

### **Caroline Town Board Meeting Minutes of September 6, 2023**

A Public Hearing on the 2024 Tompkins County Shared Services Initiative for Countywide Rapid Medical Response and the Town Board Agenda Meeting were held hybrid beginning at 7:01 p.m. and was hosted by Town Supervisor, Mark Witmer

**Attendance:**

Supervisor Mark Witmer  
Councilmember Cal Snow  
Councilmember Tim Murray  
Councilmember Kate Kelley-Mackenzie  
Councilmember Michele Brown

**Also Present:**

**Recording Secretary:**

Jessie Townsend, Town Clerk

**Public Attendance:** \_\_\_ in-person; 4 via zoom

Supr. Witmer opened with the Pledge to the Flag.

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#### **Public Hearing on the 2024 Tompkins County Shared Services Initiative for Countywide Rapid Medical Response Plan**

Tompkins County will be presenting the (CWSSI) Plan to the Legislature in November. This initiative started in 2020 by a TCCOG and later by a EMS Steering Committee who has worked on it steadily ever since. Mike Stitley from the Department of Emergency Response (DoER) was present to go over the Plan. Public Hearings were scheduled here in Caroline, Lansing, and Newfield, as parts of these towns have been most affected by the emergency response shortage. Mike clarified that the Town Board will not be any action taken tonight, comments from the Hearings will be submitted to the County Legislature for their consideration before they vote in November. He explained that this rapid response plan is to help assist the current emergency response service providers, not to eliminate or replace them. He gave an overview of the Plan and noted that data shows that there’s been a 45% increase of 911 calls this past year. What the Plan is constructed to do is have a team respond to some of the lesser distressing 911 calls to help relieve some of the community-based services that may be in transport to a much more critical call. The proposal is to run a daytime service of three response vehicles stationed throughout the County Mon-Fri from 7AM to 7PM. As data is collected, adjustments may be made based on what areas would be better served or other things that may evolve over time.

#### Public Comments and Q&A Session

*Irene Weiser* – Thanked Mike, Mark and all involved. As a former Caroline Councilmember, she dedicated a lot of time to this issue starting about 6yrs ago. She asked Mike if these response vehicles are similar to a fly car. He responded fly-car usually means paramedic and that this will be someone with basic life support training, because they will be responding to lesser emergent calls and will keep the certified paramedics available for those needing more critical help.

*Pete Hoyt* – Inquired about daytime hours v. nighttime. Mike shared the volume of calls that come between 7AM-7PM that makes it difficult.

*Rick Morgan* – Asked where the vehicles will be stationed and how many people per vehicle. Mike shared one person will take their vehicle to the DoER for restocking and ready for the next shift. He reiterated this is to aid some calls that don't necessarily need transport to the hospital and reduce the number of times an ambulance gets to a call where the patient may just need some assistance getting up from a chair.

*Kathy Mix* – Had questions regarding cost and how that gets paid and who provides the medical equipment, medications for these vehicles.

*Irene Weiser* – Shared her excitement and support of this concept. Recommends DoER provide more in-depth details of the Plan before presenting to the Legislation.

*Becky Dewitt* – Concerned about some unknown details like no clear cost for this service.

*Tonia Vancamp* – Was an EMT in Caroline. Concern regarding the risk to a single person's arrival to an unknown scene and recommended safety protocols, screening. Mike agreed, adding that it's the same screening process as it is for any medical unit. Will be on standby until law enforcement arrives. Lastly, she inquired about the possibility of Tompkins County paying for EMT's recertification, could help getting applicants and help other emergency service agencies keep staff.

*Pete Hoyt* – Concern about the high startup cost.

*Wil Lawrence* – Unclear about the cost allocation and why it's excessively higher in Caroline than the other towns.

*Kathy Mix* – Asked for a more formal presentation noting that a lot of factors remain unknown.

*Irene Weiser* – Excited and supports the concept of this shared service. Agrees that a more formal presentation that includes a clear breakdown of what this is would help resolve some of the confusion of what has been presented tonight.

*Becky Dewitt* – Agreed with Irene, many details are unknown at this point.

*Kate Kelley-Mackenzie* – Offered a reminder that this shared service plan is just a pilot program. What it being asked to the Legislation is to allocate funds for one-year and continue working on this.

Closed Public Hearing at 8:14PM

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## Committee Reports

**Bob Spencer, Highway Report** – Spoke to TC Hwy. Supt., Jeff Smith who confirmed he is waiting for a letter from NYSDOT authorizing the posting of speed signs on Landon and Lounsbery Rd. Right to Farm signs – needs to know how many and the locations of where they will be placed. The Board discussed and concluded that 8 Right to Farm signs be posted throughout the town, 2 posted on State Route 79. Cal and Bob will determine where the other 6 signs will be placed throughout the town. New Barns - Working with Labella on dimensions for the truck bays.

**Tim Murray, Clm.** – Was notified by a resident that an online petition was circulating (96 signatures to-date) for a speed reduction on Coddington Rd. She has had issues downloading and forwarding the petition. Broadband – Thomas Rd residents that are underserved.

**Kate Kelley-Mackenzie, Clm.** – ITC will be meeting next Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup> to continue discussion on the Safe Streets for All Grant

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**Approval of Minutes**

The Town Board approved the Minutes of August 16, 2023, as submitted by Velvet Lyke

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**Agenda Items for August Business Meeting**

Resolution to Tomp. Co. for speed reduction study on Coddington Rd  
Potential discussion regarding comments made at this evening's Public Hearing  
Resolution appointing Evelyn to the Joint Youth Commission  
Introduction of the Battery Storage Law  
Potential 2024 Budget discussion  
Set 2024 Budget Workshops to be held in October.

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A motion to enter Executive Session was made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Murray to discuss personnel compensation at 8:51PM and carried unanimously. A motion to exit Executive Session and adjourn the meeting was made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Murray at 9:20PM and carried unanimously.

----Meeting Adjourned----

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Jessie Townsend*