

**Town of Caroline
Town Board Meeting
Tuesday, August 5, 2014**

Present: Don Barber, Supervisor; Irene Weiser, Tim Seely, John Fracchia, and Mark Witmer; Paulette Terwilliger, Clerk

Mr. Barber opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m. and led the group in the pledge of allegiance.

Committee Reports (Attachments)

Mark Whitmere

Mr. Whitmere reviewed his written report, and

EIC Energy Independent Caroline was postponed and he attended a Solarize Tompkins Meeting instead. He reported that he is talking with Kevin about permitting issues and hopes to bring this as a topic next month for discussion and setting a resolution.

Planning Board – Attended the meeting in advance of the Public Hearing regarding the Site Plan Review – Discussion on getting the word out to all residents that this is happening and get input from everyone. Direct mailings were discussed and how to reach everyone. Don held a first meeting that was well attended.

Survey Work – Numerous attempts have been made to contact two problem properties with no success. Mr. Krogh has stated that we have done our due diligence and can start a process for a type of eminent domain to allow the work to start. We can go in and survey now.

John Fracchia

Mr. Fracchia reviewed his written report, and

EMS – Compiling statistics with the hope to educate ourselves and residents on what this would cost if we actually had to contract for the volunteer services we receive which he estimated at around \$300,000 a year.

Also talked about communication between Codes and EMS regarding safety issues in both directions as well as inspections for community or public meeting buildings.

Irene Weiser

Ms. Weiser reviewed her written report, and

New email system will be installed shortly and she will be contacting board members to set up a date and time.

Tim Seely

Cemeteries – The Town has 23 cemeteries and some are being taken care of by associations or friends of, etc. but some are not being taken care of and it falls to the Town. Will report at a future meeting on the status of them all.

Don Barber

Discussed the Clarity Connect Contract and setting a public hearing regarding overriding the tax cap. Both resolutions should be ready for presentation at the next meeting.

Proposals on Chestnut Road repairs of Stormwater issues prepared by TG Miller were discussed. Both are approximately the same price; one would be to lower the culvert and dig it out and the other is to extend the sluice pipe significantly. The Board seemed to agree that the option to extend the sluice pipe and manhole option would last longer than redoing what has been done in the past.

Budget Discussion with Cindy Whitaker, Highway Superintendent

Mr. Barber explained that he has asked department heads to start thinking about a 5-year projection of budget needs. The Town has been using its Fund Balance to offset tax increases and we can't continue to do that or it will be gone. We need a realistic estimate on our budget for the next 5 years.

Ms. Whitaker reported that the Grader has just broken and she can not find replacement parts. It seems that this particular year and model is not good and parts are no longer being made. This was not foreseen and a new Grader is \$300K

Trucks/dump trucks – We need to get back on the replacement schedule because when we have done that, we get excellent money at trade in and essentially get back almost what we paid for them. The equipment line needs to go back up.

Paving – The roads took a beating this year due to the weather. The upfront money is huge for paving a road but she would like the Board to start considering prioritizing some roads for paving. The Town has a lot of gravel and dirt roads and it is harder and harder to maintain them as the increase in traffic and heavy load traffic happens on roads that were not built to that standard. She gave examples of roads that were originally almost driveways but are now roads to a number of houses.

Staffing – Administrative; she needs an assistant. She reported that she went through the Civil Service process last year but everyone is distant and it is hard to fill because it is part time with no benefits. No one wants to work for that. She needs someone relatively local because during a storm event, that person needs to be there.

She added that she is getting dinged by inspectors because she can't keep up with the paperwork and that in turn will cause our insurance to go up.

Staffing – Operators; She reported that there are 3 people retiring in the next 2 years and she is understaffed as it is. Unlike many Superintendents, she works out in the field more often than not because she is needed. She can't keep up the pace. We also have to look at succession planning because new hires need a lot of training so for a year or two it might seem like we are “heavy” but then the retirements will happen. We need staff now, at least 1.5 but ideally 3 to start training for replacing retirees.

The Board talked about the existing building and the gravel pit and ways to use both. The department could use whatever gravel is produced, that's not the problem; the problem is we don't have staff to man it. The building needs repairs; it is an icebox in the winter and too small for administrative tasks. Ms. Whitaker thought it could be remodeled and expanded in its current location.

Ms. Whitaker would like a computerized system for gas purchases. She does it all by hand right now and it is too time consuming and no one else would ever agree to continue doing it.

Ms. Whitaker stated that in her mind, erosion is the number one problem her department has to deal with. It de-stabilizes roads and requires hundreds of manhours to maintain and fix the affects all over town from different causes.

Mr. Barber summarized the take-aways from the discussion as:

- Equipment line needs to be increased
- Labor needs to be increased to plan for succession
- Site Plan design needs to happen for the PW building
- Talk to the County about their gravel pit to see if it is worthwhile having someone there
- Prioritize roads for gravel to pavement
- Erosion is a major problem because it affects the roads

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by

Paulette Terwilliger
Clerk

Committee and Liaison Report
August 2014
John Fracchia, Councilmember

Emergency Services

FD Coverage Map Project:

- Made rough sketch of boundaries of Fire Protection District based on descriptions from contracts.
- Contacted Brian Turk, Brooktondale Fire District, to request information about district boundaries as part of project to update county maps. Received information.
- Contact county to inquire about digital copy of map. Responded to by Brian Wilbur who indicated that Brooktondale and Speedsville Fire Chiefs met with him in 2012 and came to consensus re: coverage areas. Slaterville did not. We believe that with the data provided by the chiefs and that in the FPD contracts, the remainder will belong to Slaterville. Will work with Brian to complete this project.

Volunteer Shortage Project:

- Contacted Tompkins County Department of Emergency Response to inquire about availability of call data for town fire and ambulance service providers. Received response from Brian Wilbur and requested 3 years worth of call data for Caroline EMS squads and mutual aid calls within Caroline.
- Received data from Brian Wilbur and have compiled it into a spreadsheet (attached). Am in the process of analyzing the data to look for trends and opportunities.
- Wrote to John D'Allesandro, Deputy Volunteer Coordinator at the Fire Association of the State of New York about their Tuition Reimbursement Program for 2014. No response as this is written.
- Explored cost of EMT course at TCC. Current price is \$690/semester.

EMS/Code Enforcement - Joint Areas of Concern:

- Contacted Kevin McMahon to arrange a meeting to discuss the topics of unoccupied properties and schedule for inspection of public meeting spaces. Met with Kevin on July 17 and came to a verbal consensus on processes to address challenges. Kevin is currently reviewing the summary document.

Inspection of properties where the public can gather is challenging given the volume of permits and the part-time nature of the position. Discussed the possibility of talking with Town Council to request funds for hiring a short-term assistant. Would likely be a 3-week project with approximately 20 structures requiring inspection.

Emergency Preparedness

- Wrote to Shelley Bierwiler, Community Executive for Southern Tier American Red Cross, no response.

Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium

- Reviewed proposed contract for Executive Director services and submitted feedback.

Additional Projects

HOME Rehabilitation Grants

- Received word from Christine Carreiro that most recent applicants have decided not to move forward with their grant application as homeowner felt that he could do the work more cost effectively than the estimates he received and did not like the grant provision that requires a five year lean on the house (to ensure flood insurance coverage).

Beautification Grant

- Received a copy of the previous beautification plan that was considered when the new town hall was built. Am currently reviewing the document.

CIT Committee

- Met with CIT committee to discuss Microsoft 365. Drafting resolution with Councilmember Weiser to recommend moving forward with the project.

August Committee Report, Mark Witmer

Planning Board, 10 July (Chad Novelli, Lois Lounsbery, Ed Wurtz), 6:30-8:40 pm:

- Don gave presentation on “World Cafe” process of fostering discussion of town planning among citizens
- Planning Board proposed the following process for updating the CP:
 1. Issue public notice of update of CP outlining past accomplishments and seeking input
 2. Send out survey in fall, with input from Town Board
 3. With results of survey, plan one or more World Cafe events
 4. World Cafe results will then be used to develop the revised CP

Action Items:

- Ed will talk to Joan Jurkovich at TC planning about resources for updating the CP
- Ed will talk to Irene about best ways to send information to town (listserve, newsletter, bulk mail...)
- Chad will look into hiring an intern to help the PB.

Watershed Committee, 15 July (Chris Payne, Jackie Cassaniti, Barry Goodrich, Mark Witmer)

Discussed progress in getting permissions of Buffalo Road properties. Lehman properties are posing difficulties in making contact and getting cooperation from Paul Lehman. Forms were left with his daughter. Properties are now all apparently abandoned. (At Don’s recommendation, I emailed Guy Krogh about next steps. Two important points. First, town’s have authority to trespass respectfully for survey work after making good attempts at notice to owners and renters. We have given notice and can proceed with survey work. Second, we can employ Eminent Domain process, simple procedure to enable authority to make modifications to stream.

Barry led a discussion of water challenges at WoodThrush Lane. Sheet flow from Bald Hill.

Energy Independent Caroline: did not meet this month. Solar Tompkins in progress.

Town of Caroline
July Committee Reports
Irene Weiser
Aug 5, 2014

Aquifer Protection Committee – Met with Steve Winkley – reviewed maps showing ag districts and state land and map showing a variety of land uses. (forestry, residential, commercial, etc) Discussed applicability of Aquifer Protection Law to ag districts vs land in ag districts that is used for ag purposes. Steve developed a water well survey that he would like distributed to Town residents to better assess water quality and water quantity issues in different regions of the town. Made plans for educational forums – Thurs Sept 25, Tues Oct 21, 7pm. First session will be “groundwater 101” with tie in to Caroline specifics. Part 2 will be on threats to groundwater quality and quantity and how to protect. Steve will try to get Nitrate test kits for testing water samples when people attend the forums. Goal is to have draft Aquifer Protection Plan by end of year, final by end of March 2015.

Communication, Information and Technology Committee - determined a vendor to work with for installing Office 365. Plan to move to hire installer at August meeting, install new system by Sept. if vendor is available to do so. Will need to coordinate with board members and staff for installation.