

**Town of Ancram
Town Board
Regular Meeting
May 23, 2024**

Present: Supervisor James MacArthur
Councilwoman Amy Gold
Councilwoman Bonnie Hundt (via Zoom)
Highway Superintendent James Miller
Councilman David Boice
Councilwoman Colleen Lutz
Town Clerk Monica Cleveland

Supervisor James MacArthur called the regular town board meeting to order at 7pm with a salute to the flag.

Mr. MacArthur asked if there were any items on the agenda that any member of the board needed to recuse themselves from. There were none.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Lutz to approve the minutes of the previous meeting and to place them on the record. Motion carried.

Supervisors Report:

-The first mortgage tax check for 2024 came on 5/21, for the amount of \$25,715.95. We have budgeted \$35,000.00 for Mortgage Tax revenues for the 2024 budget year, so I am confident we will reach that number.

-In news from the County I can report that Columbia County is in the process of applying to the State for approval to allow the county to charge a tax on Short Term Rental properties.

-I received the 2023 census data. In 2020 Town of Ancram recorded 1,440 residents. In 2023, the number dropped to 1,417. The county as a whole recorded 61,414 residents in 2020 and dropped to 60,407 in 2023.

-In the coming weeks I will be working with the building manager and Town Clerk to write an employment ad for the open town hall cleaning position. We will advertise for this and accept applications.

-I will be participating in the tri-town Memorial Day parade which will be held in Copake this year.

-I will be attending the grand opening of the Copake Rapid care on Saturday June 8th.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Gold to approve the supervisors report. Motion carried.

Highway Report

Diesel Fuel Used: 871 Gallons

Gasoline Fuel: 450 Gallons

**I would like to thank Jim Stickle and Ancram Construction for their assistance installing 280' of new culvert pipe beneath the ball field. We still have a few finishing touches to do when time allows. The project took nearly two weeks.*

We have also dug out the top soil and replaced with gravel an area for the pavilion so it can get settled in prior to camp opening. We still need to finish this up when time allows when we get caught up with other road related work.

I have received word that the two bodies for the Kenworth trucks are in. One truck is nearing completion and the second one will go as soon as the first is returned.

**We redid the head walls on a culvert on Over Mountain Road using large concrete blocks to alleviate an erosion problem during times of high water like seen last year.*

**We continue hauling and stockpiling gravel.*

**There is an employee out with health issues since 4/18 and could be out till mid June. This, along with the persistent rains, has hindered the grading of the dirt roads.*

**I will be attending Highway School held at Ithaca College 6/2-6/5*

Mr. Miller also noted that there was an accident with the mower for the side of the roads and that at this time it is being looked at. The insurance company has been notified.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Lutz to approve the Highway Report. Motion carried.

Town Clerk Report

-To Date I have collected 91% of my tax roll. I will conclude collecting taxes at the end of May and anything unpaid will return to the County Treasurers office for payment.

-For the month of April I collected \$110.00 in Clerks fees. Five dog licenses and six certified copies.

-I have been working along with Supervisor MacArthur to clean out stale dated documents from the vault room. At this time we have gone through boxes of old bills that have passed the 7 year retention date.

-I attended my Town Clerks of NY State convention in Albany at the end of April. I took classes on minutes, open meetings law, records management and special elections. I learned about current proposed legislation which could effect my office. I was also acknowledged for earning my Registered Municipal Clerks Certification in 2023. I will be hosting my Columbia-Green Town Clerks association meeting in June here in Ancram.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Lutz and seconded by Councilman Boice to approve the Town Clerk report. Motion carried.

Planning Board Report

Can you please put Sara Porter on the next Town Bd. Meeting appointing her as second Alternate to the Planning Board.

Sara was interviewed by committee on May 2nd. and find her to be a very competent addition to the Board.

The following resolution was offered by Councilwoman Gold and seconded by Councilwoman Luz and moved for adoption. Resolution carried unanimously.

Resolution #21 of 2024: WHEREAS; THE Planning Board of the Town of Ancram has an open seat for a second alternate member;

AND WHEREAS; the Planning Board Chair has requested the appointment of Ms. Sara Porter;

RESOLVED; that the Town of Ancram Town Board does hereby appoint Sara Porter as a second alternate member of the Town of Ancram Planning Board.

ZRC

The ZRC chair Carol Falcetti gave the following Report:

The ZRC met on May 6 2024.

Members also explored ways to approach making Ancram Zoning Law more amenable to increase Ancram's workplace housing. It was agreed that we need expert advise and that Nan Stolzenberg should be consulted.

In preparation for an in-depth discussion on Development Standards in the Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone, members reviewed Section 1 Intent and approved three changes.

Next meeting will be May 20 in which they will discuss changes to Section 3 Permitted uses, prohibited uses, exempt uses and non-conforming uses.

Ms. Falcetti also reported that there are two new members and asked for their appointment.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Gold and seconded by Councilwoman Lutz to appoint Susan Wohlking and Norman Anton to the Zoning Revisions Committee. Motion carried.

Housing

Councilwoman Hundt gave the following report on Housing:

We held our monthly meeting on Monday May 6

We approved minutes from the April meeting

*First agenda item was a presentation from a builder of tiny modular homes . The company is called **MiniMax Builders**.*

They had reached out to us because they have worked with the ADU Plus one program in Ulster County.

Columbia County has been awarded 2 million dollars from the same program to award grants to applicants to build ADU's for affordable housing. We hope to be working with them when the program is fully implemented in the Summer.

Dave gave a report on the County task force meeting.

Trillium Land Trust continues to work toward their 501-3C status.

*We have had 2 meetings with **Hudson River Housing** who are considering the Rt 82 property . They seem very interested and we have scheduled a site visit. From there we will schedule some feasibility testing and begin site study. We will reach out to possible donors to purchase the property.*

Respectfully submitted, Bonnie Hundt

Ms. Hundt also noted that of the 200 towns who had applied for a piece of the 2 million dollar grant, only 61 received money and Ancram was one of only two from Columbia County.

Intersection

Councilwoman Gold gave the following report on the intersection:

I'd like to provide you will an update on the work being done to address the safety of the Rt. 82 and Rt. 7 intersection in the Hamlet of Ancram.

· There are a number of variables in play that are being looked into to address the sightline constraints and the skewed turning angles at the intersection.

· These include:

o The removal and repositioning of the steps leading from the home on the NW corner of the intersection into Rt. 82, and the subsequent regrading of the retaining wall that currently restricts sight.

§ This would necessitate the relocation of the utility poles that exist.

o Addressing the Tinsmith House and its property lines, to potentially regrade the corner slope to affect a safer turning radius for larger vehicles.

o Looking at the grassy triangle with the historic marker and cannon to evaluate whether the grassy area can be extended up to Simons General Store, or perhaps removing it altogether and relocating the memorial to a more suitable area on Town Hall property where a true memorial space could be created.

o Addressing the two-way slip in front of Simons General Store.

o Adding signage to redirect traffic.

o Performing traffic studies at the intersection, using the current electronic speed signs, if programming allows.

Initial discussions have already taken place with State and County DOT representatives, as well as with a representative from Central Hudson. We have also invited members of Did Barrett's office and Michelle Hinchey's office to observe the hazardous situation. We expect that the cost of this work will require significant grant monies and we wanted to impress upon them the safety concerns that the intersection poses.

This past Tuesday (May 7), Bonnie Hundt, Colleen Lutz and I met with a representative from GPI Inc., an Albany-based road engineering group, to review the situation and discuss options. Chris Cornwell took several photos by camera and drone and will work with his team to consider all aspects of the safety undertaking. He will provide a detailed report with recommendations prior to our May 23rd Town Board meeting.

(This is the same engineering group that is working with the Town of Copake to address their hazardous town center.)

We do want the ultimate outcome to be agreeable to the community and we encourage discussion. I look forward to sharing the initial report with recommendations on May 23.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Lutz to increase the donation to the Roe Jan Young at Hearters from \$500 per year to \$1000. Motion carried unanimously. All members were very supportive of this increase.

Public Comment

- B. Docktor asked if there has been permission given by the Tin Smith house to have property looked at?
- A question was asked where on Route 82 where the proposed property for housing is located. (Answer: the brightly property just past the mill bridge)
- Highway Superintendent Miller noted that the highway department was planning on finishing the paving of Hall Hill but that the CHIPS requirements have changed and the road is not eligible. Work on Crest, Town and Maple will happen instead.
- Steve Olyha was asked to speak about the proposed pavilion. The committee is happy with the work that has happened at the park. The next step will be updating the basketball court and painting pickleball lines on the ball court. The Pavilion is still being worked on as a project.
- Deven Reuger asked about the landing zone at the town hall. This is still in discussion.

A motion was made by Councilman Boice and seconded by Councilwoman Lutz to approve the following budget adjustment: From Fund Balance to Parks: \$10,000. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Lutz and seconded by Councilman Boice to approve the warrants and pay the bills. Motion carried unanimously.

The Town Board discussed having a policy in regards to the Ancram Email. Councilwoman Gold questioned using it for advertising for businesses and go fund me pages. Councilman Boice noted that the decisions on what goes out lies with the Town Supervisor. He understands the issues with no advertising for businesses. He did though note in the past go fund me and donations for those in accidents and funerals have been put out. Councilwoman Hundt felt a policy is needed. Attorney Kean will research this.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Lutz and seconded by Councilwoman Gold to adjourn the meeting to executive session where the board will discuss the employment record of a particular individual which could result in matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation. Motion carried unanimously.

Executive session

A motion was made by Councilwoman Lutz and seconded by Councilman Boice to reconvene the regular meeting after an executive session where the board discussed the employment record of a particular individual which could result in matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Respectfully submitted by,

Monica R. Cleveland, RMC
Ancram Town Clerk

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