

Caroline Town Board Agenda Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2019

The Town Board Agenda meeting held on February 5, 2019 at the Caroline Town Hall was called to order at 7:09 p.m. by Supervisor Mark Witmer.

Attendance:

Mark Witmer, Supervisor
John Fracchia, Councilmember
Irene Weiser, Councilmember
Cal Snow, Councilmember
Tim Murray, Councilmember

Recording Secretary: Jessica L. Townsend, Deputy Clerk

Also present: 3 members of the public

Mr. Witmer started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Supervisor Witmer began the meeting with instructions to the Historic Town Hall's door and lock as many people have had a difficult time with the latch and lock.

Privilege-of-the-Floor

Councilmember Cal Snow, liaison to the Flag Policy Committee, passed out a draft application of the policy to all town board members.

Mike Moran – Spoke on behalf of the Flag Policy Committee. Stated he had a lot of fun being part of this committee. Enjoyed speaking with other townships that are comparable in size to Caroline such as Danby, Dryden, Groton, Locke, Moravia, all of which he reports had no flag policies in place. Finally, members met with the Town of Lansing as suggested by Town Clerk, Marilou Harrington-Lawson where they do have a flag policy in place. They were very helpful, and Mr. Moran offered a special thanks to them. Kathy Mix, another member of the committee, did a lot of the IT stuff, and in all, the members worked well together. He pointed out that one addition/change they would like to make on the application is to Amendment to #7. It reads now that “*any person or entity* who wants to fly a flag...”. He offered that language be changed to “*any resident of the town* who wants to fly a flag”. Mr. Moran filled out and offered the first application and request of the Irish-American Heritage flag to fly in observance for the month of March. His application will be held and filed in the clerk's office.

Supervisor Mark Witmer thanked Mr. Moran for serving on the committee and proposed that this discussion be on the agenda for next week's business meeting. Discussion continued regarding when there would be a vote on this and it was proposed by Councilmember Irene Weiser that the board review a list of the nationally recognized flags, make any necessary modifications, and then a possible vote at the next meeting. It was so agreed.

Bruce Murray – He has missed a few Watershed Committee Meetings, has information he'd like to forward on to the Planning Board Committee, he gave it to Supervisor Witmer to pass along. He also gave positive feedback on the LED proposal from NYPA.

Discussion of NY Power Authority LED Streetlight Proposal with Casey Maestro

Supervisor Mark Witmer introduced Casey Maestro, a representative of New York State's Power Authority to discuss the LED Street Lighting proposal to the Town of Caroline.

Mr. Maestro, the Central NY Energy Manager for the New York State Power Authority. He is happy to be here as he feels like he is in his backyard as he lives here in Caroline. states that he has worked for several years to find a solution for lighting in Tompkins County by having medium to small size municipalities work together, within the borders of the County, to aggregate together for larger single street lighting project efforts. A Project Summary and an LED Street Light Proposal for Caroline was given to board members to review. (Attachment 1) Similar proposals have been made to Moravia, Locke, Dryden, Danby, Cayuga Heights, Trumansburg, T/Lansing and many more to discuss the policy. The board members were intrigued with the proposal and anxious to move forward. The timeline depends on how soon people would sign on, if the project can get to the design phase by March, there would be no reason why we couldn't get LED's in by the end of this year. If the town board decides to move forward on this project, Mr. Maestro would recommend an Information Session, and Q&A with the public. The single design phase (approximately 80 bulbs) would take about 45 days to install.

Further discussion between board members regarding proposals. Supervisor Witmer and Councilmember Snow and Councilmember Weiser expressed their desire to move forward with NYPA. Supervisor Witmer also pointed out that the CEC money is included in the proposal and can be found on the Estimated Rebates & Incentives line in the amount of \$59,303.00.

Committee Reports

Irene Weiser, Councilmember – Aquifer Protection Committee Update; At the last meeting, CEO Brooke Greenhouse attended and was very informative. The committee will continue to review and hope to bring it forward in the next couple of months. Emergency Services; She attended last month's monthly meeting for Brooktondale and Slaterville Fire Districts. Slaterville Fire Services is struggling, they need volunteers. Attended training for fire commissioners. She spoke with Mark Butler, Esq. the attorney for Brooktondale Fire Co. about recommendations to help us get emergency services back into Slaterville. One suggestion made was to put out an RFP seeking help for fire and rescue. It was also suggested to have an attorney review the towns contracts with the fire companies and whether those contracts are sufficient or if improvements should be made.

John Fracchia, Councilmember – None

Cal Snow, Councilmember – Inquired about the insurance deductibles. He also asked when will they audit the Town Clerk books? Supervisor Witmer answered that he will recommend a Saturday morning and let the board know.

Tim Murray, Councilmember – None

Discussion of updates to Caroline Employee Handbook

405 – New Employee Orientation – This is a new section. Supervisor Witmer advocates to keep that in.

501 – Arrival at work before or after scheduled work hours – Supervisor Witmer asked if this paragraph in this section is appropriate. Councilmember Murray asked if this has been an issue before and Supervisor Witmer indicated it was not. He asked for thoughts. None given.

801 – Employee Benefits – Holiday pay and sick leave. Sick leave is proposed as a benefit to accrue without a cap. Councilmember Fracchia proposed doing the same for personal leave. Same adjustment for 606 - bereavement leave. Supervisor Witmer agreed that there should be consistency. Eligibility needs to be clarified. Working on language to include any town employee who works 30/hrs. per week or more is eligible. Supervisor Witmer will work with Rep to add language.

803 – Disclosure of Insurance Benefits – Modify this section by using the language of Resolution #29 of the Organizational Meeting for the Health Insurance language. In addition, Mr. Witmer will ask Rep for advice on wording and, also for advice on how to document that for a non-hourly employee.

608 – Family and Medical Leave Policy – This is a Federal policy and is also unpaid time-off. Councilmember Fracchia added that this may not be convenient, but ethically is the right thing to do. Supervisor Witmer agrees.

406 – Corrective Action and Discipline - Policy Statement – Councilmember Fracchia offered his thoughts that wording in this section be changed. As it states, “Any conduct that interferes with operations or that discredits the Town-will not be tolerated.” He asks that “or that discredits the Town” be taken out. Similarly, further down in the same section, as written “Offensive or unprofessional behavior that is contrary to the Town’s best interest, or any-conduct that does not warrant public trust”. He asks that “any conduct that does not warrant public trust” be removed or have that section eliminated.

407 – Civil Service Law Section 45 – Covered Employees – The first bullet point under this section, is not true and accurate and needs to be taken out.

408 – Code of Ethics – Fourth Line down reads “Pursuant to the provisions of Section 806 of the General Municipal Law, the Town Board of Caroline recognizes that there are rules of ethical conduct for Elected Officials and employees which must be observed if a high degree of moral

conduct is to be obtained...” Councilmember Fracchia again does not like that wording of this, nothing against ethical conduct, in fact he encourages it, but this to him is ill defined.

Conflict of Interest – Councilmember Irene Weiser states that wording should be added to this section regarding conflict of interest and perceived conflicts of interest, both of which need to be described and defined somewhere in this section. She adds that the City of Ithaca has great wording in their handbook and encourages mimicking that.

409 - Personnel Records – Records retention policy is defined by the state and that should be added in.

504 – Time of Reimbursement – A recommendation was made by Councilmember Fracchia to putting a timeframe on when vouchers should be submitted. It was agreed that 60 days for personnel reimbursement was plenty of time and was a good idea to put a time limit on those for keeping accounts accurate.

1105 – Reporting of Activities – Questions by Councilmember Fracchia: Is this the whistle blowing policy? Should that language be added to the title? Under consideration.

Supervisor Witmer would like more insight on the Computer/IT Section 510 and the Social Media Section 511. Councilmember John Fracchia agreed to look at those.

Resolutions

Resolution _____ of 2019 2018 Transfers

A motion made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Irene Weiser to make a transfer of the following:

Resolved, The Caroline Town Board makes the following 2018 Transfer from A Fund to SL Fund to balance SL Fund as follows:

| | |
|----------|-------------------------------------|
| \$132.67 | Increase A1990.9 Interfund Transfer |
| \$132.67 | Decrease A909 Fund Balance |
| \$132.67 | Increase SL5031 Interfund Transfer |
| \$291.41 | Increase SL5182.4 SL expenditures |
| \$158.74 | Decrease SL909 Fund Balance |

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Murray: Aye

Resolution _____ of 2019 Repeal of 2018 Encumbrance

A motion made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Irene Weiser repeals the following 2018 Encumbrance:

Resolved, The Caroline Town Board repeals the 2018 Encumbrance of \$141.55 from A3620.4

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Murray: Aye

**Resolution ____ of 2019
Repeal of 2018 Transfer**

A motion made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Irene Weiser repeals the following transfer:
Resolved, the Caroline Town Board repeals 2018 Transfer of \$438.77 from A1110.1 to A1010.1

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Murray: Aye

Discussion and agenda items for February Town Business Meeting

Flag Policy review, discussion and possible vote.

AOT Resolutions to be brought forward. Supervisor Witmer has emailed these out for the board's review.

Discussion of the handbook after Supervisor Witmer talks to Ian regarding the changes that were discussed tonight.

Supervisor Witmer will be putting forward a resolution repealing the town hall bid selection for the bioretention and grounds project.

Resolution designating EIC as Town of Caroline's Climate-Smart-Community task force.

---Adjourn the meeting ---

The meeting adjourned on a motion by Mark Witmer and seconded by Councilmember Tim Murray at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica L. Townsend, Deputy Town Clerk