

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
May 20, 2021
Via Zoom**

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

Mr. Bassin asked if there were any items on the agenda that any member of the board needs 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 as read and placed on the record. Motion carried.

Jack Lindsey on Neighbors Helping Neighbors addressed the board. He gave an overview of the food distribution done by NHN. The group feeds 8-12 families on average. They process 2500 pounds of food a week and when they run their pickup, they do get extra to distribute to Pine Plains and Hillsdale food pantries. Fresh vegetables are brought in by Rocksteady Farm. The group has a possibility of receiving pandemic money to put towards a driver to pick up the food in Albany on Mondays for a five hour run. Mr. Lindsey reported that in some towns, the town supports the food pantry with a gift in kind of the use of a vehicle or an employee to help transport food. Mr. Bassin felt that this was a good idea in theory but at this time the highway department is shorthanded. Mr. Bassin suggested that the town advertise for a part time person that could possibly become a full time employee in the future. Councilwoman Israel suggested the towns planning board secretary for the position but Mr. Bassin advised that they already have a 40 hour a week job. Councilwoman Hundt asked Councilman Boice about his suggestion of buying NHN a vehicle. Mr. Boice felt that a pickup truck was not a good fit because it is open to the elements. He suggested an Econoline Cargo Van that retails for approximately \$ 36,200.00 and may be on State bid. Mr. Steve Olyha suggested finding out if other towns are in a need of this service as well and that the town could go in with other towns in a shared service agreement. Mr. Lindsey said the issue with that is that no towns run their service on the same day. Councilman Clark asked that if the vehicle would only be used on Mondays and if a leased vehicle would be an option. Councilman Boice suggested looking for the vehicle through Sorcewell and that the van would be stored at the town hall or the highway garage and available on Mondays. Councilman Boice will have prices for the next meeting.

Town Court Report

Court Clerk Ruth Wittlinger gave a report for the 2020 Town Court books. She noted that the court was closed as of March of 2020. The court opened back up for a short time in September and October but closed again December 9, 2020. The court opened back up in March of 2021. Compared to 594 cases in 2019, 2020 had 265 cases. The court collected \$29,167.00 in fines of which \$13,000.00 came back to the town. This last DA night, in trying to catch up the backlog, the docket had 60 cases. At this time the court is still not allowed to have cases that include testimony. Justice Redlich said that the court closure was unprecedented and that going forward the court should resume to normal.

Hamlet BOCO

BOCO Chair Carol Falcetti reported that while the rail trail has been wonderful, parking is still an issue. The hamlet is going to do a survey on Memorial Day weekend to see how many cars are parking on the road. The committee is concerned with broadband. Consolidated has only recently returned calls on the subject. They have proposed that ten houses sign up for the service for an agreed on amount of \$132.00 a month for three years. The committee will discuss this. The committee is planning an event to celebrate the end of the pandemic and are signing up for working groups. Councilwoman Hundt reflected that she had read somewhere that the Covid money can be used for broadband. Mr. Bassin said he believed this was correct.

CSCTF

Susan Flamm of CSCTF spoke to the board about the proposed Air Source Heat Pump. She reported that the town hall's current units are nearing the end of their life. The Air Source Heat Pump will decrease the towns fossil footprint. She said that the town is getting near the possibility of losing grant money if the town does not commit and move along in the process. She suggested that the town use the Solstice incentives towards this project as well as the \$70,500 in remaining grant money. The town will save \$2400.00 a year with the new system. She noted that the Dual Fuel System would use an Air Source Heat Pump as well as a furnace. This will cut the towns propane use by 70%.

Carol Falcetti asked if the town went with an electric vehicle to full fill the grant obligations, could NHN use it? Mr. Bassin said this was something the town could explore. Councilwoman Hundt says that she has spoken to someone who said that Air Source Heat Pump is the way to go. She felt that this was the chance to do the right thing to preserve the climate for future generations. Councilwoman Israel felt the same and noted that other towns will look to Ancram as an example. Councilman Clark noted that the 2010 Comprehensive Plan put forth that the Town of Ancram planned to be a good leader in being a good steward of the Environment. He felt that raising tax money in the current financial climate could be quite the burden and felt that balance is needed. Mr. Clark also agreed with Ms. Falcetti's suggestion on the Electric Vehicle. Councilman Boice agreed with Councilwoman Hundt to move forward with this project. He felt that this was good for the environment. He agrees also with the electric vehicle suggestion noting that the town already has a charging station at the town hall. He felt it may be a good idea that as the town adds to the fleet to look at electric vehicles instead of conventional fuel.

Mr. Bassin put forth the resolution to develop an FFP for the design and bid on the ASHP project.

Mr. Bassin noted that the Town of Wappingers has had a lot of issues with their Air Source Heat Pump unit but he stated that he has learned that it was a sloppy install that was the lowest bid. The Town of Ulysses installed a unit in their 3500 sqft Town Hall and are happy with it. The Town of Austerlitz also installed a unit and they are happy as well.

The following resolution was offered by Supervisor Arthur Bassin and seconded by Councilman Clark and moved for a roll call vote. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #30 of 2021: Town Hall HVAC – Resolved, that the Town Supervisor is authorized to accept the proposal from Jeff Boyles Heating to install a Heil PDD4 dual fuel HVAC unit at Town Hall to replace one existing York unit at a cost not to exceed \$15,000.

The following resolution was offered by Supervisor Bassin and seconded by Councilwoman Hundt and moved for a roll call vote. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #31 of 2021: ASHP RFP- Resolved, that the Ancram Town Supervisor is authorized to accept the proposal from CPL Engineering to develop a design an RFP for an Air Source Heat Pump HVAC system for the Ancram Town Hall for a cost not to exceed \$24,000.

Susan Flamm gave a report on the Solstice project. She reported that 48 people have signed on so far. Some homes have more then one meter.

Ancram Hamlet Group

Jay Corcoran gave a report on the Ancram Hamlet Group. He said that they are working on the Historic Hamlet Banners.

The group has met the Captain Bray of the Columbia County Sheriff's Department. The issue is speeding through the 82/7 intersection. The group proposes hiring an off duty Deputy to patrol the intersection. One 8 hour patrol day would cost approximately \$500. The thought of the committee is that the speeding tickets would offset the cost of the deputy. Councilman Clark asked what the rough average of tickets are per shift. Mr. Corcoran did not have that information but that Joe Kilmer was giving out an average of 5-10 tickets in the area in one hour.

As for the radar signs, they cannot be placed on the state road without a permit. The state also does not like the signs the town purchased.

Councilman Boice asked where the committee proposes the deputy to station and if it will be for a full eight hours. Mr. Corcoran said that the deputy would be in the hamlet but would change spots.

Justice Cathy Redlich noted that this will swamp the court at a time it is already trying to catch up from covid backlog.

Mr. Bassin said that there is a staff shortage at the county sheriff's department and suggested it might be difficult to get someone to cover this. Ms. Redlich said that any ticket given out the officer has to appear in court. Does the town then have to pay for that? Mr. Bassin suggested that the town start with one shift a week and if the court is overwhelmed, the town will have to scale back. Mr. Corcoran suggested one week day and one weekend day.

Councilman Clark asked if this was only for Ancram and not Ancramdale too? The answer was yes, only Ancram. Councilwoman Israel said it should include a patrol of both hamlets. Councilwoman Hundt felt that the town is going to have a hard time finding someone to do this. Councilman Boice felt that this was a big undertaking. He also felt that the service is needed in other locations throughout town. He suggested moving the speed limit to the top of the hill. Councilman Clark suggested a 60 day period and then reevaluate the situation. Mr. Boice also felt that instead of sending back the two radar signs the state does not like, keep them and buy two more.

Supervisor Bassin proposed the following resolution. Resolution seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for a roll call vote. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #32 of 2021: Enhanced Enforcement patrols – Resolved, that the Town Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with the County Sheriff's Department to provide two 8 hour enhanced enforcement patrol shifts per week in the Town of Ancram, to cover Ancram, Ancramdale and Boston Corner, for a period of 60 days for a cost not to exceed \$25,000.

Kids Camp and Pool

Jenn Boice gave an update on the pool. She said that she had an appointment with the wheelchair lift person. The pool decking is not ideal for this. For a portable unit the town is looking at a \$5,000 expense. For a mounted unit it will be around \$8-\$9,000.00. She has spoken to Bob Reed about the bathrooms. She suggested that the town use this year to do some work on the pool. She felt the town would not be able to get lifeguards by July 1st. She did not know either how to regulate residents only. Councilman Clark asked if the pool was mandated to be ADA compliant. Mr. Bassin said that because there were no major updates since 2010, it may not be required.

Marijuana Law

The town has the option to opt out by the end of the year.

Supervisors Report

1. Financial Report – April was a normal month financially, and based on our first sales and mortgage tax checks, we appear to be headed for a strong year financially. 1Q sales tax came in at \$86,000 compared to a budgeted \$75,000. And our May mortgage tax payment will be \$69,000, compared to a budget of \$15,000. It is likely we will end the year with \$1.1 million in

the fund balance, which will be about \$300,000 higher than our “normal” target fund balance of about \$800,000. FAC has suggested that we consider using this excess fund balance to pay down debt, supplement the American Rescue Plan program’s \$160,000 or reduce taxes.

2. American Rescue Plan – The Town is scheduled to receive \$160,000 under this program-half in June 2021 and half in June 2022. I have attached a list of possible ways we can use these funds, and we should continue to discuss possible other uses of the Rescue Plan money. Might make sense to designate a committee of FAC and

TB members to review possible allowed uses of the funds, and recommend how to use these funds.

3. Marijuana Law – The Town Board has until the end of the year to decide if we want to opt out of the provisions of this law that allows the sale of marijuana in town through retail dispensaries and the establishment of marijuana “lounges”. If we decide to opt out, we would have to pass a local law subject to a permissive referendum. If we decide to opt in, we do not need to take any additional action, but we may have to add marijuana dispensaries and lounges to the use table in the Zoning Law and define where they can be established.

4. Ancram Neighbors Helping Neighbors Association – Jack Lindsey, co-chair of ANHNA, will join us on Thursday night to discuss how the Town can support

ANHNA with its food distribution mission. Support could include a combination of financial assistance and help with the weekly pick up and distribution of food to families participating in the program.

5. 82/7 Intersection - Ancram

a) Enhanced Enforcement Patrol (EEP) in Ancram – The Ancram Hamlet Planning Group is working with the County Sheriff’s Department to set up an “Enhanced Enforcement Patrol” to better enforce the 35 mph speed limit at the 82/7 intersection in Ancram. The EEP will probably take the form of 2 or 3 days a week of 8-hour deputy coverage in and around the 82/7 intersection in Ancram. We will consider a resolution authorizing this arrangement at a cost not to exceed \$25,000, which should allow 24 hours of coverage per week for about 6 months.

b) Radar Speed Sign – We continue to work with NYS DOT to secure a permit to install radar speed signs on 82 outside of Ancram and Ancramdale. NYS DOT has requested that we do an engineering analysis on the base of the posts that will hold the signs, which we

are in the process of getting done, and may request that we change the radar sign itself to a more basic design consistent with NYS DOT guidelines.

c) 35 mph speed zone – We have requested that NYS DOT move the beginning of the 35 mph speed zone on 82 north of Ancram to the top of the hill approaching the 82/7 intersection, at about 2262 Route 82.

6. Camp/Pool Planning – No new guidance from NYS or the County yet, and if guidance does not change from last year, the Camp/Pool Board is recommending we do not open the camp or pool this year. The plan is to do all pool maintenance necessary to open the pool this summer by early July, and to make a final decision on whether or not to open the camp and pool by June 1. If we do decide to open, we may have problems finding lifeguards and camp counselors.

7. Town Hall HVAC – We will consider a resolution to accept a proposal from Jeff Boyles Heating to replace one of the original 2003 HVAC units at Town Hall with a Heil PDD4 dual fuel system costing \$14,750 that will reduce propane usage by almost 70% - about 566 gallons for one unit, and by 1700 gallons if we were to eventually replace all three HVAC units with the PDD4. We have also received a proposal from CPL Engineering for an RFP for an Air Source Heat Pump System. The RFP cost is \$24,000, and CPL has estimated the cost of installing an ASHP system at about \$200,000, after taking advantage of a \$70,000 NYSERDA grant. FAC has reviewed and discussed the ASHP proposal and recommends against it, as the payback is estimated at 98 years. CSCTF will review the proposal and present its recommendations next week. It is possible that we may be able to get additional grant money from NYSERDA to help fund the ASHP system, and we are looking into whether NYSERDA will reimburse us for doing the RFP even if we do not decide to install the ASHP system at this time.

8. Highway Road Work – The Highway Department paved portions of Carson and Doodletown roads last month, spending almost \$300,000, which is about the full amount of our revised NYS Chips, Pave NY and Emergency Weather Repair money. We had budgeted \$136,000 for NYS financial support for road repairs in 2021, but NYS recently notified us that they were increasing that amount by \$169,000 to about \$305,000.

9. Highway Bucket Truck - We will consider a proposal from Highway Superintendent Miller to purchase a new bucket truck for a cost not to exceed \$100,000.

10. Solstice – We have about 50 homes already signed up for the Solstice program. Colleen Lutz will be holding another Solstice Webinar on 5/19 at 7 pm

Town Board Members

Councilwoman Hundt reported that she is continuing to work on a draft of a survey on economic housing.

Councilwoman Hundt noted that there is a grant opportunity for charging stations.

Councilwoman Israel is talking to Barringers about placing a Ancram gateway sign on their property on Route 22.

Councilman Boice has spoken to SNF Communications about installing televisions in the town hall. The proposal would be for a large screen in the meeting room with a camera system and either hardwire or wifi capability and a large screen in the conference room. He has not received the proposals yet.

Mr. Boice questioned the status of County Route 3's speed reduction in light of Dean Knox passing. Mr. Bassin will inquire.

Highway Department - May 2021 Report

-Status of the employee out on workman's comp is unchanged.

-Diesel fuel used:540 gallons

-Gasoline used: 481 gallons

-We completed a large portion of our road improvements during April after receiving word that we are to receive a record \$305,000 in state funding. We completed the Carson Road reclamation and paving project at a total cost of \$190,104.77 and repaved a 1.3 mile section of Doodletown road at a cost of \$101,090.76. These two projects total about 2.65 miles. We will be receiving a reimbursement from the state for these projects on or about 6/30.

-As I reported last month with the unexpected large increase in state funding, all municipalities are scrambling to utilize these funds. I elected to do the Doodletown project while Peckham was already here. Doing so saved us equipment mobilization costs and we avoided rapidly increasing blacktop prices sure to come due to escalating oil prices. I still plan to repave Dam Road and chip seal a portion of East Ancram and Overmountain Roads. Later this summer. If it looks like we will have enough funds we could pave Chase Road as well. These smaller paving projects will be done with our paver with help from neighboring towns. This will be determined by how many other expenses go over the summer such as blacktop prices, gravel, calcium, signs, etc that all come from that same budget line.

-Our lawn maintenance person has given notice that he will be leaving on 5/29. We have advertised for the position. Jim MacArthur has agreed to take on the mowing in addition to being a fill in CDL driver.

-Roadside mowing has begun and is approximately ½ complete on the first round.

-Flags were hung last Monday courtesy of Ginnochio Electric for the Ladies Aus.

-I would like to remind residents to please not blow grass clippings and other debris into the road. It's not only a hazard to motorcycle and bicyclists but unlawful as well.

Councilwoman Hundt asked if it was normal procedure to hire Peckham. Mr. Miller said that yes, with a project of this scope with the reclamation, they have the equipment.

Mr. Miller stated that he has priced out a Bucket Truck, current cost is \$86,500.00. Mr. Miller noted that the Sorcewell pricing has yet to come back to the town. Councilwoman Hundt felt that the town does not need this truck and that it is not in the Capital Plan. Councilwoman Israel felt that there is question over money for a heating system at the town hall but the town wants a bucket truck at this cost. Councilman Clark felt that the board has discussed this for the last few months. The town continues to keep needing and or using one and this keeps occurring. Mr. Clark felt that this was a long term investment. Councilman Boice asked if there

was a warranty with the truck and if the lift is warrantied. Mr. Miller said that there is a warranty and that he would look into the specifics. He stated that the one quoted to him is a 4500 Ram with a cab and chassis. But, he noted that Sorcewell has not sent their quote yet.

The following resolution was offered by Supervisor Bassin and seconded by Councilman Clark and moved for adoption by roll call vote. Resolution carried with ayes from Mr. Bassin, Mr. Clark and Mr. Boice. Nays from Ms. Hundt and Mrs. Israel.

Resolution #33 of 2021: Bucket Truck – Resolved, that the Highway Superintendent is authorized to purchase a new bucket truck for a cost not to exceed \$100,000.

Town Clerk

Mrs. Cleveland noted that she and her Grandfather Avery Dietter Sr. and son Ronald Cleveland, attended the funeral today of Corp. Clifford Johnson of Valatie, NY. Corp. Johnson was killed in Korea in 1950 and his remains were recently returned to the United Sftates and identified after 71 years. Corp Johnson was buried in the Saratoga National Cemetery. Mr. Dietter served in Korea in 1951 in the same division as Corp Johnson.

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

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

Resolution #34 of 2021: Resolution to take part in an Undertaking for the Benefit of the NYS DOT

-Whereas, the Town of Ancram wishes to take part in the Undertaking for the benefit of the New York State Department of Transportation, and

-Whereas, this Undertaking is in connection with work affecting state highways for the use by New York municipalities and federal agencies, and

-Whereas, the Town of Ancram, from time to time receives permits from the New York State Department of Transportation, and

-Whereas, the Town of Ancram conducts activities and operations upon highways and/or within right-of-way controlled by the State of New York for such purposes as the obstruction, installation, construction, maintenance and/or operation of facilities.

Now, therefore, be it Resolved, that the Town Board of the Town of Ancram agrees to the NYS Department of Transportation terms and conditions.

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica R. Cleveland, Ancram Town Clerk