

## Caroline Town Board Meeting Minutes of February 7, 2024

The Town Board Agenda Meeting was held hybrid on February 7, 2024, at the Caroline Town Hall, and was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Supervisor Witmer

**Attendance:**

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

**Also Present:**

County Legislature Rep Dan Klein

**Recording Secretary:**

Jessie Townsend, Town Clerk

**Public Attendance:** 8 in-person, and 6 via zoom

Supr. Witmer opened with the Pledge to the Flag.

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**Privilege-of-the-Floor**

*Matt Mix – submitted his comments on the draft zoning law to Ctm. Snow and asked that board members review and consider his recommendations prior to voting on the law.*

*Frank Proto – Encouraged the Board to keep Caroline Center Church a polling site (District #1). Recognizing the worries regarding accessibility, he proposed seeking grant funding as a possible solution. He also shared concern about the timing of this being that this is a Presidential election year. Changing venues could cause confusion for many, adding more than 500 voters polled there just in November.*

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**Discussion of Broadband Study**

Ryan Garrison from Hunt Engineering and Dan Klein were present and joined the board conversation as they reviewed results of Hunt’s feasibility study. Supr. Witmer summarized the unique opportunity to partner with the Town of Dryden’s buildout of Municipal Broadband Service. A decision is needed tonight whether to continue moving forward with the County’s initiative or to join Dryden in their buildout. Grant funding opportunities are in place and deadline requirements mean this is very time sensitive. After discussing and understanding that the County’s initiative is to service the unserved residents of the town, where Dryden’s initiative is to service all underserved residents (25mbps or less), the board unanimously agreed to move forward in an effort to obtain grant funding to position the partnership with Dryden.

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**Resolutions**

**Resolution 58 of 2024. Accepting Terms and Conditions of Old Town Hall Preservation Grant from NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Motion by: Witmer                      Second: Brown

WHEREAS, the Town of Caroline applied for financial assistance from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (“OPRHP”) under the Title 9 of the Environmental Protection Act of 1993 for the purpose of funding the Old Caroline Town Hall Restoration project; therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Town of Caroline is authorized and directed to accept these grant funds in an amount not to exceed \$375,000 for the project described in the grant application; and further be it

RESOLVED, the Town of Caroline is authorized and directed to agree to the terms and conditions of the State of New York Contract for Grants (“Contract”) with OPRHP for funding the Old Caroline Town Hall Restoration project; and further be it

RESOLVED, the Town of Caroline is authorized and directed to agree to the terms and conditions of any required deed of easement granted to OPRHP that affects title to real property owned by the Town and improved by grant funds, which may be a duly recorded public access covenant, conservation easement, and/or preservation covenant; and further be it

RESOLVED, the Caroline Town Board delegates signing authority to execute the Contract and any amendments thereto, any required deed of easement, and any other certifications to the individual who holds the following elected office: Town Supervisor

**Motion Carried.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Resolution 59 of 2024. Negative Declaration of Environmental Impacts of Caroline Zoning Law**

Motion by: Witmer                      Second: Murray

WHEREAS, the Town of Caroline Town Board (“Board”) has established a process pursuant to Town Law 266 (Adoption of First Zoning Ordinance) and received a final report from the Town of Caroline Zoning Commission (March 2023);

WHEREAS, the proposed zoning law is in the form of a Local Law pursuant to the authority and power granted to the Town Board and the Town by Articles 2 and 3 of the New York State Municipal Home Rule Law and by Article 2 of the New York State Statute of Local Governments; and

WHEREAS, the proposed zoning law has been introduced and reviewed by the Town Board; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, pursuant to the authority granted in New York State Town Law § 272-a, the Town of Caroline adopted an updated Comprehensive Plan. That Plan sets forth Caroline’s vision for its future, and the blueprint for how the Town should grow and how Caroline should preserve the characteristics and qualities of the Town so valued by Town residents. The Comprehensive Plan consists of materials, written and graphic, including, but not limited to, maps, charts, elements, appendices, and other descriptive materials. Section 272-a (11) of the Town Law requires, in relevant part, that all town land use regulations must be in accordance with an adopted Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, it is our intention to adopt a local law which brings Caroline’s land use regulations into accord with the 2020 Comprehensive Plan. In so doing, the Town, developed a draft law designed to enhance environmental review for certain actions and to strengthen the Town’s ability to mitigate or avoid adverse impacts that may result from future development in the Town; and

WHEREAS, in addition to, and in support of the implementation of the goals of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, it is also the purpose of the proposed updated zoning to exercise our Town’s right to protect our citizens by ensuring new uses of land are protective of the public health, safety and general welfare, and that are consistent with locally established goals and objectives in accordance with our comprehensive plan. Caroline’s Plan is designed to preserve and protect, for the benefit of the town as a whole, the rural-agricultural character of the Town; and

WHEREAS, this proposed Local Law is the result of almost two years of work and consideration by the Town’s Zoning Commission, Town Board, planning consultant, citizens, and other interested parties; and

WHEREAS, adoption of the proposed Local Law #\_\_ of 2024 adopting a zoning law for the Town of Caroline has been determined to be a Type I action, pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) 6 NYCRR Part 617.4, and

WHEREAS, the proposed action will not require permits and approvals from any other local, regional, or State agencies prior to adoption, and a coordinated SEQRA review took place; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board carefully reviewed Parts I, II, and III of the Full Environmental Assessment Form and took the required hard look on the above-described action according to SEQRA, 6 NYCRR Part 617 as part of the required adoption procedures; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board, after consideration of the Full Environmental Assessment Form Part III finds that:

The Town has not identified any significant, adverse environmental impacts that would result from adopting proposed Local Law # \_\_\_ of 2024 related to the zoning law. The Town Board has reviewed Part I and II and has determined that there are no identified potential moderate to large adverse environmental impacts associated with adopting the zoning law for the Town of Caroline. This action implements policies established in the 2020 Town of Caroline Comprehensive Plan. Protection of the environment and maintenance of the rural character of the Town are paramount policies of the Town and this local law is established to ensure consistency between future development and that Comprehensive Plan.

The action of adopting a local law by itself will not result in any physical change to the environment. The proposed zoning relates to furthering the environmental protection goals of the Town of Caroline. A detailed Section F narrative attached to Part I of the Full EAF was provided to fully describe these proposed zoning regulations. As detailed in Section F, the proposed zoning strengthens environmental protections when new development is proposed by well-considered siting and review processes and will therefore positively benefit the Town of Caroline and is fully consistent with the goals of SEQR. The depth and breadth of environmental topics addressed in the Town's Plan and translated into land use regulations via the zoning law illustrate the commitment Caroline has made to protect, preserve, and enhance the environment. The primary purpose of the proposed amendments to the zoning law is to implement these principles through land use regulations.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF CAROLINE, TOMPKINS COUNTY:**

1. That the Town Supervisor is authorized to execute and sign the Full Environmental Assessment Form, Part III, and
2. That the Town of Caroline Town Board hereby declares that adoption of the proposed Local Law # \_\_\_ of 2024 adopting a Local Law that establishes the Town of Caroline Zoning Law as described herein, will not have any potential significant adverse environmental impacts; and
3. That the Town Board hereby makes a negative declaration regarding SEQR 6NYCRR Part 617 and authorizes filing of such negative declaration (Part III of the FEAF); and
4. That the Town Board directs the Town Clerk to file a notice in the Environmental Notice Bulletin according to SEQRA, 6 NYCRR Part 617 as required; and

WHEREUPON this Resolution was declared passed and adopted on February 7, 2024 by the Town Board of the Town of Caroline.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** Supervisor Witmer: AYE; Councilmember Murray: AYE; Councilmember Kelley-Mackenzie: AYE; Councilmember Snow: AYE; Councilmember Brown: AYE

**Motion Carried.**

Annexed Documents:

Exhibit A: Determination of Non-Significance

**Exhibit A**

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW  
EVALUATION OF THE MAGNITUDE AND IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS  
RELATED TO ADOPTION OF A TOWN ZONING LAW  
**DETERMINATION OF NON-SIGNIFICANCE**

**Name of Action:** Adoption of the Town of Caroline Zoning Law

**SEQRA Status:** This is a Type I Action.

**Description of Action:** The action is adoption of a zoning law for the Town of Caroline, designed to implement the previously adopted Town of Caroline Comprehensive Plan. To do so, the zoning establishes an Ag/Rural district encompassing the largest area of the Town, with specific districts for hamlets: Besemer, Brooktondale, Caroline, Caroline Center, Center Brooktondale, Slaterville Springs, Speedsville, and West Slaterville, and a focused commercial district. The overall purpose of the zoning law is to protect and promote public health, safety and welfare and to guide physical development of the Town in a manner which maintains and reflects the unique character of Caroline as a rural community, conserve the Town's natural resources and protect the environment, promote the Town as a vibrant and desirable community to live, including avoiding adverse impacts, support home occupations, encourage existing and new businesses, promote outdoor recreation, accessibility, and livability for people of all ages. As a first zoning law, the Town of Caroline had conducted its review and analysis and submitted its final report recommending zoning to the Town Board in March 2023. The zoning would be adopted as a local law, subject to all requirements as such.

The environmental analysis of the related long-term, short-term, direct, and indirect impacts was initiated with a comprehensive review of all submitted materials, including the FEAF Part 1 and Part 2. The Town Board carefully reviewed and considered the Part I, Section F, which provides a detailed narrative about the potential environmental impacts that may be associated with adoption of the Town's zoning law. This Determination of Non-significance references and incorporates in full, Section F's detailed evaluation of impacts.

This action, adoption of the Town of Caroline Zoning Law, implement policies established in the 2020 Town of Caroline Comprehensive Plan. Protection of the environment and maintenance of the rural character of the Town are paramount policies of the Town and these amendments were designed to protect them. The action of adopting a local law by itself will not result in any physical change to the environment. It is recognized that future development in the Town may adversely impact the environment however, and adoption of the zoning law is specifically designed to avoid or mitigate those impacts.

The zoning has been designed to minimize and limit the scope of potential adverse impacts. It sets performance expectations and development standards specifically designed to eliminate or decrease the duration, magnitude, size and extent of any adverse impacts that may occur in the future in order to meet the Town's environmental, character, and quality of life vision, goals, and policies.

The purpose of Part 3 is to build on evaluations made during Part 2, to decide how significant any Part 2 identified moderate to large impacts are, and to decide if further information is needed in an environmental impact statement. Part 3 is where, for each potential impact, the reviewing agency discusses the magnitude, importance, probability of occurrence, duration of impact, irreversibility of impact, geographic scope, and cumulative impacts in the context of the site and community.

In completion of FEAF Part 2, the Town Board found that there were no moderate to large impacts that would occur. As the zoning amendments are fundamentally designed to limit adverse environmental impacts related to land use in Caroline, the Town Board has concluded that there will be no adverse impact to adopting the zoning law. Further, the Town Board has:

1. Considered the entire action including both the adoption and implementation of the proposed zoning law by the Town.
2. Reviewed the following information as part of its decision making:
  1. The 2020 Comprehensive Plan;
  2. The proposed zoning law and map;
  3. Documents, minutes and public input received from the Zoning Commission; and
  4. Other inventories, studies, and plans prepared regionally.
3. The Town Board has determined that there are no other involved agencies required as part of the adoption process for this local law but has incorporated comments received from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, consultant-recommendations made to the Town of Caroline Agricultural Committee, and the public, and has conducted the required 239-m review with Tompkins County.
4. The draft zoning law was developed by the Town of Caroline Zoning Commission. As part of their drafting and reporting process, the Commission solicited and received many comments from the public. The Commission responded to these comments by a) evaluating and making changes to the draft zoning law as appropriate, and b) developing a public document showing all the comments and the Commission response. The report submitted to the Town Board in March 2023 reflects months of public input and re-drafting to address issues raised. Subsequent to the Commission report, the Town Board conducted an extensive review process that included public input and editing of the document and proposed zoning district map.
5. Regarding the 18 environmental topics evaluated in Part 2 of the FEAF, the Town Board did recognize that future land use and development in the Town of Caroline has the potential to:
  - Involve construction on, or physical alteration of the land surface of the proposed site.
  - Affect one or more wetlands or other surface water bodies (e.g., streams, rivers, ponds or lakes).
  - Result in new or additional use of ground water or may have the potential to introduce contaminants to ground water or an aquifer.
  - Result in development on lands subject to flooding.
  - Result in a loss of flora or fauna.
  - Impact agricultural resources.
  - Create land uses that are obviously different from, or are in sharp contrast to, current land use patterns between the proposed project and a scenic or aesthetic resource.
  - Create land uses that may occur in or adjacent to a historic or archaeological resource.
  - Result in a loss of recreational opportunities or a reduction of an open space resource as designated in any adopted municipal open space plan.
  - Result in a change to existing transportation systems.
  - Result in land uses that are inconsistent with the existing community character.

In further evaluation of these potential impacts, the Town Board examined the specific potential environmental impacts of the proposed Action in relationship to their significance, setting, probability of occurrence, duration, irreversibility, geographic scope, magnitude, and number of people affected, and concludes as follows:

1. **IMPACT ON LAND.** Future development as allowed by zoning may impact land. Regulating and managing/mitigating adverse impacts are core purposes of this zoning law. Compared to the limited reviews and regulations currently existing in Caroline for any and all kinds of uses anywhere, uses appropriate to the town and each district are now specified and will receive appropriate re-

view. Additionally, this zoning law establishes districts that protect existing hamlet centers, commercial areas, and open spaces, including farmland. This, by design, will both avoid and mitigate impacts, particularly cumulative and secondary impacts. This proposed zoning law implements the goals of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, is based in NYS Smart Growth principles, and will therefore minimize impacts.

2. **IMPACT ON GEOLOGICAL FEATURES. NO IMPACT.** There are no unique land forms or geological features identified in the Town from local, state, or federal databases.
3. **IMPACTS ON SURFACE WATER.** Future development could impact surface water. However, surface water is specifically protected by this zoning law and a proposed EPOD therein. Adopting zoning does not increase the impacts or likelihood of a negative impact occurring, but instead mitigates or avoids such impacts. The EPOD serves to move development away from sensitive areas alongside surface water bodies, thereby minimizing impacts of development on such areas. The Town review processes in this zoning law will avoid or mitigate impacts in or alongside surface waters.
4. **IMPACT ON GROUNDWATER.** Future growth will rely on groundwater. Zoning adds review and criteria to ensure for adequate water, emphasizes measures to control and minimize storm-water and erosion, authorizes hydrogeologic studies for new groundwater withdrawals, establishes a special use process that includes attention to groundwater, allowing the Review Board to fully assess adequacy of groundwater for the use, and potential impacts on groundwater. Such protections are currently not in place.
5. **IMPACT ON FLOODING.** Impacts, including cumulative or speculative impacts, are mitigated by an existing flood damage and prevention law. Zoning enhances this protection by steering new land uses and development away from flood prone areas (Stream Corridor Overlay). Flooding will be minimized or avoided as a result of the development standards of the new zoning. The zoning is designed to limit development in, and impacts to, flood zones and riparian areas
6. **IMPACT ON AIR.** Proposed zoning will restrict certain uses that would impact air, such as heavy industry. Zoning elevates the importance of air resources via site plan review and special use permits where the Review Board must evaluate air resources. It is not likely that any future use, as allowed by the Use Table, will have any air emissions that come close to or exceed regulatory levels. Some future development projects may have air emissions related to construction or deconstruction operations but those would be temporary.
7. **IMPACT ON PLANTS AND ANIMALS.** Future building in Caroline could have adverse impacts on plants and animals by disturbing forest, meadow, wetland, and other habitats. Zoning will not stop development but will ensure it is of appropriate scale and intensity and is located and designed to avoid or mitigate impacts on plants and animals. These zoning regulations are designed to mitigate impacts on plant and animal life during development. Site Plan Reviews and Special Use Permits will give the Town the tools to identify, protect, and mitigate impacts of development as they are proposed. Having zoning is far more protective of plants and animals than exists without, where little is identified, reviewed, or protected. Thus, the impacts of adopting zoning are expected to be positive for plants and animals.
8. **IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES.** The proposed zoning is very farm friendly and allows all types of agriculture to continue or expand throughout town without impediment. The 3-acre average lot-subdivision provision in the Ag/Rural District will ensure that open space is preserved for the possibility of farming activity in the future. Farmland and farm resources will be protected by ensuring new projects reduce impacts to adjacent farms via an Ag Buffer, requires use of the Ag Data Statement and the Ag Disclosure Notice, adds a modified site plan review process for certain intensive Ag operations, and requires the Review Board to consider impacts of a

proposed project on agriculture in the District. Currently, development can take place anywhere regardless of its impacts on agriculture. These zoning regulations will significantly enhance protection of agriculture.

9. **IMPACT ON AESTHETIC RESOURCES.** New building may impact aesthetic resources, but this zoning law defines scenic resources, adds protection of such resources with performance standards, directs the Review Board to avoid or mitigate impacts, establishes that land disturbances should be in locations least likely to block scenic vistas and that conservation subdivisions be designed to preserve scenic resources, authorizes the Review Board to require a visual impact assessment, and uses a special use permit that includes protections of scenic resources
10. **IMPACT ON HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES.** The proposed zoning elevates the status of historic structures (purpose statements), establishes hamlet districts to promote these traditional centers with their historic buildings, specifically defines historic structures and features as part of hamlet definition, includes historic resources as feature to be included in preserved open spaces, and adds provisions that require historic structures be considered in siting and design of new structures as part of site plan review. As above, current land use regulations have no review or standards related to protecting these resources. Zoning will improve the Town's ability to protect historic resources.
11. **IMPACT ON OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION.** New development of any kind will reduce open space in Caroline. The 3-acre average lot-subdivision provision in the Ag/Rural District will ensure that open space is preserved. This zoning protects open spaces through use of buffers, includes open space in community character purpose and definitions, establishes that major subdivisions must be designed in a conservation subdivision manner with 50% preserved open space, and establishes rural siting and farmland protection siting guidelines. This zoning will allow for growth patterns designed to mitigate impacts on open space and recreational lands.
12. **IMPACT ON CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS. NO IMPACT.** There are no designated Critical Environmental Areas in the Town of Caroline.
13. **IMPACT ON TRANSPORTATION.** Creation of a focused commercial district, allowance of businesses and multifamily developments in hamlet areas, and other operations elsewhere have the potential to increase traffic in Caroline. Zoning, however, is designed to ensure that no major project is allowed without site plan review and special use permit review of which minimizing traffic impacts and increasing multi-modal transportation opportunities are critical components. Zoning requires limiting # of curb cuts, authorizes use of traffic impact analysis, and requires Review Board to evaluate traffic and impacts in every site plan and special use permit review. Further, this zoning law, by encouraging mixed-use development of residential hamlet centers and preservation of open space, will promote "livable" neighborhoods that reduce the need for long-distance transit. Zoning is the mechanism to reduce, avoid, or mitigate traffic impacts that do not currently exist.
14. **IMPACT ON ENERGY. NO IMPACT.** The adoption of zoning will not increase energy use but is designed to reduce it. As noted, by promoting Smart Growth, the longer-term goal of this zoning law is to reduce the use of energy for transportation. Site Plan Review includes a Design Standard to minimize energy use and encourage renewable energy.
15. **IMPACT ON NOISE, ODOR, AND LIGHT. NO IMPACT.** Adoption of this zoning law will not increase the likelihood of noise levels above local ambient noise levels. Site Plan Review and Special Use Permits will give the Town increased ability to identify and avoid or mitigate noise, odor, and lighting impacts. Zoning Design Standards include a Dark Sky Compliant lighting standard. Many intense uses that create noise or odors are not allowed under this zoning law. This zoning law provides enhanced protection from noise, odor, and lighting environmental impacts.

16. **IMPACT ON HUMAN HEALTH. NO IMPACT.** No negative impact on human health is anticipated as a result of adopting this zoning law. Enhanced regulation of land uses that may introduce pollutants, as well as specifying allowed uses appropriate to Caroline, will both enhance protection of human health. Heavy industries and others likely to adversely impact human health are not allowed.
17. **CONSISTENCY WITH COMMUNITY PLANS. NO IMPACT.** A key purpose of this zoning law is to promote the community’s vision and goals articulated in the Town’s recently updated Comprehensive Plan. The proposed zoning law does that by providing enhanced environmental protections in review of each development project, as well as by guiding future development to promote nodal development with “livable” hamlets and neighborhoods and protecting open space.
18. **CONSISTENCY WITH COMMUNITY CHARACTER. NO IMPACT.** As in previous response, the proposed zoning law is fully consistent with community character as its purpose is to preserve and enhance the Town’s community character as expressed in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. See Section F for details on community character.

In making a legally sufficient determination regarding significance, the Town Board has: (1) identified all relevant environmental impacts; (2) thoroughly analyzed these potential impacts; and (3) provided a written explanation of its reasoning in concluding that the proposed action may cause, or will not cause, significant adverse environmental impacts.

For all of the reasons noted and discussed throughout this environmental assessment form, the Town Board has determined that adoption of the proposed zoning will result in large, long-term POSITIVE impacts that will directly and indirectly benefit the entire community in Caroline. And at the same time, after careful examination and application of the criteria for determining significance set forth in the SEQRA regulations, the Town Board has not identified any significant adverse environmental impacts to flow from the proposed action. The proposed Zoning Law significantly addresses protection of the environment as a key feature. All of these environmental resources have been identified as critical and important to Caroline. The proposed action has been developed specifically to address these resources when new development occurs. Without zoning, the current tools available to the Town are limited. No action (not adopting the zoning law) would result in adverse environmental impacts because there is no ability for the Town to address uses, lot sizes and setbacks, density of development, size of buildings, intensity of uses, or scale. Subdivision and site plan is limited to evaluation of site specific impacts and do not adequately help the Town direct growth that meets community needs. Enactment of this proposed Zoning Law is anticipated to result in a positive impact on these features compared to the Town taking no action.

The Town Board’s ‘hard look’ has resulted in the determination that the proposed zoning law is an implementation of policies, programs, and strategies established by the community in 2020. The proposed zoning law addresses all the principles outlined in the 2020 Comprehensive Plan. It addresses all the natural and human-caused environmental resources identified in Caroline by establishing a comprehensive review process and implementation of development standards that will serve to eliminate or limit adverse impacts.

**NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

After reviewing the Full EAF Parts 1, 2 and 3, together with the documentation provided by the Zoning Commission and information provided by other agencies, interested parties, and the public during the review of the draft zoning, the Town Board of the Town of Caroline hereby concludes that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be required for the proposed adoption of the zoning law because this Action will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts (*see* 6 NYCRR § 617.7(a)(2)).

**Motion Carried.**

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

**Nays: None**



**Resolution 60 of 2024. Adopt Caroline Battery Energy Storage**

Motion by: Witmer                      Second: Murray

WHEREAS, the Town’s Planning Board drafted a Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) Local Law modeled after NYSERDA’s template and with input from Town fire protection personnel; and

WHEREAS, a Public Hearing was held on October 19, 2023, to hear comments on this proposed local law; and

WHEREAS, the Caroline Town Board has considered comments and recognizes that Governor Hochul assembled a Fire Safety Working Group in 2023 to study BESS and that a report is forthcoming; therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Caroline Town Board hereby adopts the Caroline Battery Energy Storage Systems Local Law, recognizing that amendment for additional fire safety measures may be warranted in the future.

**Motion Carried.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Abstain: Snow**

**Resolution 61 of 2024. Completion of 2023 Town of Caroline Annual Audit**

Motion by: Witmer                      Second: Snow

RESOLVED, the Caroline Town Board hereby affirms completion of the financial audit of the offices of the Town Court, Town Clerk, and Town Supervisor on 30 January 2024. The accounts and recording-keeping of these town offices were found to be in good order.

**Motion Carried.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Resolution 62 of 2024. Authorizing Energy Independent Caroline to vet providers for Community Solar**

Motion by: Witmer                      Second: Brown

WHEREAS, the Town of Caroline is a certified Climate Smart Community and is committed to swift transition to renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, Community Solar providers offer affordable solar energy from off-site solar arrays; therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Caroline Town Board hereby authorizes the Town’s sustainability committee, Energy Independent Caroline, to vet and make recommendations for providers for Community Solar.

**Motion Carried.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Resolution 63 of 2024. 2023 Budget Amendment**

Motion by: Witmer                      Second: Snow

RESOLVED, the Caroline Town Board hereby makes the following 2023 budget amendment:

\$4,739.00 Increase DA3089 State Aid - Ekroos Road

\$4,739.00 Increase DA5110.42 Ekroos Road

**Motion Carried.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Resolution 64 of 2024. 2023 Budget Transfers**

Motion by: Witmer                      Second: Snow

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby makes the following 2023 budget transfers:

\$1,500.00 From A1620.2 Town Hall EQ to A5010.4 Supt. of Hwys. CE

\$345.70.00 From A3510.4 Dog Control CE to 5010.4 Supt. of Hwys. CE

**Motion Carried.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Resolution 65 of 2024. Authorize pre-payment of Town Bills**

Motion by: Witmer                      Second: Kelley-Mackenzie

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board approves of the pre-payment of January bills to avoid any late fees or penalties due to the rescheduling of the Business Meeting being held on the 28th of February.

**Motion Carried.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Resolution 66 of 2024. Contract with Soil & Water Stormwater Coalition**

Motion by: Witmer                      Second: Kelley-Mackenzie

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby authorizes the Supervisor to sign the Contract Agreement with Soil & Water Stormwater Coalition.

**Motion Carried.**

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

**Nays: None**

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**Discussion of single polling place**

Supr. Witmer opened the discussion by clarifying that the Board has no authority in the decision of whether or not to close the Caroline Center Church as a polling place. This elimination is being considered by the Tompkins County Board of Elections due to several factors including the Church not being ADA compliant, the lack of cell service in Caroline Center, fewer poll workers, and alternative voting options such as early voting and absentee voting. This would leave the Brooktondale Fire Hall being the sole polling place for Town of Caroline residents. The Board was unanimously saddened to lose the polling site, but understood the reasoning given by the Board of Elections.

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**Discussion of 2024 Association of Towns Legislative Agenda**

After independent review and consideration of the proposed Resolutions set forth in Legislative Agenda, Board members took turns reading aloud the title and Resolved section of each Resolution, briefly discussing, and unanimously agreeing the approval of such by consent agenda.

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**Approval of Minutes**

The Caroline Town Board approved the Minutes of the January Business Meeting as prepared by Town Clerk, Jessie Townsend

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**Agenda Items for February Business Meeting**

Meeting will be held on Feb 28

Interview Candidates for the Review Board seat

Discussion of comments received at the Feb 14 Public Hearing on zoning

A Motion to enter Executive Session was made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Kelley-Mackenzie to discuss the Union Contract and was carried unanimously at 9:28pm. A motion to exit Executive Session and adjourn the meeting was made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Snow at 9:44pm and carried unanimously.

---Meeting Adjourned---

Respectfully Submitted,

***Jessie Townsend***