

Caroline Town Board Meeting - Minutes March 5, 2013

Supervisor Don Barber called the Town Board Agenda meeting held on March 5, 2013 at the Caroline Town Hall to order at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Don Barber, Supervisor
Dominic Frongillo, Councilmember
Linda Adams, Councilmember
Aaron Snow, Councilmember
Irene Weiser, Councilmember

Recording

Secretary: Christine Wilbur, Deputy Town Clerk

No members of the public were present.

Supervisor Barber led the Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

Privilege of the Floor – no one

Interviews for Communications Support Specialist:

– Harvey Gitlin had provided a letter of interest and resume, and was chosen by the Committee to be interviewed by the Board. Mr. Gitlin provided a brief description of his background – he has lived in the Town of Caroline for 30 years and is currently working reduced hours at Unity House, and would be available to perform the duties as described. He was on the Cable Commission for City of Ithaca in 1990's and has some familiarity of public policy; he has developed his own website and is familiar with the processes involved. Ms. Weiser asked what his computer program experience included – he described what he works with currently and his ability to learn new programs.

He passed out a list of suggestions for improvements to the Caroline Website that he would recommend and discussed each item he listed.

He was asked how he might expand memberships to the Town's list serve. He spoke to Paula Younger from the County who reported about possible improvement of broadband access in the Town (but it won't be anytime soon), many people don't have access to the internet; and posters don't necessarily work; ways that could work are word of mouth, public access TV, the government channel, notices in newspapers, Tompkins Weekly, Ithaca Times, Ithaca Journal, Pat Brhel for her articles in the Ithaca Journal – but we might have to get permission from the IJ to do this. There once was a local interest to have an access station for the Town of Caroline – but there was never enough money to do that.

When asked about availability to address items that need to go up in a timely manner and transportation – Mr. Gitlin can make his own work schedule and can be available on short notice, and he has transportation.

When asked what interested him in the position –he replied that he likes to do this kind of work and would like to be a participant in his town's activities and business

- Michael Ludgate also provided a letter of interest and a resume and was invited by the Board to be interviewed for the position.

When asked what interested him in the position – he replied that he likes the work and doesn't have a day job. He currently maintains two websites of his own as well as a newsletter, a blog and a forum that

covers his interests in folk music, outdoor sports and aerobic exercise. He works with WordPress which is the program currently used for our Website. He discussed his expertise in how blogs, interactive forums and websites are put together.

When asked what kind of changes or improvements he might suggest for the Town's website - he reported that right now it's pretty "plain jane" and could have a fresh look. He looked at some other town's websites and discussed their pros and cons. Mr. Ludgate was also asked about the ease of passing off the work to others in the future – he replied that it is not difficult if not too customized.

Mr. Ludgate currently volunteers at Cornell Plantations for imaging for their website; his daytime schedule is pretty flexible to do the work needed on a timely basis and he has reliable transportation.

His suggestions on how to increase subscribers on the list serve included publishing a press release, direct mail, Brooktondale newsletter – maybe the town could purchase town announcement space, telephone chain, snail mail, ads, weekly "penny savers". The IJ circulation is way down. He suggested publishing something interesting about the town and include information on subscribing to the list serve.

Mr. Ludgate asked board members if there was ever any interest in having a Facebook page. The reply was that there has been no time to consider but maybe something the CIT Committee could consider in the future.

Board members will consider the two candidates this week, and Supervisor Barber will write a resolution leaving the name blank until a final decision is made at next week's meeting. Ms. Weiser reported that the person in this position is not the "webmaster" and that the webmaster's contract was not renewed for this year. Brightworks will maintain the day-to-day computer maintenance issues and other items previously discussed, but not website content. This is a separate piece and the process will be determined by the CIT Committee.

Reports:

Don Barber, Supervisor:

- Road Preservation Committee – 2nd forum – 25 attendees, 10 new people; 1st forum on website – 2nd is available – Ms. Weiser explained how the link works. The 3rd session is scheduled for March 21st at 7 PM – Guy Krogh will give a presentation and there will be a give and take session – he encouraged board members to attend.
- Letter from Code Officer regarding the side doors at the historic town hall - need hand rails. Students at the DeWitt Middle School are possibly going to do the work.
- Received inspection from NYMIR – fire escape – needs some work;
- Mr. Snow commented on the Code Officer's inspection report of the Historian's Room – need to move items away from the doorways.
- Mr. Barber noted the following items for the agenda next week:
 - o Request from Chamber of Commerce to sign on as applicant for a Welcome Sign for the town's border. Mr. Barber will prepare a resolution to authorize him to sign the application –there is no cost to the town;
 - o There is a need to set up an assessment committee and establish a date for assessment review - 2 names next week – one is Alan Karasin – who works with City of Ithaca, and will need one more.
 - o Association of Towns is recommending a company - Computel –who will review utility bills to discover overpayments, etc. They receive no pay unless they find something,

then they will take ½ of the findings. Need authorization to sign on with them.

- He will provide a resolution to support NYS Assembly Bill to “Require Lending Institutions to Notify local Governments” regarding foreclosed property.
- The Town Clerk will provide a resolution for consideration to urge lawmakers to stop using Records Management Reserve Funds for other purposes.
- Discuss the possibility that the Slaterville and Brooktondale voting districts may be asked to consolidate – this would be a decision of the election board, not the town. This would save about \$500 per election. This does not include Speedsville and would not change district lines.
- Contracts with the Communications Support Specialist and Brightworks for computer maintenance services.

Aaron Snow, Town Board:

- Watershed Committee met – Ms. Weiser is helping out with the audit on March 11 – she reported that preparations for the audit are going well – working with Angel, Barry, Cindy and Kevin to put together the requested documentation. There is a slight possibility that the audit could be postponed. If that should happen, Ms. Weiser is out of town for the rest of the month of March, but she can hand off the information – but both Mr. Barber and Mr. Snow should attend the audit. One item the committee identified is a need for a process for someone to report a watershed issue – ie. illegal discharge of septic, etc. There should be a point of contact or a system to be notified. A database could be developed to track and document watershed incidents that need attention. The committee will discuss and make a recommendation.
- Youth Commission – decided to have a rotating chair person – 2 months at a time – Doreen Smith for the next 2 months; working on a Middle School survey to get information on programs that could be relevant, activities and interests
 - Rec. Partnership – no report – waiting for response on someone to make a presentation to the town board.
- Mr. Snow reported that an Ag. Committee – relating to food safety and security in the Town of Caroline - will be meeting the first Wednesday of every month at 7:00 PM here at the historic town hall. The meetings are open to the public.

Dominic Frongillo, Town Board:

- Planning Board - working on feed-back regarding the site-plan review document ; thinking about updating comprehensive plan – formulate thoughts on meetings & surveys;
- Energy Indep. Caroline - Solarize program – passed out notices – issued RFP for installers who want to participate in the program; Park Foundation grant application – series of outreach meetings will be scheduled; the web site is: solarizetompkinsSE.org. Mr. Barber reported the Park Foundation Board meets on March 26th and will notify us of their decision. They could fund all or part of the grant requested. Mr. Snow asked what the grant monies will be used for. \$5,000 for advertising and \$10,000 for a paid coordinator to document the successes and failures of the program, and \$45,000 for applicant incentives.

Irene Weiser, Town Board:

- Highway report – met with Cindy – several issues – a bit of a contentious issue – Harford and Hammond Hill Rd. – a citizen is upset about the snowmobile right of way – local law that allows

the right of way – in touch with Guy Krogh about situation – still contentious; was abusive and threatening – not a good situation.

- Would like the board to address the issue of inadequate parking here at the Town Hall – danger with overflow in the street – snowplowing and general – explore possibility of expanding the parking lot. Lots of people taking the bus. Limited by septic system – may need to deal with park & ride issue – not something that we have thought about recently. Board members discussed alternative parking places.
- To Mr. Snow from Cindy through watershed committee – extreme erosion ditches along Buffalo Rd. near Rt. 79 – need to look at how to address the issue. Mr. Barber discussed some of the history of whether it is a road issue or water issue.
- Cindy is reporting that 4 or 5 full time staff members are approaching retirement age – need to think about how to replace staff and looking at overlaps for training. This would need to be done through budget process
- Ms. Weiser will stay involved with watershed issues – but Mr. Snow is the official committee member.
- Aquifer Prot. Comm. - met today with Cindy Shulte of the Health Dept. to speak of the role of the department in ground water quality, water testing, and septic system items. Water testing in regard to water in both town hall buildings being public facilities as well as legal issues regarding the artisan well out front which is different in terms of it being an unregulated outflow – should testing (or non-testing) information be posted? The Town Attorney needs to be contacted regarding potential liability. Board members discussed their recollections of this issue from 2010 and will discuss it more at future meetings.
- Some ideas were discussed about Code Officer training for septic systems – board might support if money not in his budget;
- CIT Committee – A long discussion (with misunderstandings and disagreements) followed regarding how much money is in the budget for computer services as it relates to the Brightworks contract. Before the contract is signed, the company needs to be aware of the budget limitations and have some type of pre-approval process and accounting system of monies spent. Board members also discussed prioritizing work that needs to be done, as well as defining hardware, software and maintenance issues. Mr. Barber will come up with some language for a resolution to be considered next week.

Ms. Weiser also reported that Tompkins County has been using an electronic records mgt. system and has a shared services grant that will include the Town of Caroline – the first phase is to digitize meeting minutes and building permits.

Linda Adams, Town Board:

- Will not be at next week's meeting – she will be on vacation.

Approval of Minutes:

Resolution 66 of 2013 – Minutes of Agenda Meeting held on February 5, 2013:

A motion was made by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mr. Frongillo to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2013 as submitted by the Deputy Town Clerk. Mr. Barber asked to have the spelling corrected for a person that was in the audience: Dan Klein.

Adopted: Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Aye; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Mr. Frongillo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Weiser. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Wilbur, Deputy Town Clerk