

Town of Ancram Town Board Regular Meeting  
January 19, 2023 In Person Board Meeting

Present: Town Supervisor Art Bassin                      Town Councilman Hugh Clark  
Town Councilman David Boice                      Town Councilwoman Amy Gold  
Town Councilwoman Bonnie Hundt                      Town Highway Supervisor James Miller  
Deputy Town Clerk Ruth Wittlinger

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The regular meeting of the Ancram Town Board was called to order at 7:00 PM by Supervisor Arthur Bassin with a salute to the flag. Supervisor Bassin asked if there were any items on the agenda from which any board member needed to recuse themselves from. Councilman Boice stated that if there was going to be a vote on the Firefighter property tax exemption he would recuse.

The minutes of the December 15, 2022 were approved as written. Motion made by Councilman Clark and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Hundt.

Chairperson of the CC, Jamie Purinton gave the annual report for the last time. She is stepping down after 12 years as the founder and chairperson of the CAC. Councilwoman Gold read a Resolution of Appreciation to her for the years of service to the CAC.

The next item on the agenda was the Firefighter property tax exemption. The audience included many firefighters from the Ancram Fire Co. Councilman Boice also serves as the fire chief for the last 33 years.

Supervisor Bassin introduced the discussion by stating that in December, 2022 New York State had passed a law to give local firefighters up to a 10% reduction in their assessed value for tax relief for their time and effort in volunteering in the town. The requirement was the person had to have 2-5 years of active membership with the fire company and/or the ambulance corp.

Supervisor Bassin opened the comments and questions to the town board members. Councilman Clark stated to Councilman Boice that he would be in the best position to evaluate this proposition.

Councilman Boice stated that this would be a good step to help out the volunteers. He urges the town to pass this local law. There is a program that is in place called LOSAP (length of service) which is for firefighters that have been active for a few years. This program would be good for all firefighters.

Councilman Boice did bring up that there are many husband/wife teams or parent/child teams that are active firefighters. Would that entitle the household to (2) 10% reductions on assessment? Supervisor Bassin stated that the household would only be entitled to (1) 10% reduction.

Councilman Boice asked if the town might consider doing some other benefits to help increase the participation of firefighters or get more volunteers to join. He suggested there be a small stipend for each fire call that a member attended. Or possibly the members be paid for the hours spent on mandatory training? Also, a stipend for attending a fire out of district for mutual aid?

Councilwoman Gold thanked Councilman Boice for pointing out anything to help keep members. Councilwoman Hundt stated the same and thanked the firefighters for their dedication to the town.

Supervisor Bassin stated that the town board needs to learn more about implementing this or modifying it for approval. There will be a public hearing before the February 2023 board meeting to discuss this matter further.

Councilwoman Gold thanked everyone for bringing critical points to the attention of the town board.

Motion made by Councilman Clark and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Gold to accept Local Law #2 for public hearing.

#### Committee and Board Reports

SIC – no report

CRB- Final draft for code of conduct and incident report procedure.

Motion made by councilwoman Gold and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Hundt to approve Resolution #6 (accepting the final code of conduct and incident report). Motion accepted.

#### Supervisor's Report

- December financials are not done yet- sales tax figures stand the same as last year and above budgeted amount.
- T-Bills- program that was set up is working well- looking for about \$30,000 to \$40,000 worth of interest income for the year
- Playground at the pool – got an inquiry of why it is in such bad shape- Councilman Boice stated that he is been involved with the pool for a long time. The equipment there is in bad shape. Needs to be upgraded or replaced. Councilwoman Gold asked how much it would cost to replace it.

Motion made by Councilman Boice and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Gold to replace playground equipment at pool – cost to be determined- with comparable equipment by a committee. Supervisor Bassin appointed the following:

Jennifer Boice

Colleen Lutz

Ruth Wittlinger

This committee will report to the town board at its March, 2023 meeting.

- There was a question asked about the design and implementation of a Pavilion. Supervisor Bassin stated that this project is not being considered right now.

- Revaluation of all properties is nearing the end. All information has been gathered -final reports are due in March 2023.

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Annual Document Review:

Supervisor Bassin stated that on the agenda for approval is the Financial Process Manual, Purchasing Policy, Fee schedule and Employee Handbook. Employee Handbook is not yet ready for approval and will be postponed.

Motion made by Councilwoman Hundt and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Clark to accept Resolution # 2, Resolved that the Financial Process Manual is approved as presented.

Motion made by Councilman Boice and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Clark to accept Resolution #3, Resolved that the Ancram Purchasing Policy is approved as presented.

Resolution #4 – Fee Schedule

Discussion followed about an inspection fee of \$1,000 in the judgement of Planning Board for commercial site plan review (to be kept in escrow). Inspection escrow collected for commercial site plan reviewed as ZRB deems necessary. Supervisor Bassin stated that escrow does not need to be on a fee schedule – it is used in various Planning Board cases.

Councilman Clark asked that this portion of the fee schedule be discussed next month when there is more information.

Motion to accept new fee schedule was made by Councilwoman Hundt and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Gold. (Resolution #4)

Additionally, there will be an inspection escrow of \$1,000 implemented for commercial site plans.

Roll call vote:

Councilwoman Hundt	Yes
Councilwoman Gold	Yes
Councilman Boice	Yes
Councilman Clark	Yes
Supervisor Bassin	Yes

Resolution #1- Town Justice Bank Account – Resolved that Ancram Town Justice Suzan Flamm is requested and authorized to open a fine account at the Bank of Greene County that shall be titled Town of Ancram, Justice Flamm- Fine account, that Justice Flamm is the sole signatory on this account.

Motion made by Councilwoman Gold and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Clark.

Resolution # 5

Columbia County MIS Department – Resolved that the Ancram Town Supervisor is authorized to enter into an agreement with the Columbia County MIS Department to provide technology support to the Town of Ancram on an as needed basis.

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Motion made by Councilman Clark and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Boice.

Supervisor Bassin asked for any comments from town board members:

Councilman Boice stated he said enough in the Firefighter Exemption discussion.

Councilman Clark – Local Law #1 places a temporary moratorium on site plans, building permits and special use permits for hospitality entities. This will be in effect for 9 months and can be extended by (2) additional 6 month periods. This Local Law #1 will be considered for adoption adopted after the Public Hearing on February 16, 2023.

Resolution for a Public Hearing on February 16, 2023 beginning a 6:45 PM for Local Law #1. Motion was made by Councilman Clark and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Boice.

Roll call vote:

Councilwoman Hundt	Yes
Councilwoman Gold	Yes
Councilman Boice	Yes
Councilman Clark	Yes
Supervisor Bassin	Yes

Resolution is adopted.

Councilwoman Gold – no comments

Councilwoman Hundt – no comments

Report from Town Highway Superintendent Jim Miller

- Quiet on snow removal so far
- Have lots of sand and salt on hand
- Hauling in products for this year
- Reset the cannon by the fire house after it was hit by a driver
- Looking to replace dump style bodies on the big dump trucks – will give about another 15 years life to the trucks
- New plow truck to arrive before next winter (2024)
- Bucket truck – been using Jim Stickles truck on a per use fee – would like the town to buy its own – Councilman Boice stated that the board approved to but one a few months ago -should act on it because the price is only going up

- Councilwoman Hundt asked about any opportunities to rent? Superintendent Miller stated that it needs to be arranged for and availability may not be there.

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- Councilman Clark stated that there is money in the Capital Fund at the price from 2022 to purchase the truck. He stated he thought buying it was a good idea. Councilwomen Hundt and Gold agreed.

Motion to purchase bucket truck for \$96,285 which includes freight to deliver made by Councilman Boice and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Clark.

Roll call vote:

Councilwoman Hundt	Yes
Councilwoman Gold	Yes
Councilman Boice	Yes
Councilman Clark	Yes
Supervisor Bassin	Yes

Court Clerk Ruth Wittlinger stated to the Town Board that the Town of Ancram Justice Court's books are open for inspection. Supervisor Bassin stated thank you.

Motion to accept the Budget Adjustments made by Councilman Boice and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Clark.

Motion to approve the Warrants and pay the bills made by Councilwoman Hundt and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Gold.

Resolution #7, #8, #9 and #10.

Appreciation Resolutions for Jamie Purinton, John Ingram, Suzan Flamm, and Jim Stickles for all their public service to the Town of Ancram.

Supervisor Bassin made a motion that the Town Board go into Executive session at 8:55 PM to discuss the employment history of a particular individual.

At 9:05 PM the Town Board came out of Executive Session. Motion made by Councilman Boice and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Clark to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned and closed at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted-

Ruth C. Wittlinger  
Deputy Town Clerk

Councilman Clark	Yes
Supervisor Bassin	Yes
Councilwoman Israel	Yes
Councilwoman Hundt	Yes
Councilman Boice	Yes

Respectfully Submitted-

Ruth C. Wittlinger  
Deputy Town Clerk  
Town of Ancram

