sup> meeting that she attended on affordable housing. This was hosted by Didi Barrett. She, Ms. Hundt, feels this issue has to look beyond the habitat model. One item that came out of this meeting was that a homeowner is more apt to volunteer for town committees, the fire departments, etc.

Councilman Boice stated that he has spoken to the AOT and has received the opinion that the email regarding the 30 day waver for the Farmer's Wife may have been in breach of the Open Meetings Law. He did find out that site trips are okay as long as the members don't discuss or deliberate.

Mr. Boice also informed the board that he has spotted two more replaced LED street lights.

A motion was made by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Boice to allow for a 30 day waver of the liqour license notification requirements for the Pond Restaurant. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Israel reported that the town will be selling Ancram t-shirts and giving out the remaining light bulbs at Winterfest.

Councilwoman Israel reported that the remaining Gatepost signs will be installed next Tuesday, weather permitting.

## **Highway Department**

Superintendent Miller reported that the department has obtained 150 tons of salt. The doors on the new shed have not been hooked to electric yet.

Councilwoman Hundt questioned the application of the town for possible grant money to update culverts. She expressed that she understands that Mr. Miller does not want to address the culverts but that there is a person willing to write the grant. Mr. Miller stated that the ones that the study points out are ones that the town recently replaced and that he does not see the need to pull them back out. Mr. Bassin said that when Mr. Miller decides to replace the culverts then the town will apply for the grant money. Colleen Lutz felt that there was no guarantee that the money will be there at that point. She said that while the culverts are functioning in the way the highway needs them, they are failing when it comes to crossings for creatures in the water. Mr. Bassin said that this decision has to defer to Jim's judgement. Councilman Boice stated that in regards to the culvert on Doodletown, he cannot understand why they want it changed. He is worried about the costs to the town at the end of the project. Colleen stated that the town will soon have shovel ready designs for Undermountain.

Mr. Miller feels that the town needs to purchase a new boom mower for the John Deere Tractor. Town board approved assuming Jim can use highway funds for the purchase.

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

**Resolution #50 of 2019: 2019 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 at a monthly premium cost of \$451.74 per individual 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, and it is further Resolved, that the Town of Ancram will contribute \$750 to an Health Savings Account for each eligible employee, and will pay for or reimburse eligible employees for any unreimbursed medical costs incurred over \$1500 up to the policy out of pocket embedded maximum of \$7,150 per person or \$14,300 per family. It is further Resolved, that any employee eligible for town health insurance hired before January 1, 2011 who opts out of the Town health insurance program will received a \$4800 opt out payment in lieu of health insurance coverage, or an opt out payment of \$3600 if hired after January 1, 2011.

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

**Resolution #51 of 2019: Retiree Health Insurance** – Resolved, that the Ancram Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with Blue Shield of Northeastern New York to provide health insurance in 2020 to one retiree and spouse using the Blue Shield Forever Blue 799 (PPO) Plan EF1 TRx, which is the same plan that is in effect for retirees in 2019, at a premium cost of \$406 per month per retiree, which the Town will pay; it is further Resolved that, as in 2020, the Town will contribute \$850 to the retiree and to the spouse as partial compensation for out of pocket drug and medical co-pay costs.

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

**Resolution #51 of 2019: Columbia County Humane Society Contract** – Resolved, that the Ancram Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with the Columbia Greene Humane Society, on substantially the same terms and conditions as are contained in the 2019 Contract, to provide care and shelter in 2020 for dogs from Ancram brought to the Society by the Town of Ancram Animal Control Officer.

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

**Resolution #52 of 2019: Legal Retainer Agreement with Elena DeFio Kean** – Hinman Straub – Resolved, that the Ancram Supervisor is authorized to approve a retainer agreement with Hinman Straub to secure legal services related to personnel matters from of Elena Defio Kean, who currently serves as the town's legal counsel on personnel matters.

The following budget adjustment was offered by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Clark. Adjustment carried.

From Fund Balance: \$9,150.00 to Pool 7310.4 \$800.00, Highway 5132.4 \$7,600, Retirement \$750.00

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

Mr. Mike Citrin stated that the FAC has discussed the proposed “smart” tv’s for the building. A 75 inch will cost around \$5000.00

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica R. Cleveland  
Ancram Town Clerk