

## **Caroline Town of Caroline, May 6, 2008**

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Caroline held on May 6, 2008 at the Town Hall was called to order by Supervisor Don Barber at 7:02 p.m.

### **Present:**

Don Barber, Town Supervisor  
Toby McDonald, Councilman  
Pete Hoyt, Councilman  
Dominic Frongillo, Councilman: arrived at 7:20  
Linda Adams, Councilwoman

### **Recording**

**Secretary:** Debra DeAugustine, Town Clerk

### **Privilege**

Penny Boynton: 1) reminded board that in the fall of 2005, the youth group gave town board \$344.14 to help with a park because Mackenzie Park had been taken away. 2) Caroline youth group was chosen by the United Way for Youth in Philanthropy program.

Kim Schwartz of United Way, Youth in Philanthropy program. FOCUS is a spinoff for middle-school-aged kids. Caroline youth group hosted a dance where they asked kids what they thought our community needed. Kids came back with very good answers, and showed they're concerned about their environment. Normally, FOCUS groups are awarded \$3000 to distribute as grants. James Brown, the chairman of United Way board, awarded another \$500 to the Caroline group for grants. Ms. Schwartz then recognized the students who participated in the program. The outdoor outings group was present at the meeting.

Alex Swansborough (named as teen most instrumental in spearheading the grants discussion), Samantha Swansborough, Ashley Park, Charles Crispell, Alice Crispell, Kaylin Andrews, Trevor Townsend, Clifford Townsend, Autumn Crispell

Ms. Swansborough named grantees:

Caroline Outings Group: \$730 (trip to Adirondacks for group)  
Community Beautification Program: \$500 (to stipend a volunteer coordinator)  
Brooktondale Community Center: \$1270 (old fire hall building repairs)  
Empowering Caroline School: \$1000 (to leverage other funds for a wind turbine)

Mr. Barber thanked the United Way representatives on behalf of the board for involving students and facilitating the grant process.

Dan Klein: Tompkins County Beautification Program. A few years ago, town board approved the projects the beautification grant money would be applied toward. Would like board to consider two more projects: 1) Corner of Brooktondale Rd and Route 79: installation of a more permanent sign -- a frame that other signs could be inserted in, plus flowers. Complication is that it's owned by NYS DOT and is not really in the Town of Caroline. He would do the work, but needs Caroline to co-apply to DOT and NYSEG. 2) Banners either in Slaterville Springs, Brooktondale, or both. On posts and done by Caroline artists. Artwork would be a design artist already completed, not a commissioned work. Banners taken down for the winter. Other projects on the list are planters and landscaping sign coming into town around historic sign. Mr. Hoyt asked about using the money for landscaping Annex property. Mr. Klein noted that it's better not to bank money for future use since they can't get more money until this money is spent, and also because it's a good idea to maintain the momentum of the group, who is ready to work on projects.

## **Department, Committee, & Liaison Reports**

### **Dominic Frongillo**

Planning Board. The Planning Board had a lengthy discussion about what they heard at the four meetings with the public and what it means as a whole for the town. They talked about rather than focusing on the legal options this year, the possibility of focusing on what there's a broader understanding of and consensus for in the town. The Planning Board asked whether the Town would loose grant funding if they went this route.

Discussion: Promised state a guidance system by end of year, and could lose the funding if not delivered. Not a consensus on planning board to be able to move forward because they couldn't get a good reading from community. Mr. McDonald thinks PB is correct in not moving forward at this point. We did not miss the deadline for lack of effort or planning, but because we lack consensus from community. What's the tone of the PB on moving forward with this? Mr. Frongillo: what's more important than pushing forward is keeping trust of community. Table the development guidance system and come back to it at some point. Ms. Adams: sense of comfort that there's enough now. Mr. McDonald: thinks they started out with an overly aggressive goal: something new and never done before. Mr. Barber: reason for starting with that goal is that community doesn't have an idea where it's going. Mr. Hoyt: just let it go if the town is divided. Mr. Barber: the consultant said to chose between site plan review or zoning, but we wanted something different for rural communities, and they said it has been done in different communities. Not working on it puts the town in a reactionary goal: when something happens, people react. Tell the department of state that we're not doing it. Don't keep pushing hope against hope. Mr. McDonald: thinks the problem is that we started with an unattainable goal. Have to get into one of the boxes or the box we're in now--that's pretty wide open. Mr. Barber: still have the issue with the dept of state; they have not sent us any money, so we should tell them not to send us a check. Not realistic to apply for an extension. How to proceed? Build on the things you agree on, that you have in common. Mr. McDonald: people will respond when there's a trip to make it happen. Mr. Frongillo: it has already happened. Someone changing land use and people coming to the town board and saying, What are you doing about it? Ms. Adams: unfortunate when you get an instance like that when it's on the extreme nuisance end. In the end, people talked it out. When there's enough of a groundswell and it goes beyond nuisance, zoning will have to happen after the fact. Mr. Barber: town board has been reactionary in the past when something came up; the trailer park law is an example. PB is supposed to come up with recommendations on implementing the plan; if the recommendation is to talk about things we have in agreement, put a stop to development guidance system, then that's what should happen. Mr. McDonald would like to see the PB continue. Ms. Adams: these meetings did bring people together and provide education. Mr. Hoyt: these meetings came off politely because nobody felt threatened. No hostility at any of the meetings. Board should extend appreciation for their dedication, honesty, and thoroughness. Mr. Frongillo: would like to extend the message of appreciation and give them direction to work on things people do agree on.

Website Committee. The Website Committee has held two trainings. About 8 people were trained. People said the new website system was very easy to learn and use. People who have been trained can begin migrating content to the new website. Launch date will likely be in August.

#### Energy Independent Caroline

- About 90 volunteers for "Lighten Up Caroline" delivered energy-saving light bulbs to about 90-95% of houses in Caroline on April 19.
- Over 120 surveys have been returned. They deadline is May 10, but may be extended because of houses which still need their bags and light bulbs.
- Energy Independent Caroline was awarded a \$1,000 grant for the Youth in Philanthropy Program for a renewable energy project at Caroline Elementary School.
- There's a potluck/movie on May 10 at 5:30pm at the Brooktondale Community Center, and an information meeting on May 22 at 7:00pm at the Town Hall.

#### Public Information Committee

The Public Information Committee met and continued to discuss. Dominic would like to ask the committee to consider a phone-based information system that would be a "hotline" for town and community events. A timeframe for recommendations would be useful.

Information Technology. The Town Board appointed Bert Cooley, Rob Elshire, and Tim Larkin to the Information Technology committee. There were sent the charge of the committee and will be starting to collect information about IT.

#### **Toby McDonald**

Long-distance provider update: 3 of our numbers are switched over; 2 numbers are not. Cindy switched her number back when she got high-speed internet. Talked with Pioneer today and thinks it's straightened out.

Midnight Sun: removed by highway department. Mr. Barber had conversation with attorney and he said that according to the department of labor, we are supposed to be paying prevailing wage for any public works project. He thinks we've skirted issue by using in-house labor. He will go online and make sure we were not in violation. McDonald: annex committee is working on specifications and plans for modular structure and are revisiting site. Investigated septic, and found we have inadequate system. Have a good 1000 gallon cast concrete tank, but no leech field. Have filled out application for septic system, and need to include check for \$335 with application. Grant: town needs to provide space and state will help outfit it with shelving, climate control, etc, if grant is approved. Barber suggested NYSEEDA and Dormitory Authority for more grants. Asked about landscaping. McDonald will be looking for volunteer effort, and would welcome professional help. Barber: will committee talk to TCAT about parking issue? Frongillo emailed them today and asked would there be interest in assistance pursuing Park and Ride.

### **Linda Adams**

Watershed committee: gave feedback to Todd Miller on aquifer draft. Japanese knotweed project: 6 people showed up for first work project. Was between 6 and 30 inches tall already. Swabbed with herbicide. Barry Goodrich will keep an eye on it every 3 days. Want to hold a public meeting on stormwater law. Barber says meeting also used for people to report what's happening with creeks in area.

May 19, Tompkins County Trust Co. will give award to citizens advisory board to Camp McCormack.

Natural Areas and Trails group: meeting with Bob Pass from NYSEG. He requested resolutions from other towns in support of Caroline's leadership in this project. Bob said NYSEG would be willing to give citizens group letter of access for the feasibility walk-through. Group is writing a proposal for a federal grant. 4/28 letters were sent out to adjacent landowners inviting input and giving contact information, and three dates of public meetings. McDonald: was under the impression that landowners needed to approve and endorse this. Is that still the case? Adams: Bob Pass said that NYSEG supports this and they know not all landowners will support it. Most focused in getting sign-off from other townships. They do not need letters of support from landowners. There are 17 landowners on the Beaver Creek to Burns leg. McDonald: what if landowners don't think it's a good idea. Do you still pursue it? Answer: that's to be decided. Barber: hopefully the process is to let people know the process, what the issues are, what the opportunities are, and mitigate concerns, if possible. Hoyt: thought the board's position was that we were okay with letting this go forward, but are we actually spearheading it or endorsing it? Barber: we're in the lead to talk to NYSEG, etc, so they don't have to talk to every township and go through the process with all of them. Adams: this is going to be a very long process. Frongillo: do you have a sense of what the challenges might be? Adams: using public (not Town's) money making improvements on NYSEG's property. Hoyt: that right of way is too valuable for NYSEG; very doubtful they'll sell it. Adams: other negative is that property adjoining these trails often increases in value, which can be a positive or negative. These properties also usually sell faster, which is good. McDonald: maybe in Belle Sherman, but probably not in rural Caroline. He can understand why landowner might not want the increased traffic on his property. Frongillo: bring in people bordering other trails in area to share their experience. Hoyt: as a board member, does not want to be too closely associated with this. Barber: this will take time for people to be comfortable with the concept. McDonald: up to the trails group to pitch the idea. If they do that and landowners agree, has no problem. They have a public relations job. Barber: biggest task is to be brokers of honest information. Town of Caroline will be the group signing the agreement with NYSEG. Adams: other negative is liability. Association of Towns said there isn't any increase in liability; same as if you're a landowner. Shared NYS law 9-103. If landowner takes money or anything of value for people using their property, they're liable in many ways. Positives: decrease in crime along trails. Board might want to do an ordinance, which would probably help landowners. Hours of operation, etc, rules. Trails are a huge thing, and for funding access, there's a single landowner, NYSEG, which makes it a less encumbered project and very attractive to grantors. Trails don't hurt business any.

### **Resolution 5-1 of 2008**

#### **Approve voucher for septic system permit**

By Mr. McDonald; Seconded by Mr. Hoyt

RESOLVED, the Town Board approves advance payment of the septic system permit.

**Passed**

Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Aye; McDonald: Aye; Hoyt: Aye

**Resolution 5-2 of 2008  
sign contract with EBE Officesource for service agreement for main copier in town hall**

By Mr. Barber; Seconded by Mr. Frongillo

RESOLVED, the Town Board authorizes the supervisor to sign the maintenance agreement with EBE Officesource for service on the Sharp AR-207 copier.

**Passed** Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Aye; McDonald: Aye; Hoyt: Aye

**Agenda Items**

Beautification projects

Contract for youth programming from cooperative extension

Lawn-mowing contract

John Confer, amphibian study

**Adjourn**

On a motion, the meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra DeAugustine, Town Clerk