

Caroline Town Board Meeting Minutes of December 6, 2023

The Town Board Agenda Meeting was held hybrid on December 6, 2023, at the Caroline Town Hall, and was called to order at 7:04 by Supervisor Mark Witmer

Attendance:

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

Also Present:

Hwy. Superintendent, Bobby Spencer

Recording Secretary:

Jessie Townsend, Town Clerk

Public Attendance: 5 in-person, 4 via zoom

Supr. Witmer opened with the Pledge to the Flag.

Privilege-of-the-Floor

Matt Mix – 9th generation farmer. He has read parts of the zoning draft and does not agree with some of the content as written and needs continued work.

Katherine Goldberg – Also commented on the draft zoning law. Observes continuous subjectivity in many sections of the law, thus creating interpretation throughout. Urges the Board to correct such subjectivity.

Bruce Murray – Congratulated the re-elected members of the board.

Committee Reports

Bob Spencer, Hwy Report – New truck is currently at MDI receiving final setup, expects receipt very soon. Crew is continuing road and brush work on Level Green Rd.

Dan Klein, County Legislator Report – Dan was not present at the meeting, but he provided the following report: County is actively exploring how to fund the Rapid Medical Response project. We want to take a little more time to think through and come to some kind of consensus on what we would like to ask of the Towns in terms of cost-sharing. When and if we end up with a formal request, he hopes to engage in good conversation about this. In the meantime, the conversation will continue at TCCOG and at the Shared Services Panel, both in the next week.

Cm. Cal Snow – Received donation for Caroline Cemeteries. Currently seeking procedural direction from the Division of Cemeteries on how to proceed after receipt of such funds.

Supr. Witmer and Cm. Kelley-Mackenzie - Broadband - Meeting last week. Report should be forthcoming. Transportation Council – will meeting with municipalities throughout the County.

Discussion of Highway Facilities Project

The Board and Hwy Supt Spencer discussed the next steps after reviewing the first draft report from Labella. Cm. Murray suggested they meet with Labella to go over the 3 concepts they put forward and discuss different measures to scale back the cost burden to taxpayers.

Discussion of the Caroline History Room operation

Clm. Brown suggested that a committee be formed to oversee the needs and operations of the History Room. She recommended having up to two board members, both the Historian and Deputy Historian, and up to two additional volunteers. This Committee will work to review and sort the continued needs to support the Historian and the History Room.

Discussion of draft zoning law – final edits and next steps

Articles X & XI have been revised by the Town Attorney. The Board has reviewed and agrees with the revisions he has made thereto. Supr. Witmer summarized the last few edits he has suggested to do the draft as follows:

Definitions:

County Planning Department – replace with Tompkins County Planning and Sustainability Department throughout.

Zoning Officer – delete second sentence (that may also be called CEO). “Code Enforcement Officer” replaced with “Zoning Officer” throughout, where appropriate.

Solar Energy Facility – added sentence to clarify when a system is an on-farm Building.

Wind Energy Generating System, Large – added sentence to clarify when a system is an on-farm Building.

Article V:

5.3.G.2: revised and added to 3d as follows: Parking or parking lots, except in connection with Activities part of a Farm Operation. It is recommended that lots and driveways be pervious.

5.3.G.2.c.: added language to allow minor storage sheds in buffer area.

6.5.2.A.2: (note P for Accessory Structures as Dwelling for Farmworker Housing.

6.5.9: Revised Junk, Trash, Rubbish, Garbage, Reuse, Debris, and Discarded Materials.

Article X

Enforcement and Administration – Revised – see draft law for full revisions.

Article XI

Zoning Board of Appeals – Revised - See draft law for full revisions.

With the approval from the Board, this concludes the edits to the draft law. The final draft will be posted on the town website for public review. With the SEQR review underway, a Public Hearing will be set for January. The consideration for another extension to the Moratorium will need to be made.

Supr. Witmer noticed a typo in Resolution 101 and clarified for the record that the word “uncoordinated” should be “coordinated” review.

Resolution 129 of 2023. Appoint Steve Nicholson as Representative on the Environmental Management Council

Motion by: Witmer Seconded: Snow

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby appoints Steve Nicholson to serve on the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council.

Motion carried.

Ayes: Witmer, Snow, Murray, Kelley-Mackenzie, Brown

Nays: None

Approval of Minutes of November Business Meeting

The Caroline Town Board approved the Minutes of the November 1, 2023, Agenda Meeting and the November 15, 2023, Business Meeting as prepared by Town Clerk, Jessie Townsend

Agenda Items for December Business Meeting

SEQR determination

Set Public Hearing on draft zoning law

Resolution to approve the Fire District Contracts

Resolution for 2024 employee wage increases

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Snow and carried unanimously at 9:39PM.

----Meeting Adjourned----

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessie Townsend