

Caroline Town Board Public Hearings and Business Meeting Minutes of November 15, 2023

The Town Board Public Hearings on the 2024 Caroline Preliminary Budget and Business Meeting was held hybrid at the Caroline Town Hall and was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Supr. Witmer

Attendance:

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

Also Present:

Recording Secretary:

Jessie Townsend, Town Clerk

Public Present: 6 **Zoom:** 2

Supv. Witmer opened the meeting with a Pledge to the Flag.

PUBLIC HEARINGS on 2024 Caroline Preliminary Budget

Supv. Witmer gave a brief presentation summarizing numerous account lines in the preliminary budget and the changes made thereto. He also outlined the anticipated expenditures and the variety of projects coming in 2024, including the Historic Town Hall, new Highway Facilities, Broadband and Emergency Services. Lastly, he shared details of the different metrics used to stay below the tax cap.

Public Hearing on the 2024 Caroline Town General and Highway Budget

No public comment – closed at 7:20PM

Public Hearing on the 2024 Caroline Fire Protection District Budget

Supr. Witmer shared that the Brooktondale budget remained flat. Speedsville had a significant increase of 18%, noting their need to purchase a new truck in 2024. Slaterville contracts independently which results in receiving funding from other resources and therefore has no impact on the town budget.

No comment – closed at 7:22PM

Public Hearing on the 2024 Caroline Lighting District Budget

Brief description by Supr. Witmer regarding the overall cost savings as a result from purchasing the streetlights.

No comment – closed at 7:24PM

This concluded the Public Hearings on the 2024 Caroline Preliminary Budgets. Supr. Witmer closed the Public Hearings at 7:25PM

Privilege-of-the-Floor

Matt Mix – Shared a medical situation he had recently. He explained how dire it is to have emergency personnel in the town. He understands the ongoing work with the County to implement a shared service for this, but urged the Board not to wait until that Plan is in place and strategize how to remedy this now.

Committee Reports

Supr. Mark Witmer – Supr. Witmer provided the following:

- The Speedsville Community Center will host an informational meeting with Egg Geothermal about the Speedsville Thermal Network Feasibility Study on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 7 pm at the Speedsville Community Center and by Zoom (use Town Zoom invitation on town website home page).
- Attended presentation on CloudPermit, a cloud-based system for managing building code and zoning applications, that we are considering.
- New York State Deferred Compensation Plan is offering an additional benefit for voluntary ROTH IRA contributions by employees, beginning January 1, 2024. I recommend that we approve this offer.
- DWSP2 group is beginning work on stormwater considerations for large solar projects. We will be meeting soon to begin discussions.
- Attended round table hosted by Assemblymember Anna Kelles on the companion bills for a CHIPS-style state funding model to support municipal emergency response. Will offer a supporting resolution at the December business meeting.
- Attended Speedsville Volunteer Fire Company’s November 13 meeting. Their budget increase for 2024 is for increased repairs of a truck and capital planning for impending replacement of this truck. Speedsville Volunteer Fire Company meets on second Monday of each month at 7 pm. Slaterville Fire District meets on the first Monday of each month at 7 pm. Brooktondale Fire District meets on the third Monday of each month at 7 pm. Meetings are at the fire halls.
- Received Highway Facilities Project Report from LaBella. Recommend that we schedule a special meeting to review the document with LaBella.

Code Officer, Cliff Babson – Submitted a Report to the Board for their review, a copy of which has been filed with the Clerk in Town Correspondence.

Town Clerk, Jessie Townsend – The Clerk’s Office will be closed next Wednesday, November 22, 2023. Preparation for tax season officially begins in the last days of November. Tax collection information will be posted on the town website sometime mid-December. The Clerk’s Report of fees collected in October included: 3 Hunting Licenses, 1 Impoundment, 42 Dog Renewals, and 10 Building Permits, and such Report has been submitted to the Supervisor, along with the payment of \$1,119.73.

Clm. Kate Kelley-Mackenzie – ITC meeting next week.

Clm. Murray – Zoning Law - Town Attorney is currently revising the administrative section of the draft law. He is hoping to receive it after the Thanksgiving holiday. After that, they should be close to having a final draft in place.

Discussion of draft zoning law

Reviewed and discussed the Schedule of Uses in Article IV of the draft law after receiving advice from the Attorney related to Special Use Permits (SUP) vs. Site Plan Review (SPR). The following Uses were set as follows:

SUP	SPR
Event Facilities	Multifamily Dwelling w/ 5+ Units
Industrial Use/Light	Auction House
Junk, Scrap or Salvage Yard	Farm Brewery, Farm Winery, Farm Cidery or Farm Distillery

Retreat Center	Campground
Sawmill, Commercial	Commercial Kennels
	Food & Beverage
	Fuel/Gas Station
	Electric Vehicle Stations
	Funeral Home
	Hunting
	Mine
	Mixed Use Buildings
	Nursing Home
	Self-Storage
	Slaughterhouse (Abattoir)
	Solar Energy Facility
	Vehicle body Repair Shop
	Vet Clinic

Two other Uses that vary in allowance within Districts were also set as follows:

Brewery, Winery, Cidery or Distillery – P in Ag/Rural and Focused Commercial; X in Besemer, W. Slaterville and Center Bdale; SPR in Slaterville, Caroline Center/Caroline/Speedsville and Bdale.
Commercial Recreation Facility, Outdoor – X in Besemer, W. Slaterville, Bdale and Center Bdale; SPR in Ag/Rural, Slaterville, Caroline Center/Caroline/Speedsville and Focused Commercial.

Further discussion regarding editing language resulted in removing the following:

- Article V Section 5.3.G.4. – remove b (septic systems)
- Article VI Section 6.3.B.1 – remove second sentence.

Resolutions

Resolution 122 of 2023. Approval of Changes to the Draft Zoning Law

Motion by: Murray Second: Witmer

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board agrees to a Consent Agenda to approve the changes made to the Draft Zoning Law as outlined above.

Motion carried.

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

Nays: None

Resolution 123 of 2023. Amend the Preliminary Budget

Motion by: Witmer Second: Murray

Discussion: Supr. Witmer proposed making a minor adjustment to the Preliminary Budget by further reducing fund balance in order to help offset the levy.

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board agrees to reduce the amount of (A) Fund Balance to offset the levy by \$7,500.

Motion carried.

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

Nays: None

Resolution 124 of 2023. Adopt 2024 Caroline Town Budgets

Motion by: Witmer Second: Brown

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby adopts the 2024 Caroline Town General and Highway Budget, the Caroline Fire Protection District Budget, and the Caroline Lighting District

Motion carried.

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

Nays: None

Resolution 125 of 2023. Approve the 2024 NYS Deferred Compensation ROTH IRA Benefit

Motion by: Witmer Second: Murray

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board agrees to approve the additional benefit for voluntary ROTH IRA contributions by employees, as offered by the New York State Deferred Compensation Plan beginning January 1, 2024

Motion carried.

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

Nays: None

Resolution 126 of 2023. Budget Amendments

Motion by: Witmer Second: Brown

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby makes the following budget amendments:

- \$11,440.00 Increase A8989.42 Home & Community Services - Broadband (exp.)
Increase A2389.1 Home & Community Services - Broadband (rev.)
- \$33,788.20 Increase A7140.1 Youth Summer Employment (exp.)
Increase A3820 Youth Programs (rev.)
- \$176,650 Increase DA5112.2 Improvements - Hwy. Capital Outlay (exp.)
Increase DA3501 CHIPs - Consolidated Hwy. Imp. Program (rev.)
- \$4,739 Increase DA5110.42 Gen. Repairs - Ekroos Culvert Project (exp.)
Increase DA3089 State Aid - Ekroos Culvert Project (rev.)

Resolution 127 of 2023. Budget Transfers

Motion by: Witmer Second: Murray

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

(PS = Personnel Services, CE = Contractual, EQ = Equipment)

- \$500 From A1410.2 Town Clerk EQ To A1410.4 Town Clerk CE
- \$100 From A1010.4 Town Board CE To A1410.4 Town Clerk CE
- \$3,100 From A1990.4 Contingency To A1420.4 Legal CE
- \$90 From A1220.4 Supervisor CE To A1480.4 Public Information
- \$1,200 From A1620.4 Town Hall CE To A1620.41 Town Hall IT CE
- \$400 From A7510.2 Historian EQ To A7510.4 Historian CE

November Business Meeting – Recorded and Posted on Town Website

\$340	From A8989.4 Comm. Service CE	To A8810.4 Cemeteries
\$2,350	From A1990.4 Contingency	To A9060.8 Medical Insurance
\$20,511	From DA5142.1 Snow Removal PS	To DA5110.1 Gen. Repairs PS
\$4,600	From DA5112.1 Improvements PS	To DA5130.1 Machinery PS

Motion carried.

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

Nays: None

Resolution 128 2023. Approval of Payment of Town Bills

Motion by: Witmer Second: Brown

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board approves payment of audited vouchers for the General (A) Fund, Highway (DA) Fund and Streetlighting (SL) Fund as follows:

A Fund:	\$33,765.28
DA Fund:	\$198,608.38
SL Fund:	\$545.41

Motion carried.

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

Nays: None

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Murray and carried unanimously at 9:38PM.

---**Meeting Adjourned**---

Respectfully Submitted,
Jessie Townsend, Town Clerk