

## **Caroline Town Board Meeting Minutes of October 5, 2021**

The Town Board Agenda Meeting of October 5, 2021, was held electronically via zoom teleconference and was called to order by Supervisor Witmer at 7:19 p.m.

### **Attendance:**

Supervisor Mark Witmer  
Councilmember John Fracchia  
Councilmember Tim Murray - Absent  
Councilmember Cal Snow  
Councilmember Katherine Goldberg

### **Recording Secretary:**

Jessica L. Townsend, Town Clerk

**Also Present:** 2 members of the public via zoom

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### **Additions or Deletions of Agenda**

Supr. Witmer added discussion regarding an email from a resident that was circulated to the board concerning a project on Middaugh Rd.

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### **Privilege-of-the-Floor**

Janice Burton – Happy to see everyone.

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### **Committee Reports**

**Councilmember Fracchia** – Highway Barn – Highway Committee met with Laberge last week. A Preliminary Report should be coming in the next week or two. John will ask Laberge to join a board meeting for a Q&A. Supr. Witmer thanked John for his letter to Tompkins County Legislature urging for support of the broadband initiative in Caroline.

**Councilmember Snow** – Cemeteries – Discussed gravel and other small items that are needed in some cemeteries in town. Hwy. Supt. Spencer said that he was asked to help truck some gravel from the gravel pit to one cemetery in town. This is something that is not done often but was not paid for by the town, only helped with the transport. Discussion on a policy regarding matters like this may be needed for future situations as this.

**Councilmember Goldberg** – None

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### **Approval of Funding for Dry Hydrant Installation on McGrath Road**

#### **Resolution 131 of 2021. Approval of Town Funds for Dry Hydrant Project**

A motion made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Snow

Whereas, the Town's volunteer fire companies depend on surface waters for water supply during fire emergencies; and

Whereas, there is a need for additional sources of available surface water for fire-fighting in the Town;  
and

Whereas, "dry hydrants" are simple hydrants that provide access to surface waters throughout the year;  
and

Whereas, Speedsville Volunteer Fire Company is collaborating with Mr. Jonathan Fairbanks for installation of a dry hydrant on his pond on McGrath Road; and

Whereas, the Caroline Highway Department has committed to install the driveway culvert and prepare the driveway access; and

Whereas, Speedsville Volunteer Fire Company has developed a project proposal for parts and construction in the amount of \$1,677; therefore be it

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby commits funds to support this project, not to exceed \$2,000.

**Passed:** Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Snow: Aye; Murray: Absent; Goldberg: Aye

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### **Presentation of 2022 Tentative Budget**

Supr. Witmer presented the 2022 Tentative Budget. You can find it on the website or here: [http://www.townofcaroline.org/uploads/6/2/7/8/62781479/tentative\\_budget\\_2022.pdf](http://www.townofcaroline.org/uploads/6/2/7/8/62781479/tentative_budget_2022.pdf)

### **Budget Workshop #1**

Supr. Witmer had some technical issues in sharing his preparation of documents that correlate with the budget. He did his best talking through the department lines and shared his analysis of how he came to such modifications, where noted. He will get his presentation sorted out and will pass that information to board members for their review ahead of next week's business meeting, where a second budget workshop will take place.

Notably, the tax levy will 1.77%. That is 1% below tax cap. No fund balance will be used to offset the levy.

### **Highway Budget**

Bob presented a [2022 proposal](#) for the highway department. He found that A5010.101 – clerical, had been lowered from \$19,000 to \$15,000. He asks that the line be kept where its at to allow a 20 hours per week position.

Bob also noted that the town hall equipment line was increased from \$5,500 to \$15,000. Supt. Witmer explained that this was increased for a town lawn mower and storage shed. The mower would be used for town grounds and cemeteries. Bob shared concerned with purchasing an electric mower to do cemeteries, because of the hills.

Bob went through the highway equipment line (page 3 of his presentation) and outlined a 15-year proposal, which includes new replacement equipment (shown in red), installment payments for financing the equipment (shown in black), the expected revenue from the sale of the replaced equipment and what the annual cost will be for doing it this way. Moving forward, he notes that the average yearly cost for this line is \$164,000. For the 2022 budget, he is asking for the equipment line to be set at \$202,000 in order to maintain the schedule he set forward. He also noted that he would like to purchase an excavator sometime in the future. The cost is not included in his 15-year plan but would need to be fit in somewhere. He is focusing on an installment payment option and rotation, rather than saving and spending it all at once.

**Bioretention Feature at the Town Hall:** Bob spoke to the board about this because he was not present during last month's discussion on this. He is opposed to a bioretention pond at the Town Hall because there isn't a huge water issue currently. He said that the parking lot project last year was designed to pitch the water to the storm drain, specially so the water wouldn't be an issue on the grounds anymore. Resident Barry Goodrich, who was present at the meeting, also spoke and agreed with Bob that there was not a water issue at the Town Hall. After a long discussion, Supr. Witmer and Clm. Snow decided that

there are retention ponds at other locations and would like to observe a few, with different features, and come together again to discuss and decide if this project makes sense here or not.

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**Approval of Minutes**

The Business Meeting Minutes of September 15, 2021, as submitted by Town Clerk, Jessica Townsend was unanimously approved.

**Discussion on Middaugh Rd Complaint**

A resident had concerns about a project located on Middaugh Rd that had a Stop Work Order in place. Worried that there was some kind of land disturbance at the location and notified town board members of such. Supr. Witmer updated board members that Code Officer, Cory Williams is aware of this and will be working with the landowner to resolve this.

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**Agenda Items for October 13 Business Meeting**

Resolution authorizing Supr. to sign Dog Control Contract

Resolution and discussion on HRA Account

Budget Workshop #2

Clm. Snow to report on a water test at Town Hall and Highway Dept.

A motion to adjourn made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Snow at 9:48 p.m. and carried unanimously.

**----Adjourn the meeting ----**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica L. Townsend, Town Clerk