

To: Ancram Town Board
From: Art Bassin
Date: August 14, 2021
Supervisor's Report



1. Financial Report – Another normal financial month in what is shaping up to be a very strong financial year because of higher than budgeted sales tax revenues (about \$50,000), higher than budgeted mortgage tax revenues (about \$55,000), lower than expected highway salary costs (about \$60,000 due having one person out on disability all year and lower overtime) and no camp & pool expenses (about \$78,000). We expect to end the year with about \$1.4 million in cash, compared to our normal \$800,000.

2. American Rescue Plan Act – It looks like about \$102,000 of the \$152,000 in ARPA funding will be classified as “revenue loss” and can be used for anything a town can normally use funds for. So far we have allocated \$30,000 to expanding broadband in Boston Corner, \$40,000 for a van to support the ANHNA food distribution program, and \$11,000 a year for labor to support the ANHNA food distribution program.

3. Investing in the environment – We will consider a resolution to stop work on the ASHP RFP and reallocate the estimated incremental \$170,000 that an ASHP HVAC system would cost to save 800 gallons of propane to other environmental projects that could have a more significant environmental impact than just saving 800 gallons of propane. Possible environmental investments would include more solar panels, better insulation at TH. more EV chargers around town and grant support for Ancram homeowner environmental projects that reduce greenhouse gasses.

4. NYS DOT Response – We received a letter from NY DOT requesting that we submit a formal request with a Town Board resolution to extend the 35 mph speed zone on 82 to the area of 2259/2261 State Rte 82. NYS DOT declined to act on any of the other requests made by Ancram residents over the past 6 months, citing the fact that the accident history at the 82/7 intersection did not justify any action.

5. Enhanced Enforcement Patrol (EEP) in Ancram – EEPs have been in place for the past 6 weeks, with two shifts a week. I recommend we extend the EEP program to the end of 2021, and expand the number of shifts from two a week to 4 a week, so we can cover more locations simultaneously. Key patrol areas are the 82/7 intersection in Ancram, the 8/3/82 intersection in Ancramdale and CR 8a in Ancramdale. Cost of the EEPs is about \$500 a shift, so four shifts a week would cost about \$2000 a week.

6. Radar Speed Signs – No new news, but we hope to hear soon. We have resubmitted our application to NYS DOT for a permit to place radar speed signs on fixed poles on 82 coming into Ancram and coming into Ancramdale. When this permit is approved, we will purchase two new radar speed signs that meet NYS DOT guidelines. Our two trailer mounted radar signs have been positioned in the center of Ancram and Ancramdale to slow traffic coming through the centers of the two hamlets.

7. Weight limit on Ancramdale Bridge - We have received another request to consider putting a weight limit on the bridge at the 82/8/3 intersection to prevent heavy truck traffic

from speeding through Ancramdale and using CR 8 and CR 8A as a short cut to 199 and 22. There would have to be structural reasons for putting a weight limit on the bridge which NYS State DOT would have to determine by doing an inspection. The town cannot put weight limits on county roads, so weight limits on 8 and 8A would have to be decided on by the County. The problem with weight limits is that they will affect local contractors, farm vehicles, emergency vehicles and highway vehicles, and have the unintended consequence of rerouting heavy truck traffic to other town roads. Hopefully an expanded EEP program and more radar speed signs will be able to slow down the heavy trucks and minimize the problem.

8. Ancram Historic District Marker – We should discuss this and plan to make a decision on where the marker should go. The Ancram Hamlet Planning Group has suggested a spot on CR 7 by the Little Store that is blocked by a tree and a pole from the south and is on a curve. Three Town Board members have expressed a concern about this location. An alternative location, suggested by Councilman Hugh Clark is on CR 7 on the southern edge of the Fire House driveway at the top of Blass Field, opposite Simons General Store.

9. Workers Compensation Program – Columbia County has joined the Public Employer Risk Management Association (PERMA), which is a Mutual Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance Program. All towns in the County can be a part of PERMA by passing a resolution to join. The County has been self-insuring for as long as I can remember. The cost of PERMA is about the same as it would have been if we continue to self-insure, but the benefit is we as a County will not have ongoing future obligations for individuals who are covered by workers' comp. And by being part of a county-wide mutual workers' comp program, all towns and the county will save premium money when compared to buying individual workers' comp policies.