

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
June 17, 2021**

Present: Supervisor Arthur Bassin Councilman Hugh Clark
 Councilman David Boice Councilwoman Madeline Israel
 Councilwoman Bonnie Hundt (viz zoom)
 Town Clerk Monica Cleveland
 Highway Superintendent James Miller

The regular meeting of the Ancram Town Board was called to order by Supervisor Bassin with a salute to the flag. Mr. Bassin thanked everyone for attending the first in person meeting in many months. Councilwoman Hundt was attending the meeting via zoom.

Supervisor Bassin asked if there were any items on the agenda any member of the Town Board needed to recuse themselves from. There were none.

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

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Mr. Jack Lindsey addressed the board. He thanked the board with their willingness to help NHN food distribution. The group is looking for help with a person to pick up food once a week and funding a vehicle when this becomes necessary. Jen Boice asked if this help from the town will hinder the groups 501c3 status. Jack responded that the person who will be paid will be vouchered to the town and hired as a contractor. Councilman Boice has been looking into a van for the group to use. The van that the group is interested in is a Dodge Ram Promaster 2500. The capacity is 8900 pounds. The quoted price through Sourcewell is \$40,500 but they are no longer pricing 2021 vehicles. Mr. Boice will not have more information until August. Mr. Boice also noted that there are no available electric vehicles from Dodge as they are all going to Amazon.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

Resolution #35 of 2021: Support for Ancramdale Neighbors Association (ANHNA) - Whereas, the Town of Ancram has determined that there exists food insecurity for some residents of the Town; and Whereas, the Town of Ancram seeks to ensure the health, safety and well-being of its residents; and Whereas, ANHNA provides weekly food deliveries to families in the Town of Ancram, and Whereas, ANHNA has requested support from the Town of Ancram to allow it to

continue to provide this important food delivery service to Ancram residents, Therefore it is resolved, that the Town of Ancram will, based on a written request from ANHNA outlining the needs for and uses of the requested funds, donate \$11,000 annually to ANHNA to allow ANHNA to continue the weekly delivery of food to Ancram residents, and be it further resolved that, if requested to do so, the Town of Ancram shall purchase, lease or rent a vehicle suitable for use by ANHNA and will make this vehicle available to ANHNA on a regular weekly basis to support the ANHNA food program, and be it further resolved, that the Town of Ancram shall review and adjust its annual contribution to ANHNA each year as part of the Town budget process so the amount of annual Town support provided to ANHNA is consistent with the changing needs of ANHNA. It is further resolved, that the Town of Ancram will require ANHNA to provide an annual report to the Town as to the utilization of the funds provided and the services provided to the Town of Ancram residents.

Historic Banners

Lynn Perrella gave a presentation to the board regarding proposed historic banners. The banners will hang in groups on electric poles throughout the three town hamlets, Ancram, Ancramdale and Boston Corners. The banners will be on poles not already being used by the Ladies Auxiliary for American Flags. There will be 12-15 designs with 40 banners total. The estimated cost of the banners to be made will be \$75.96 per unit with a cost of \$3741.20 total. Moore and More printing will provide digital files of the artwork and color copies for a cost of \$300. Perrella Designs will provide the artwork and the designs at no charge.

Mr. Bassin reported that there is still \$7800.00 left in the Heritage Resources budget fund. Councilman Clark asked what the life expectancy of the signs are. Mrs. Perrella said that similar signs in Hudson made by this printer have been up for six years. Mr. Miller noted that the town has no way of installing the signs at this time as the new bucket truck will not be delivered until 2022. Mr. Bassin suggested asking Ginnochio electric to help with the project. Councilman Clark noted at this time the section of the Comprehensive plan that specified a project of this exact kind to enhance the appeal of the hamlet.

The following resolution was offered by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Boice and moved for adoption. Resolution carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Resolution #36 of 2021: Historic Banners – Resolved, that the Historic Banners proposal presented by Lynne Perrella is approved at a cost not to exceed \$4000.

Climate Smart Community Task Force

Mr. Bassin noted that the committee is still working on the RFP for the air source heat pump.

BOCO Hamlet

Committee chair Carol Falcetti addressed the board. Ms. Falcetti noted that the rail trail parking was quiet over the holiday weekend.

The committee has been actively discussing the need for Broadband in the area. She noted that there are 15 homes that have had fiber since 2019. 66% of the homes in the hamlet have no fiber hookup. The hamlet has been actively working on this issue for some time. They were offered fiber by CCI if 10 homes would agree to sign up for a three year contract at a specified price. Another option is a USDA grant that would pay for 75% of the buildout leaving a cost of \$30,400 to the residents. The board discussed pledging the money needed to the hamlet from the promised Covid-Relief funds. Mr. Bassin noted that to run fiber for the entire town, a cost of \$500,000 would have to be funded by the town.

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

Resolution #37 of 2021: Boston Corner Broadband Investment – Resolved, that the Ancram Town Board authorizes the Town Supervisor to enter into an agreement with Consolidated Communications to install fiber along Boston Corner Rd, Undermountain Rd and Altenburg Rd in Boston Corner for a cost not to exceed \$30,000, using American Rescue Plan Act funds to pay for this expansion of broadband service.

It was noted that in order for this to get on the work schedule for the company to be done by the end of 2021, it has to have a work order put in in the next six weeks.

Mr. Bassin also brought up Broadband for all unserved areas of the town and the commitment to funding. Mr. Bassin suggested drafting an RFP to specify the intent. Councilman Boice asked about the cost of this proposed RFP. Mr. Bassin said that an RFP of this time will have no cost to the town.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Resolution carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

Resolution #38 of 2021: Town of Ancram Broadband RFP – Resolved, that the Ancram Town Board authorizes the Town Supervisor to issue a request for a proposal to internet service providers to bid on expanding broadband service to areas in the Town of Ancram not currently served by broadband.

Ancram Hamlet Committee

The committee reported that the extra patrols will begin on Monday. Mr. Bassin said that in regards to the radar signs, the State has been very hard to reach and get an answer from. Councilman Boice noted as well that the 35 MPH does not start at Wildflower Hill.

Pool

Jenn Boice reported that the handicapped lift that they are proposing will cost the town \$9400 and will take about six weeks to install. She felt that a fixed structure is the way to go. She said that to put the lift in, some of the decking will have to be removed. The company will install the lift. Mrs. Boice said that she is trying desperately to find lifeguards. There is a shortage but Mrs. Boice feels that one way to fix this issue going into next year is to hire someone to give the training right at the pool. Mrs. Boice is also working on making the bathrooms handicapped accessible. Councilman Clark asked if there are any other pools that have this same lift who can offer reviews of it. Mrs. Boice did not know of any but could find out.

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

Resolution #38 of 2021: Handicapped pool chair – Resolved, that the proposal presented by Pool Director Jennifer Boice to install a handicapped pool chair at the Ancram town pool is approved at a cost not to exceed \$12,000.

Camp

Mr. Bassin noted that while the Ancram Kids Camp is not opening this year, Ancram has agreed to pay for camp for Ancram children at Hillsdale, Pine Plains and Copake. There are at this time 14 children enrolled in Pine Plains and 4 in Hillsdale.

Marijuana Law

Mr. Bassin addressed the board concerning the Marijuana Law. He said that at the town can opt out of the parts of the law related to the retail sales and smoking lounges. Councilwoman Hundt commented that there is a small chance that a retail site or lounge would set up in any of the business districts. She pointed out that if the town opted out, the town would lose out on tax payments in association with the sales. She felt it was an arduous process to opt out given it may not affect Ancram. John Perrella was concerned that the town wouldn't opt out given the accidents that have happened recently. He noted a DWI who drove through the Stiehle house. John MacArthur noted that the next town over may not opt out, so people can go there to purchase and then drive through Ancram. He felt that opting out would not dissuade people from driving through to these other towns to purchase. He did not see the need in opting out. The town board decided to defer for another month.

American Rescue Plan

Mr. Bassin said that he has received numerous pieces of paperwork regarding the plan in recent days. The first steps to receiving the funding is the Town Supervisor signing off that the town is in compliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Amendment, agreeing to terms and conditions and submitting an application to NYS by July 9..

Supervisor Report

1. Financial Report – May was a strong 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 was \$69,000, compared to a budget of \$15,000. It is likely we will end the year with about \$900,000 in the fund balance if we decide to prepay our \$240,000 plow truck loan, or with about \$1.1 million if we decide not to prepay the truck loan, which we are paying 1.5% interest on. Our “normal” targeted year-end fund balance is about \$800,000. FAC has suggested that we do not prepay the truck loan, but to consider using any excess fund balance to supplement the American Rescue Plan program’s \$160,000 and consider a dramatic investment in expanding broadband in unserved areas of town.

2. American Rescue Plan – The Town is scheduled to receive \$160,000 under this program-half in the next month or two and half a year later. FAC has discussed how we could use this money and has concluded we should evaluate projects eligible under ARPA based on impact on public health and safety, economic impact, sustainability and lives affected. Projects that seem to be most likely to meet these criteria are broadband expansion, support for ANHNA and support for emergency first responders - the Ancram Fire Company and the Copake Rescue Squad. FAC also suggests we consider matching the \$160,000 we expect to get from ARPA with town funds, so we will have \$320,000 to invest in recovering from the pandemic.

3. CSCTF – Suzan Flamm has applied to NYSERDA to approve reimbursement for the \$24,000 ASHP RFP project and the installation of the \$15,000 PDD4 dual fuel unit. She has also requested that our grant be extended for 18 months to the end of 2022, to give us more time to use the funds. Solstice is doing well, with over 50 sign ups. At the suggestion of FAC member Mike Citrin we are also exploring whether there are better environmental impacts for a \$200,000 investment of town funds than the ASHP system.

4. Ancram Neighbors Helping Neighbors Association – Jack Lindsey, co-chair of ANHNA, will join us again Thursday night to discuss how the Town can support ANHNA with its food distribution mission. Support could include a combination of financial assistance and the use of a town vehicle. Resolution 1 outlines how we may be able to assist ANHNA.

6. 82/7 Intersection - Ancram

a) Enhanced Enforcement Patrol (EEP) in Ancram – EEPs will begin the week of June 18 and will cover Ancram, Ancramdale and Boston Corner. The EEPs will be scheduled for two days a week for 8 hours a day, for 60 days, at which point we will evaluate the program and decide if we want to continue it or not. That decision might depend on whether or not we have gotten our radar sign permit.

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.

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. We expect a response from NYS DOT soon.

6. Camp/Pool – Both Pine Plains and Hillsdale have opened their camps to Ancram Kids. No information yet on how many Ancram kids have applied to these camps.

7. Marijuana Law – **As you may recall**, 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 allow 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 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. We should decide at next week’s meeting if we want to opt out or not, and if we do want to opt out, we can have a local law prepared to consider in July. As a point of interest, FAC was 6-1 in favor of opting out.

8) Broadband – We will be considering two resolutions at our 6/17 meeting to expand broadband in Town. One is to approve a \$30,000 payment to Consolidated to expand broadband to about 35 homes in Boston Corner, and the other is to request an RFP from the ISPs to provide broadband for about 200 unserved homes around town. As a practical matter, Consolidated is the only likely bidder, and we should be able to get a cost, road by road, to reach these 200 homes.

9) Deputy Planning Board/ZBA Clerk – We will consider a resolution authorizing the Planning Board to add a deputy clerk to help process the volume of applications they are dealing with.

10) Speed limit on Simons Rd – A resident on Simons Rd has requested that we apply to the County and State to reduce the speed limit on Simons from 55 to 30. We still have not heard back on our request to reduce the speed limit on CR 3.

11) Roe Jan Ramble Bike Tour – We will consider resolution to designate the 2021 RoeJan Ramble Bike Tour a Town sponsored event so volunteers working on the bike event are covered by town insurance.

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

Resolution #39 of 2021: Revised Covid 19 Safety Plan Requirements – Whereas, NYS has modified Covid-19 guidance to reflect revised CDC guidance, and whereas the Town of Ancram intends to continue to be in compliance with NYS and CDC guidance, therefore it is resolved

that effective June 18, 2021 the Town of Ancram will reopen the Town Hall and other town properties to the public and will no longer require vaccinated employees and vaccinated members of the public to sign in to the Town Hall, wear masks or socially distance when at Town Hall or at other town properties. However, it is further resolved, that employees and members of the public who have not been vaccinated will be required to continue to wear masks and socially distance, and vaccinated individuals may continue to wear masks and socially distance if they so choose, and it is strongly recommended and requested that any vaccinated employees or members of the public who show symptoms of what could be Covid-19 or any other respiratory illness wear a mask and practice social distancing when entering Town Hall or other Town properties.

The following resolution was offered by Councilwoman Israel and seconded by Councilman Clark and moved for adoption. Councilman Boice questioned if there was any liability insurance provided to the town for this event? Mr. Bassin will find out. Resolution Carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Resolution #40 of 2021: Roe Jan Ramble Bike Tour – Resolved, that the Ancram Town Board approves the Roe Jan Ramble Bike tour to be held on September 18, 2021 as a “Town sponsored event” and be covered by the Town liability insurance policy.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilwoman Israel and moved for adoption. Resolution carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Resolution #41 of 2021: Speed limit on Simons Rd – Resolved, that the Ancram Town Board requests that the speed limit on Simons Road, a rural road extensively used by walkers, joggers, bikers and farm equipment, be reduced from an unposted 55 mph to 40 mph.

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

Resolution #41 of 2021: Deputy Planning Board/ZBA Clerk – Resolved, that the Ancram Town Board authorizes the Town Supervisor to advertise for and hire a deputy Planning Board/ZBA Clerk to assist the Planning Board/ZBA Clerk to process the increased number of applications coming before the Planning Board, to work for up to 8 hours a week and to be paid up to \$19.40 per hour, depending on experience.

Carol Falcetti asked if this position could be filled by a High School intern with some training. Mr. Bassin noted that it is very hard to find young people for these positions at this time. Councilman Clark asked if this person will work with J? Mr. Bassin said that they would.

Town Board Members

Councilwoman Hundt reported that the housing survey is complete and that it will be distributed soon.

Councilman Boice reported on the proposed television monitor system at the town hall is an ongoing project. At this time most companies are working six to eight months out. Mr. Boice suggested that the town look at the board that was suggested by John Ingram and to talk to Kyle Loughheed of Ginocchio electric about installation.

Highway Report

The Highway Superintendent gave the following report:

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

Diesel fuel used: 457 gallons

Gasoline used: 412 gallons

CHIPS funding application has been submitted for projects completed for \$291,105.

Reimbursement is scheduled on or about 6/30. We have \$14,741 remaining in this years CHIPS allotment.

Grading our dirt roads has been completed

Completed drainage work to alleviate a problem spot on Woods Drive and will be paved over soon.

Chip sealing a portion of E Ancram and Over Mt roads is scheduled for July 9.

We will be assisting Copake and Gallatin with their upcoming projects in return for their help in our upcoming paving projects on Dam road the week of 6/28 and Chase road to follow.

Roadside mowing is ongoing.

Tentative date for Town Cleanup Day is 9/25

I took part in the virtual highway school June 7-10.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Report

The Town Clerk reported that the 2021 taxes have been returned to the County Treasurers office. The town had a collection rate of 94% this year.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Israel to make the following budget adjustment, approve the warrant and pay the bills. Motion carried.

From the Fund Balance: \$18,900.00

To 1355.4: \$7,500

To 8010.13: \$3,500

To 1620.4: \$5,900

To: 8010.4Z: \$2,000

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