

**Town of Ancram  
Town Board  
Regular Meeting  
July, 21, 2022**

**Present:**      **Supervisor Arthur Bassin**      **Councilman David Boice**  
**Councilman Hugh Clark**      **Councilwoman Bonnie Hundt**  
**Councilwoman Amy Gold**      **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 meeting agenda that any member of the board needed to recuse themselves from. There were none.

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

**Committee for Respectful Behavior**

Mr. Bassin announced that the committee had received six applicants. Mr. Bassin named the following: Bill Walters, Dave Hall, Isalyn Connell, Amy Allen, Jaclyn Ryan and Abby Westlake. Councilwoman Hundt and Councilwoman Gold will serve as liaisons to the committee. The committee will meet and review the draft policy and draw up a complaint procedure and training. At that point those items will be presented to the Town Board for review and approval. Councilwoman Hundt questioned if the time frame for additional applicants for the committee was open ended. Mr. Bassin responded that it was. Ms. Hundt questioned if the town would be better served with a seven or a five member committee. Mr. Bassin suggested starting with a six member committee and then allow the committee once formed to decide if they wanted to have five members and one alternate. Mr. Bassin said that the town board will decide on and retain an attorney if one is considered necessary for investigations.

Mr. Bassin asked for comments from the town board members.

Councilman Clark said that he understands the call of appointing a committee. He believes that the investigation aspect of the process is the key. He felt that the goal should be that the policy will mesh with the employee handbook in concept and process.

Councilwoman Hundt noted that the original investigation recommended 25 items in the final report. Eight of those had to do with training and four with policy changes.

There was a question from Terry Boyles, a resident, via zoom. Mr. Boyles asked if a person, while out in public, can be charged with disrespectful behavior even if not in a meeting or conducting town business at that time. Mr. Bassin felt that if the person is not in a meeting and

not working in the capacity of the town, then no. Mr. Boyles noted that Ms. Hundt had stated in a newspaper article that these behaviors a lot of times happened not at a meeting. Ms. Hundt stated that she did not say this.

Mr. Michael Citrin, a resident, via zoom asked if there will be a budget line for the committee. Mr. Bassin said that the attorney costs will come from the attorney budget line. Mr. Citrin was concerned with a six member meeting and the possibility of a 3-3 tie. Mr. Bassin said that this was something the committee will have to work out when it forms.

Mr. Terry Boyles asked the board if the committee is all female. Mr. Bassin said that the members are four women and two men.

The following Resolution was offered by Councilwoman Gold and seconded by Councilwoman Hundt and moved for adoption:

**Resolution #33 of 2022:**

CRB Resolution: Resolved, that the following individuals are appointed to the Committee for Respectful Behavior: Bill Walters, Dave Hall, Isalyn Connell, Amy Allen, Jaclyn Ryan and Abby Westlake to recommend to the Town Board a final draft of the Respectful Behavior Policy and Code of Conduct, a respectful behavior complaint procedure and training programs for Town staff and volunteers to encourage respectful behavior; and it is further resolved that Councilwomen Bonnie Hundt and Amy Gold will serve as the Town Board liaisons to the Committee for Respectful Behavior and will assist the CRB to get organized and appoint a chair or co-chairs; and it is further resolved that the Town Board will continue to accept applications for membership on the Committee for Respectful Behavior.

Supervisor Bassin called for a roll call vote: Supervisor Bassin Yes, Councilman Clark Yes, Councilwoman Hundt Yes, Councilwoman Gold Yes, Councilman Boice No. Resolution carried.

Mr. David Hall, member of the newly formed CRB, introduced himself to the members of the town board.

**SIC Update**

Mr. Will Weiss gave an update on proposed projects the committee is investigating to invest town funding into. Two of the areas of potential investment include the Ancram water issues and worker housing. Mr. Weiss said that both of these need further investigating. Two ideas the committee are leaning towards are a pavilion on town property and solar power for the Town Garage salt shed.

Susan Flamm spoke to the board about the proposed solar panels. She said that the property was looked at by Solar Generation and that they were confident that the panels could supply the power for the Town Garage facility as well as additional power. The town can qualify for a \$10,000 NYSERDA grant and the town will have to dedicate \$86,000 to the project. Councilman Boice asked how much money the town will save by going to solar at this facility and noted that the town hall has yet to recoup the money put out for the solar panels on this roof. It was

noted that there have been many solar storage area box fires recently. Ms. Flamm said that this project does not include battery storage and instead goes directly to the grid. She felt that the benefit to the environment is important and that the town should not look at this as a money saving opportunity. Mr. Bassin said that it is the town boards responsibility to look at the financial aspect of all projects. Mr. Bassin said that this would have to be put out to competitive bidding like the HVAC project and that an engineer needs to be involved. Councilman Clark asked that because this is going on a building like the salt shed, he wanted to know if there were any plans to change this building in the future. Mr. Miller said that he did not foresee any changes. Ms. Flamm said with this project the town can choose a meter to direct the savings to for over production. Ms. Flamm said that this could go towards the Light District. Mr. Boice said that if the town took the \$86,000, divided it by the amount the Light District pays each year for street lighting, those in the lighting district could have a tax cut for 28 years. Jen Boice asked if the roof on the structure is in good shape. Ms. Flamm said that the contractor said it can hold the panels. Councilwoman Hundt asked if the contractors can look at the project and give an estimate without contracting an engineer. Mr. Bassin said the town will need an RFP for a project this size. The committee will return with additional information. Councilwoman Gold asked if the grant has an expiration date. Ms. Flamm said it does not.

The second proposed project is a pavilion. Mr. Weiss suggested that the town do a survey to see if the residents would like a pavilion and if it should be built on Blass field or the town hall site. The committee has gotten proposals for an engineer. CPL came in at \$2200 and CT Male came in at \$3925 and includes testing the soil and the draining. Mr. Bassin suggested that the town put off choosing an engineer until the town board can look at the estimates. Mr. Bassin said that the town will have to think about maintenance of the structure, ongoing upkeep, etc. Councilman Boice made a motion to accept the CTMale proposal, which motion was approved.

Councilwoman Gold felt that the town should look at the ongoing rise in fuel and food and how the town can help those falling short. Mr. Bassin said that NHN addresses this issue and if the need is great, the town can help them.

The following resolution was offered by Councilwoman Hundt and seconded by Councilman Clark and moved for adoption:

**Resolution # 34 of 2022: Support Clean Air, Clean Water and Green Jobs Bond Act** – Resolved, that the Ancram Town Supervisor is authorized to register Town of Ancram support for the Clean Air, Clean Water and Green Jobs Bond Act.

Resolution carried by unanimous roll call vote.

### Road Salt

Mr. Bassin thanked Councilwoman Gold for her investigation into Brine as an alternative to road salt. The road salt report from the Cary Institute shows that the town of Ancram uses far less salt on the roads than the brine alternative would. Councilwoman Hundt asked what the pretreating the state does, if it keeps the runoff down. Mr. Miller said it was to keep it from freezing.

### **Camp and Pool**

Mrs. Jen Boice said that the pool is doing well. She thanked the highway department for their help. The pool will be closed the 23<sup>rd</sup> for painting of the bathroom floors.

### **Supervisors Report**

- 1) Financial Report – June financial results were as expected. We continue to see significant increases in the cost of highway materials, with 2022 fuel costs likely to be about \$20,000 over a \$40,000 budget. Given the likely continuation of a combination of high inflation, rising interest rates, supply chain uncertainties, oil price spikes, potential oil shortages, food and fuel cost increases, and the situation in Ukraine, the economic environment is unpredictable and is likely to negatively impact our costs and revenues. We should plan to continue to be cautious and conservative in our financial management until we see how things evolve, and what happens with costs, sales tax and mortgage tax revenues over the balance of the year.
- 2) Respectful Behavior Committee (CRB) Next Steps – We have received seven applications for membership on the CRB. We will consider appointing all 7 at our 7/21 meeting and will leave the application window open going forward for additional applicants. In addition, I am recommending that we ask Bonnie Hundt and Amy Gold to serve as Town Board liaisons to the CRB until CRB can identify and designate a chair or co-chairs. Once the CRB has been appointed, it will review and finalize the proposed Respectful Behavior Policy and Code of Conduct for consideration by the Town Board for adoption.
- 3) Strategic Investments Committee – SIC will report on their work over the past 6 months to identify \$500,000 of strategic investment projects that can have a material beneficial impact on the Town. The SIC has been looking into housing, a pavilion at TH or Blass Field, expanding solar and water issues in Ancram.
- 4) Kids Camp & Pool –Camp and Pool are off to a good start, with about 60 kids signed up and about 45 attending on a daily basis.
- 5) Climate Smart Bronze Certification – Congratulations and thanks go to Suzan Flamm, Colleen Lutz, Jamie Purinton and the members of the Climate Smart Community Task Force for leading the way to Ancram's bronze certification as a Climate Smart Community AND to the members of the Conservation Advisory Council for their leadership and hard work over the years to protect Ancram's environment. Among the 1590 NYS municipalities eligible for Climate Smart certification, there are now 94 total certified Climate Smart Communities in New York State - 9 silver and 85 bronze.
- 6) Clean Air, Clean Water and Green Jobs Bond Act – We will consider a resolution of support for this bond act, which has the support of CAC and CSCTF.
- 7) Local Law Public Hearings & Adoption – We will be holding a public hearing on Local Law #6 of 2022 (zoning revisions) and will consider this local law for adoption if we have received Town and County Planning board comments by our 7/21 Town Board meeting.

Councilwoman Hundt asked how much of the town's income comes from sales tax. Mr. Bassin said about \$350,000.

## **Town Board Members**

At this time, Councilman Clark reviewed Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the EAF for Local Law #6 of 2022-Zoning Revisions, with the Town Board Members.

The following resolution was offered by Councilman Clark and seconded by Councilman Boice and moved for adoption and passed with a unanimous roll call vote:

### **Resolution #35 of 2022: NEGATIVE DECLARATION – UPDATE TO ZONING LAW Adoption of Local Law Updating the Town of Ancram Zoning Law (Local Law No. 6 of 2022)**

#### **WHEREAS:**

1. Proposed new legislation in the form of a local law updating the Town of Ancram Zoning Law has been introduced and reviewed.
2. The new provisions related to the updated zoning are proposed in the form of a Local Law pursuant to the authority and power granted to the Town Board and the Town by Articles 2 and 3 of the New York State Municipal Home Rule Law and by Article 2 of the New York State Statute of Local Governments.
3. In 2019, pursuant to the authority granted in New York State Town Law § 272-a, the Town of Ancram adopted an updated Comprehensive Plan. That Plan sets forth Ancram's vision for its future, and the blueprint for how the Town should grow and how Ancram should preserve the characteristics and qualities of the Town so valued by Town residents. The Comprehensive Plan consists of materials, written and/or graphic, including, but not limited to, maps, charts, elements, appendices, and other descriptive material. Section 272-a (11) of the Town Law requires, in relevant part, that all town land use regulations must be in accordance with an adopted Comprehensive Plan.
4. It is our intention to adopt a local law which brings Ancram's land use regulations into accord with the 2019 Comprehensive Plan. In so doing, the Town developed a series of amendments designed to enhance environmental review for certain actions and to strengthen the Town's ability to mitigate or avoid adverse impacts that may result from future development in the Town.
5. In addition to, and in support of the implementation of the goals of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, it is also the purpose of the proposed updated zoning to exercise our Town's right to protect our citizens by ensuring new uses of land are protective of the public health, safety and general welfare, and that are consistent with locally established goals and objectives in accordance with our comprehensive plan. Ancram's Plan is designed to preserve and protect, for the benefit of the town as a whole, the basically rural-agricultural character of the Town.
6. This proposed Local Law is the result of hours of work and consideration by the Town's CAC and ZRC, and planning consultant.

7. Adoption of the Local Law No. 6 of 2022 establishing an updated zoning law has been determined to be a Type I action, pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) 6 NYCRR Part 617.4, and
8. The proposed action will not require permits and approvals from any other local, regional, or State agencies prior to adoption, and a coordinated SEQRA review is not required; and
9. The Town Board carefully reviewed Parts I, II, and III of the Full Environmental Assessment Form and took the required hard look on the above-described action according to SEQRA, 6 NYCRR Part 617 as part of the required adoption procedures; and
10. The Town Board, after consideration of the Full Environmental Assessment Form Part III finds that:

The Town has not identified any significant, adverse environmental impacts that would result from adopting Local Law No. 6 of 2022 related to amending the zoning law. The Town Board has reviewed Part I and II and has determined that there are no identified potential moderate to large adverse environmental impacts associated with adopting updates to the zoning law for the Town of Ancram. This action implements policies established in the 2019 Town of Ancram Comprehensive Plan. Protection of the environment and maintenance of the rural character of the Town are paramount policies of the Town and this local law is established to update the zoning regulations to ensure consistency between future development and that Comprehensive Plan. The updated Plan outlined a variety of zoning changes needed to address ongoing and new issues facing the Town. The Town of Ancram appointed a Zoning Review Committee to implement these recommendations made in the adopted Comprehensive Plan through updated zoning regulations. The amendments contained in this Local Law were drafted by the Zoning Review Committee with their consultants and submitted to the Town Board for review and adoption.

The action of adopting a local law by itself will not result in any physical change to the environment. The proposed zoning changes relate to furthering the environmental protection goals of the Town of Ancram. A detailed Section F narrative attached to Part I of the Full EAF was provided to fully describe these proposed zoning changes. As detailed in Section F, the proposed zoning changes strengthen environmental protections when new development is proposed and will therefore positively benefit the Town of Ancram and is fully consistent with the goals of SEQRA. The depth and breadth of environmental topics addressed in the Town's Plan and translated into land use regulations via the zoning law, illustrate the commitment Ancram has made to protect, preserve, and enhance the environment. The primary purpose of the proposed amendments to the zoning law is to implement these principles through land use regulations.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS BY THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF ANCRAM, COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK:**

1. That the Town Supervisor is authorized to execute and sign the Full Environmental Assessment Form.
2. That the Town of Ancram Town Board hereby declares that adoption of the proposed Local Law No. 6 of 2022 establishing a Local Law that updates the Town of Ancram Zoning Law as described herein, will not have any potential significant adverse environmental impact; and
3. That the Town Board hereby makes a negative declaration regarding SEQR 6NYCRR Part 617 and authorizes filing of such negative declaration (Part III of the FEAF); and
4. That the Town Board directs the Town Clerk to file a notice in the Environmental Notice Bulletin according to SEQRA, 6 NYCRR Part 617 as required; and

**WHEREUPON** this Resolution was declared adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Ancram:

This resolution was filed in the office of the Town of Ancram Town Clerk on the 21st of July of 2022 by Monica R. B. Cleveland, Town Clerk of the Town of Ancram.

Exhibit A:      SEQR FEAF Part I, 2 and 3

Mr. Clark noted that the County Planning Board found no County wide impact from the law. The Ancram Planning Board has not yet responded.

Councilwoman Hundt reported on the Housing committee. The committee is seeking \$100,000 in seed funding to move forward with planning. The committee is looking to apply for grants. NHN has proposed money towards a housing project and the committee is trying to identify landowners to donate land and money. Resident Devon Ruger asked if this was going to be based on the model in Ancramdale. Ms. Hundt said no. Mr. Ruger stated that he applied to the Ancramdale project and was turned down because he made \$500 too much a month to qualify. Town Clerk Cleveland asked that the committee, when thinking through any project, would base the income on what a family actually has to earn to live in the area, and not on poverty levels.

**Highway Department**

We completed shimming and leveling portions of Crest Lane, Hall Hill and Poole Hill roads using our paver with assistance from Gallatin, Copake and Taghkanic. Total cost of this work was

about \$47,000. We still have some to do but will run out of money before we run out of places that need work due to Asphalt prices.

We completed our chip sealing of Sawchuk and Carson with assistance from Gallatin, Copake and Hillsdale. We also assisted Hillsdale and Copake with chip sealing.

My fuel budget 5140.4 will run out of money in September. Fuel costs are running about \$5000 per month. I estimate the fuel line will be about \$20,000 short this year.

We completed many tasks around the Playground, Pool and Ballfields in preparation for camp and pool season.

William Baker will be joining the crew August 1. He is coming over from the Copake Highway department where he was shop foreman. He is the only applicant we had when I advertised our opening following Tom Millers retirement.

We are beginning the next round of road side mowing as time permits.

A motion was made by Supervisor Bassin and seconded by Councilwoman Gold to approve the Superintendent to attend fall conference. Motion passed.

#### **Town Clerk**

Mrs. Cleveland reported that she has closed out her tax year and settled with the County Treasurer.

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

The following resolution was offered by Councilwoman Hundt and seconded by Councilwoman Gold and moved for adoption.

**Resolution #36 of 2022: Court Clerk Conference** – Resolved, that Court Clerk Ruth Wittlinger is authorized to attend the 2022 Court Clerk's Conference at a cost not to exceed \$1100. Resolution passed unanimously.

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica R. Cleveland  
Ancram Town Clerk

