

## **Caroline Town Board Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2015**

The Town Board Agenda meeting held on February 11, 2015 at the Caroline Town Hall was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor Don Barber.

### **Attendance:**

Don Barber, Supervisor  
John Fracchia, Councilmember  
Irene Weiser, Councilmember  
Mark Witmer, Councilmember  
Tim Seely, Councilmember

### **Recording**

**Secretary:** Deb DeAugustine, Deputy Town Clerk

**Also present:** Dan Klein, legislator

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### **Privilege of the Floor**

No members of the public were present.

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### **Reports**

#### **Don Barber, Town Supervisor**

Correspondence of Note:

1. Town of Caroline received Living Wage Employer Designation
2. Email communication from PSC that REV extension of 7 days has been granted
3. Petition from Joe Wiiki for discontinuance of a section of Level Green Road

Report:

1. Received a contract from DASNY for Broadband funding- hasn't signed it yet.
2. Met with Clarity Connect. He will meet with Town Board tonight in Executive Session
3. Collaborating with several other municipal leaders to send a letter to all Town Supervisors in NYS regarding AoT bylaws and upcoming Annual Meeting
4. NYMIR will be asking Towns to adopt a ban on firearms on municipal property. There is room for accommodating hunters' weapons when locked and properly secured in their personal vehicles. For future discussion.
5. Mr. Barber suggested it would be appropriate to obtain a 3rd party audit of Supervisor funds and asked for the board members' thoughts. He'll be glad to get a couple quotes. Board members agreed that it would be appropriate for the transition.
6. As fate would have it, a local entrepreneur stopped by the supervisor's office to suggest an alternative to salt. He has invented an alternate solution that doesn't need salt as the medium. With the \$60K bill this month alone for salt, it seems like a path to at least see where it leads. The gentleman provided a chemical analysis which could use some technical review. The product is a liquid, like the Magic currently used, and can be mixed with sand alone. The supervisor will work with Mr. Witmer to determine what we would

be subjecting our environment to if we were to use this product. Then if appropriate, work with Ms. Whittaker for trial.

#### 7. Ambulance Service planning

The Caroline Town Board has been put on notice that there is a very real possibility that the Slaterville Ambulance, Inc may not be able to enter into a contract for town-wide ambulance service beyond 2015.

The Caroline Town Board needs to first determine if it will have a role should the current ambulance service be terminated.

The Caroline Town Board, in his opinion, needs to understand the options available and time lines to make them happen.

It is Mr. Barber's understanding that a town has the authority to provide ambulance service, but is not required to do so.

Options:

- A. Towns may provide ambulance service town-wide under General Municipal Law, §122-b by contracting with a service provider (private, nonprofit or municipal) or as a town service with town employees/volunteers.
- B. Towns may establish ambulance districts under Town Law, §198 (10-f).
- C. A town may address ambulance service as part of a fire protection contract under Town Law, §184.
- D. The town board may seek to partner with another municipality that is authorized to provide ambulance service via an intermunicipal agreement under article 5-g of the General Municipal Law.

The first decision for the Caroline Town Board is: will the board ensure that the residents of Caroline have at least basic life support (BLS) ambulance service 24/7? Do we need public input to make this decision? Mr. Fracchia thought public input was important.

If the answer is yes, the Caroline Town Board needs to work backwards on a timeline to determine when it must start to work through the four options in order to have BLS or better by 1/1/16.

Option A1: We need to determine what non-Town services are available and the quality. (This may require some meeting time to set minimum standards.) His sense of timing is that by 7/1/15, we should have an RFP sent out – received back by 8/1 – and negotiated or be close by 10/1 as the town board starts budget deliberations.

Option A2: Town-supplied service. This requires the most amount of work as there would be negotiations to acquire equipment, find volunteers and paid staff, set up accounting systems, etc. He would envision this as being part of the very initial discussions about whether the town should take on the responsibility for ambulance service.

Option B: The Town is in possession of a town-wide map, plan, and report (MPR) for an ambulance district that was done over a decade ago. This would require about a month to get into shape for a public hearing. This would set into a local law the requirement that

the Town will provide ambulance service at some described level, but it doesn't articulate how. This could be the first outcome to determine if the Town will assume the responsibility. If we take this path, the timing would need to be adopted in July so that the RFP process means something. This means we would need to start the MPR process in May.

Option C: The timing is such that we need to know ahead of the RFP process - so 8/1 is the completion date. His sense is we would hold these discussions ahead of or during the MPR process, meaning May or earlier.

Option D: Same timeline as Option A1.

So, the timing looks like we have 30 to 45 days to put a plan together about how we'll move forward and then start moving.

Mr. Seely asked if we had an ambulance district, could we tax enough to pay EMTs to cover 24/7.

Mr. Barber responded that as long as we made it all up by property tax, we would not have to have an accounting system.

Mr. Fracchia said we would never stay under the property tax cap.

Mr. Seely asked whether it would still count under the property tax cap if we do it through a district rather than through the town budget.

Mr. Barber responded that it does. An ambulance district shows up as a separate line on your taxes; otherwise, it comes out of the General Fund. The reason to set up a separate district is that otherwise, it could dwarf the rest of the General Fund's budget and people could lose site of the cause. We don't want this going through the town's books.

Board members all agreed that a public hearing to open up a community discussion would be in order and that it would be vital to invite the three fire companies that serve the town to the discussion.

## **County Rep Report**

Mr. Klein said that he saw the highway capital plan for the county. Brooktondale Road will have two projects: one section at Banks Road where it keeps caving in.

Mr. Barber suggested the engineers talk to the town's watershed committee. Barry Goodrich and a couple other committee members have a long history and good insight. His sense is that they will have to do some water draining above that on private property or put in an unbelievable abutment that captures the water and moves it, because the only reason it's sloughing is that there's water down there.

Mr. Klein said that construction would start late summer into the fall. The other project is the replacement of the large box culvert between Banks and Middaugh. That will happen over the summer and result in the road being closed for a month. They will also replace a large culvert on 76 Road. This will involve the Fish and Wildlife Service and the fish ladder. That is scheduled for spring and will involve road closure.

Ms. Weiser pointed out that work should wait until after school closes so the school buses can

get through because, otherwise, the school bus would have to go all the way to Speedsville and come back.

Mr. Klein responded that project has to be coordinated with the Fish and Wildlife Service because there are only certain windows when it can be done.

Ms. Weiser asked about the county budget for our county roads. Some are in really bad shape. We've experienced poor maintenance on county roads and are wondering what kind of increase in budget for the county there is to better maintain the roads. On 76 Road, the shoulder has eroded completely away and into the road to the point that, in order to get around the big area where there's no tarmac anymore, you have to drive into the other lane.

Mr. Klein said that after the conversation in the fall, he gave the list to the county highway superintendent, and he doesn't remember what the outcome was.

Mr. Barber pointed out that it's not on the list of things to do. The conversation was that the county highway would come out and meet with us. The best time to go around with Ms. Whittaker and Mr. Witmer to see the situation would be in May after snow plowing season. Ms. Whittaker thinks that the roads with reasonable shoulders are the ones that the county drivers plow and the ones that without are the ones the town plows. The guys that are plowing complain about what they have to deal with.

Mr. Klein talked about unique natural areas. The environmental management council did a second round of boundary updates; there are four more in the Town of Caroline where the boundaries are changing. Boundaries are shifting because there's better aerial photography. So they're being changed for accuracy, but also for lining up better with property lines and with other unique natural areas, and also farmland was taken out. Natural areas have no legal designation in themselves. The four areas in which boundaries are changing in Caroline are the Belle School Fen, Eastman Hill, Bald Mountain Laurel Woods, and Bald Hill Woods. Landowners will be notified.

## **Tim Seely, Town Board**

### **The Joint Youth Commission**

Meeting was 2/10/2015 at the Ithaca Town hall.

Penny Boyton attended the meeting and reviewed the current status of her ongoing programs at Dewitt and in Brooktondale. She also presented her annual report and brought up her concern of declining numbers of youth participation from the Town of Caroline. She will be doing a mailing to all JYC member families and hopes this may boost the enrollment numbers.

Rich DePaolo presented the revised bylaws and the commission accepted them as is. We can review and approve the Supervisor to sign them at our 2/11/2015 meeting. They are attached to this report.

Kris Bennet has brought to his attention that the Tompkins County Youth Services Board helps guide funding and staff efforts. The board has a seat for each municipality in the County, currently the Town of Caroline seat is vacant.

Several Commission members are concerned with the low numbers of participants they have seen on recent program reports provided by the coordinators. This will be an ongoing discussion

between the commission, the program managers and their supervisor.

Mr. Seely said the question is whether the drop off in participation this year is because of becoming part of the JYC or because the youth are more interested in sports.

Mr. Barber said they may feel intimidated to participate with kids from other schools that they don't know.

### **Tompkins County Recreation Partnership**

We set the 2015 meeting schedule

We discussed getting all RP municipalities to put a link on their web site to the RP programs to inform residents of this opportunity and get them to the current program offerings. Currently the Town of Caroline site does not have a link, but we should add this when redesigning the site.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

Town Hall trees:

Soliciting for three bids to remove one tree and trim the remaining two. He will present these numbers at the March agenda meeting.

### **Fund Transfers**

#### **Resolution 69 of 2015**

Motion made by Don Barber and seconded by John Fracchia

#### **Be It Resolved the Caroline Town Board makes the following 2015 Fund Transfers**

- \$ 333.00 from General Fund Account A 1220.4 Supervisor CE to General Fund Account A 1220.2 Supervisor EQ.
- \$ 225.00 from General Fund Account A 1460.4 Records Mgmt CE to General Fund Account A 1460.1 Records Mgmt PS.
- \$ 715.00 from General Fund Account A 3620.4 Code Officer CE to General Fund Account A 3620.2 Code Officer EQ.

**Adopted** Barber: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Witmer: Aye; Weiser: Aye Seely: Aye

### **Approval of Abstracts**

#### **Resolution 70 of 2015**

#### **Streetlight Fund Abstract**

A motion was made by Don Barber and seconded by Mark Witmer to approve payment for the Streetlight Fund voucher numbers 3 and 4 for \$573.64.

**Adopted** Barber: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Witmer: Aye; Weiser: Aye Seely: Aye

**Resolution 71 of 2015  
General Fund Abstract**

A motion was made by Don Barber and seconded by John Fracchia to approve payment for the General Fund voucher numbers 31 through 66 for \$12,857.86

**Adopted** Barber: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Witmer: Aye; Weiser: Aye Seely: Aye

**Resolution 72 of 2015  
Highway Fund Abstract**

A motion was made by Don Barber and seconded by Tim Seely to approve payment for the Highway Fund voucher numbers 16 through 52 for \$93,824.96.

**Adopted** Barber: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Witmer: Aye; Weiser: Aye Seely: Aye

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**Resolutions****Resolution 73 of 2015: Caroline Emergency Services Day**

A motion was made by John Fracchia and seconded by Irene Weiser

WHEREAS, The Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Companies provide an invaluable service to the Town of Caroline and its residents, and

WHEREAS, National EMS Week and International Firefighters Day are each celebrated during the month of May, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Caroline wishes to acknowledge all Caroline Emergency Service volunteers for their service and recognize volunteer members who have achieved milestone years of service,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Caroline Town Council does hereby designate the second Wednesday of the month of May as Caroline Emergency Services Day and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Council liaison to the emergency service providers shall solicit the names of volunteers who have achieved milestone years of service (5 year increments) for recognition at a reception to be held on this day.

**Adopted** Barber: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Witmer: Aye; Weiser: Aye Seely: Aye

Discussion: Mr. Fracchia heard back from Chris Jordan in Brooktondale who gave his support.

**Resolution 74 of 2015: Establish a Public Hearing for a Local Law Discontinuing a Portion of Level Green Road as a Minimum Maintenance Highway**

A motion was made by Don Barber and seconded by John Fracchia

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board will hold a public hearing at Town Hall, 2670 Slaterville Road, Slaterville Springs, New York on the 7th day of April, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. for the purpose of considering the proposed "Local Law Discontinuing a Portion of Level Green Road as a Minimum Maintenance Highway."

**Adopted** Barber: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Witmer: Aye; Weiser: Aye Seely: Nay

### **Discussion Regarding Setting up a Safety Committee**

Mr. Barber noted that Ms. Whittaker has a safety committee. OSHA sends her monthly toolbox talks and she discusses these with her staff. Mr. Barber stated that Ms. Whittaker's discussions are a good thing, but do not meet this requirement, which comes from NYMIR. If we're not managing those risks, we've been lucky. NYMIR will support the effort, but it will require someone making it a priority. The handbook suggests the committee be made up of the following people: the supervisor, a councilperson, a code enforcement officer, and someone from highway. What's most important is that we take it seriously. NYMIR would like to get a report that this requirement has been met. The Town of Caroline has a loss ratio of over 65%, which is good. If you have been creating a safety committee and have been working on safety, you can mitigate some of the impact of an accident or claim.

Ms. Weiser suggested including someone with knowledge and experience in the insurance field on the committee. She also suggested collaborating with other municipalities who have already set up such a committee.

Mr. Barber thought that was a great idea and said he would talk to NYMIR about setting that up. Regarding who is on the committee, he would encourage someone from the highway being there. The idea is to raise awareness.

### **Resolution 75 of 2015: Recommending Changes to the Health Insurance Consortium Municipal Cooperative Agreement**

A motion was made by John Fracchia and seconded by Tim Seely

WHEREAS, The Town of Caroline has been asked to review the Municipal Cooperation Agreement (MCA) of The Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium and to recommend proposed changes as required under the MCA,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Caroline Town Council certifies that it has reviewed the MCA and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Caroline Town Council offers the following feedback and recommendations:

Section C, 9: The provision for special meetings states that the minimum notification given for a special meeting will be, "no less than 3 days." We believe that this is an insufficient amount of time and recommend amending the required minimum notification to "no less than 7 days."

Section C, 10: This provision outlines protocol for a board action should an urgent situation arise and calling of a special meeting be impractical. It allows the board to review and vote on proposals and the chair to act once a sufficient number of affirmative votes has been received. It then notes in the last sentence that any actions taken by the chair pursuant to the paragraph shall be ratified by the board at the next scheduled meeting. It is our opinion that this represents a redundancy of process, as a legal vote of the board will have already occurred. Further, it does not provide guidance as to remedy should the board not ratify the action at the following meeting.

**Adopted** Barber: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Witmer: Aye; Weiser: Aye Seely: Aye

### **Resolution 76 of 2015: Intermunicipal Agreement and Operating Guidelines of the Joint Youth Commission**

A motion was made by Don Barber; seconded by Tim Seely

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby authorizes the supervisor to sign the Intermunicipal Agreement and Operating Guidelines of the Joint Youth Commission among the Town of Ithaca, Town of Caroline, Village of Cayuga Heights, and Village of Lansing.

**Adopted** Barber: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Witmer: Aye; Weiser: Aye Seely: Aye

### **Discussion**

Mr. Seely said that the big changes are the authority and the purpose. The meat of it is what we currently had agreed to.

Mr. Barber said one of the things we started last year was to try and get private sector funding.

Mr. Seely said it's interesting to find that employers who could do this don't find it valuable to start exposing kids at this age to what it's like to be in a professional career.

Mr. Fracchia thought that in his role with Ithaca College Career Services, he might be able to foster a potential partnership.

Mr. Barber said that when he was on the TCAD Board, the president of Kionix stood up and said that kids these days aren't motivated and that the school system is turning out crap, nobody worth hiring. Mr. Barber reminded him that if these kids aren't provided any work experiences, and all they do is play around with their cell phones, they come out of school and have to choose between doing what they're used to doing and getting a job they know nothing about. He challenged everyone at the table to start thinking about ways they can incorporate youth at 14-15 years old to start thinking about jobs as something exciting to do and something they would aspire to do. We need a cheerleader for this because this is something every employer should be clamoring to get somebody in there so that when they finish up their college educations, that they can't wait to get a job.

Mr. Seely said that the youth employment part of this through the Learning Web is not underused. They fill that program every year. It's limited only by dollars and staff. Caroline had



seven youth participate in the program last year. With a little more funding, they could have more staff to get the kids placed in the community.

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## **Town Business**

### **Discussion of Association of Towns Legislative Agenda**

Mr. Barber said the 13 resolutions will come forward at the annual meeting for a vote, and the board needs to direct Mr. Witmer how to vote.

The board went through the resolutions and decided to vote no on resolutions #4 and #9.

### **Discussion Regarding Health Insurance Options for Elected and Appointed Officials**

Mr. Barber pointed out the comparison between the Platinum Plan and the current Town of Caroline PPO. For all practical purposes, most of the town employees would be in network since all of Tompkins County is covered. The biggest difference is the hospitalization. The current PPO plan has the employees paying no premiums. The Affordable Care Act has the Platinum Plan, and it's the highest plan – for the average person, 80% of all the medical claims and prescriptions are being paid by the plan. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

On a motion by Don Barber and seconded by John Fracchia, the town board entered executive session at 9 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations. On a motion by Don Barber and seconded by John Fracchia, the town board exited executive session at 10:07 p.m.

### **---Adjourn the meeting ---**

A motion by Mr. Barber the meeting adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb DeAugustine, Deputy Town Clerk