

Caroline Town Board Meeting Minutes of October 7, 2008

The regular meeting of the Caroline Town Board held in the Town Hall was called to order on October 7, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor Don Barber.

Attendance:

Don Barber, Supervisor
Dominic Frongillo, Councilman
Linda Adams, Councilwoman
Toby McDonald, Councilman
Pete Hoyt, Councilman

Recording

Secretary: Cindy Vicedomini, Deputy Town Clerk

Salute to the flag: Supervisor Barber: Tonight is our meeting to receive reports from town Board Members and set our agenda for next to think about the issues we will be voting on next week. We will also be starting our budget deliberations tonight. There are a lot of people here tonight. We will start with the privilege of the floor.

Privilege of the Floor

Tom Fox – Indicated he is in favor of the Town of Caroline Recreational Trail, but is opposed to the down sized “mini trail” proposal. (Letter attached). Mr. Fox also stated that he lived in the Town of Dryden and used the Recreation Trail often, and knows how it can be a good thing for the community. It sounded grand in the beginning, now it is just a little of the south-hill trail. He indicated that the Town Board really needs to take a step back and look at the current proposal.

Mary Beth O’Connor – Opposes the trail. Read from a Letter to the Town Board Meeting. (Attached).

Virginia Miller – Stated she is against the Caroline Trail. Ms. Miller read her letter to the Town Board Meeting. (Attached).

Bill Hilker – Stated that the last speaker is exactly right; we did not hear from anyone, we were never contacted. It was after a Board Meeting that this became a big issue, and then they called. Very disappointed of the Board of who is opposed or for the trail as it was in the Ithaca Journal or who was responsible for the Ithaca Journal article.

Scott Vangaasbeck – I never was contacted by anyone. I was told there would be 3 meetings. I received a letter that one of the meetings was cancelled, and was told that I would be contacted regarding the next meeting and never was. I was also told that the Planning Board said it was a no go. Reading from a letter. (Copy attached).

Rebecca Phillips – She and her Husband oppose the trail. Husband searched these people out and has a letter directed to the Town Board. (Attached).

Tom Fox – Read his letter to the Town Board. The proposed Caroline mini trail comes and goes from nowhere. And probably not in the best interest for the people of Caroline. The board should approach this very slowly.

Wanda Davenport – Agrees with all of these people and is wondering who is going to maintain these trails?

Rebecca Phillips – I have asked that question from day one, but never received an answer.

Joe Scaglione – I gave the Town Board several pages of this type of trail that has crime on these trails, has anyone looked at this. Don Barber stated that he has looked his material over.

Scott Vangaasbeck – Indicated that with access to his property he is concerned about improper use. He found that someone has already grown pot on his property.

Bill Hilker – Indicated the same regarding a relative and that individual went through a lot of trouble with the law trying to plea his innocence.

Rebecca Phillips – You have no idea the anxiety, frustration and fear of someone plowing through your yard, please have some compassion for us who are being affected. People who are doing this have nothing to lose, but we have a lot to lose, we are fighting for our wellbeing and peace of mind. We are feeling violated and our

lifestyle is being threatened and violated. Not at that proposed trail, but it does affect me, but so close it will.

Tom Fox – Stated the Town Board needs to go back to the drawing board.

Don Barber – We are making sure that the information will go to the individuals responsible. It is not the Town Board. We are trying to make people aware with the Planning Board and the Trail Committee. You have the opportunity to meet with these people.

Pete Hoyt – Why can't we cut to the chase – the Planning goes to the Committee and the Committee to the Town Board, why can't we put this to bed, why can't we just have a vote and be done with it.

Mary Beth O'Connor – Meetings were scheduled then cancelled. And no one called that another meeting was re-scheduled. We emailed the Town Planning Board, and did not get a response. There has been no public opportunity to speak.

Don Barber - The board meetings are open to the public and they can attend. How we communicate with the town? What is our responsibility? We put it on the website and in the Newsletter. We do what we have to by law to notify the public.

Mary Beth O'Connor– Who are these people? There is no proposal.

Don Barber - We directed the Planning Board to get back to us last month and they did. If you think this is all foggy and smoky, it is.

Rebecca Phillips – You have been asked, and you have never given us an answer, this has been going on since Spring.

Mr. Hilker – The Trial Committee has been a total failure. They only address people who are in favor, not anyone else.

Don Barber – They came a month ago to let us know where they are in the process.

Linda Adams - There was a letter of access, NYSEG would issue to a feasibility team to see if a trail was even possible. The first two information meetings there was obvious concerns & some families were against the trail initiative, the Planning Board got involved to see where there was support and was not. The Planning Board recommended the Trail Committee go back to NYSEG and ask for a letter of access for the stretch Burns Road to Middaugh Road for the feasibility team only to do research; it is not a vote on the trail.

Joe Scaglione - Indicated that Linda invited who she wanted and not the people opposed to the trail.

Tom Fox - They have misled people as to who is for or opposed to this.

Pete Hoyt – Drafted a resolution to offer at the voting meeting.

Bill Case – Opposes the trail, I just wanted to be on the record.

Bill Hilker – So will people who are in support of the trail be invited and not us, so we don't have a vote

Toby McDonald – There is only 5 votes that count, they are up here.

Linda Adams – We were asked where is all the support for the trail? So NAT went forth to formalize support. I started getting calls from people, mostly supporters that were very upset the trail may not get investigated. I sent an email to the trails sub-committee to explain what conduct was appropriate to maintain public order and constructive dialogue. NAT posted my letter of conduct on various email lists and web list servers. With number of people at last meeting, it could have been nasty if folks weren't reminded of how to conduct themselves.

Bill Hilker – The people are mostly from Dryden, are these who are being counted.

Virginia Miller – You made mention to people of a heated meeting, we expect to be treated with dignity, if the meeting has no information, we are upset because we have not been told up front.

Dominic Frongillo - ... based on the input received there was opposition from Middaugh south and from Middaugh to Burns Road.

Mary Beth O'Connor – When we got notice to go to the meeting, I called her – after phone tag several times, we did speak, I did tell her we have reservations.

Linda Adams – There are 17 parcels from Middaugh to Burns Road

Rebecca Phillips - I counted, there is 9.

Toby McDonald - Stated that he doesn't feel differently, he has wanted to kill this for the last 4 months.

Rebecca Phillips – The Town of Caroline is taking responsibility for the whole ball of wax, and the trail itself affects 4 plots of land. The Lackawana Trail borders Town of Dryden.

Bill Hilker – Has been told you cannot put driveway or walkway across these trails.

Sandra Keenan Middaugh – Email letter to Linda Adams, read by Rebecca Phillips. Copy received for the record from Linda. (Attached).

Rebecca Phillips – They don't have approval,

Don – At a meeting they were deciding how they were going to get on the property.

Catherine Goldberg – The board will vote to get out of the trail business? If it does not pass will it proceed?

Town Business

Lucy Gagliardo – Representing the Youth Recreation Program. We are requesting \$500 above last year, because 4-H and Cooperative Extension

Two parts of the program: 1) the Brooktondale Camp, that money goes towards the programming, and we have a lot of 15 year olds that don't want to leave. The goal is to have a community event, this year it did so well. They have been very active with the farmers market, they employ high school youth to work with middle school to brainstorm, to work as a group and do something for the community.

2) Cooperative Extension – 12 through the summer, 20 to 50 during the school year. She has a lunch club and a horse club. There is 20 active kids and more at events.

Will get numbers before next week.

Pete Hoyt – recollection increase over last year accounts a 3% salary increase for Penny Boynton.

Lucy Gagliardo – For program costs – salary.

Pete Hoyt – Did conclude that all costs were constant. Penny Boynton does a good job and is undercompensated. She gets the money and gets the most out of it. \$8910 the town is asking to come up with, it is \$500 more than last year.

Linda Adams – How do the youth qualify?

Lucy Gagliardo - Anyone can be part of this program, they are usually from the Caroline School. Dryden contributes because Dryden kids attend, and they will increase to \$1500. Penny would not deny any other kids that want to attend.

Annex

Mr. Hoyt – What is going on with the Annex, what is happening with it. A lot of people are asking me.

Don Barber – I have seen a draft and put in comments.

Toby McDonald – There are two separate things to go forward. The specs ...

Don Barber – The specs were not complete.

Pete Hoyt - So, is it in the committee's hands?

Toby McDonald- Yes.

Pete Hoyt – Is there anything the board should be doing?

Toby McDonald – Maybe to get someone to assist or look it over, Barry may not know how.

Don Barber - There are two who can help and know how to do this.

Pete Hoyt - I think we missed the Fall window, should we wait until Spring.

Don Barber - No, as long as the ground does not freeze we can move forward. Covering the ground with straw will keep the ground from freezing.

Toby McDonald - I will speak to Barry, things seemed to have slowed down a little.

Don Barber – If they just need a template, there would be one already for the Midnight Sun, Tim Seeley was involved with that proposal.

Toby McDonald - I will talk to him.

Fire Protection

Don Barber - We did receive the proposal from Speedsville Fire Company, and a proposal from Brooktondale Fire Company today.

Don Barber – I can only share that for my first 13 years on the Town Board, the Brooktondale Fire District's fee was unchanged.

Chris Smalt - There is room to move – this is just a budget proposal, it just takes communication.

Pete Hoyt – Speedsville is asking for \$2000 more and that is a 67 % increase, some is workers' comp. The fire companies together is 57% and went up by 7%. The tax base has to cover 67%.

Linda Adams– It is a 7% increase in spending – The whole budget. This does not include the Fire District.

Don Barber – Budgets are used to set priorities and support long-range plans. Today's actions create tomorrow's opportunities. To establish the CFPD budget, I used the info that I had available to create the tentative budget. The Town Board works from the tentative budget to develop the preliminary budget. When working on a budget, my recommendation is to not force a tax rate. Because of signs of decreasing assessment and now returning to full 100% assessment, my experience that there may be a real growth in assessment of 5% over the three years.

Pete Hoyt - The only thing that matters, is what the increase is for the residents.

Pete Hoyt - Two resolutions on Watershed, one to support the DEC. I have emailed them to all on the watershed committee.

Linda Adams - The WRC collaboration – recommends a monitoring program for the South end of Cayuga Lake which pools resources from several entities. There is an activist only looking at phosphorus at only S. end of Cayuga Lake, trying to force the DEC to come down on the county with total maximum daily load. There are several components to the water in the discharge that WRC wants to monitor, including the phosphorus. The WRC approach will cover much more water quality measurements, get rid of current redundancies resulting in better lake water monitoring with greater efficiency.

Don Barber – So the resolution brings forth efficiency and other documents in concurrence with them.

Linda Adams - This individual doesn't comprehend that there is another avenue.

Pete Hoyt – I will provide resolutions by email for the agenda.

Linda Adams – Brooktondale gauge station, 3 year, will need resolution on that.

Don Barber - We are just asking for them to pass it in their budget. Linda has budget she prepares every year, this is our expectation.

Toby McDonald – I talked to Cindy regarding the highway budget. She knows this budget will not come back intact. She is also talking about setting a different standard for when the trucks go out. The standard is \$4500 every time the trucks are sent out and do their route. Talking about a different standard.

Don Barber – I do not expect to see as much sharing from the State.

Toby McDonald - The town contracts with the county to do some of their roads. It is time and materials. Don Barber - It is a fixed rate per vehicle.

Pete Hoyt - If the county cuts back and doesn't use Caroline as much.

Don Barber - If we are plowing less, we are spending less. Because of the icing conditions in the spring, we were out more and the county contracted with us more. It is not a money making thing. I can show you where the off-

set is. We just care what it costs the town. What would be helpful is the net to the town.

Dog Control

Toby McDonald – How do we stand with dog control?

Dominic Frongillo – The Coalition of municipalities is negotiating with Pet Playhouse and the SPCA with bids and since then there was a discussion with a final formula. There was no agreement at that meeting, counting people and dogs. Smaller coalition started with SPCA and Pet Playhouse. SPCA does not want to be dog cops, they just want to do the sheltering and adoption. \$300,000 for 2009. Pet Playhouse is very interested in taking over this. Dryden may come in because the costs will actually be less, the City may come in also. Dryden and Town of Ithaca may be 50% of the money. I talked to Michel Whittaker and she doesn't think they need 3 dog officers to service the county.

Don Barber – Have you seen any numbers?

Dominic Frongillo - Herb Engman has taken that over. We need to see some numbers. The amount would be roughly \$9000.

Don Barber - The Council of Government is only advisory.

Dominic Frongillo - The COG is orchestrating this, and the amount to come up with, would roughly be a \$5000 drop from what we pay now.

Pete Hoyt - The Pet Playhouse is right in Caroline.

Don Barber - There seems to be collaboration between the SPCA and Pet Playhouse. Will get a final number.

Trails

Dom Barber – The Planning Board had a long meeting. There were new issues raised tonight that have to be put into the mix. Linda will talk to the board about that.

Toby McDonald - If people who are adjacent to this don't want it, it shouldn't go through.

Don Barber – Another agenda item is with snow removal. Plan for working on the budget, need to see how to do that. Cindy will be coming to meet on that.

Pete Hoyt – I will go through the numbers to find the net. Postpone scheduling more meetings until next week.

Linda Adams - Revenues are all set up and appropriations are all set.

Don Barber - But they are not in any order. Are there any other department heads you want brought forward?

Pete Hoyt – I do not think town board members should be given any raises. Suggests all department heads as well.

Linda Adams – What goal, Pete, would you like to see, 2 or 3%? But most cuts will come from the highway.

Pete Hoyt – The roads are getting wider.

Dominic Frongillo – There is a federal standard.

Pete Hoyt - Like Level Green road, over the last 30 years it has gotten wider. It takes money to make wider, and more to maintain.

Dominic Frongillo - We can ask Cindy when she comes.

Don Barber - Why the roads got wider? We will have to ask Cindy. Painted center lines are helpful in times of fog and to make the road as safe as possible for safe passage.

Pete Hoyt - Who sets the standards for safe passage? I will provide Pete with the book. It has weight limits on bridges and traffic on the roads. This budget impacts budgets down the road several years from now. I think the roads should stay narrow, to keep costs down.

Executive session

At 9:25 pm Dominic Frongillo made a motion, seconded by Toby McDonald, to go into executive session.

Executive Session ended at 9:40 pm.

Agenda Items

- Authorize Supervisor to Sign Agreement with County for Snow and Ice Removal (8:25)
- Resolution to Establish Town Board Position on Natural Areas and Trails Activity (8:30)
- Resolution supporting WRC Cayuga Lake Monitoring Statement and Monitoring Plan (9:00)
- Resolution supporting letters to DEC from Penningroth and Johnson (9:05)
- Resolution authorizing expenditure of funds for Depth of Aquifer Study along Six Mile Creek from Slaterville Road to Creamery Road (9:10)
- Resolution authorizing Supervisor to sign 3 year Agreement with USGS for Brooktondale Guage Station (9:15)
- Resolution establishing date public hearing for 2009 Budgets and dates and dates of Budget Work Session (9:25)
- Budget Discussion

Adjourn

On a motion by Dominic Frongillo, seconded by Don Barber, the meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Vicedomini, Deputy Town Clerk