

### Caroline Town Board Meeting Minutes of May 17, 2023

The Town Board Business Meeting was held hybrid at the Caroline Town Hall on May 17, 2023, and was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Supr. Witmer

**Attendance:**

Supervisor Mark Witmer  
Councilmember Cal Snow  
Councilmember Tim Murray  
Councilmember Katherine Goldberg  
Councilmember Kate Kelley-Mackenzie

**Recording Secretary:**

Jessie Townsend, Town Clerk

**Public Present:** 6 **Zoom:** 9

Supr. Witmer opened the meeting with Pledge to the Flag.

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**Privilege-of-the-Floor**

*Julie Hanson* – Spoke in favor of zoning and encouraged the Board to adopt the law. Caroline is a gateway from New York City to the County. Zoning will help protect what is here.

*Bruce Murray* – Read correspondence between NYSDEC Representative and a Zoning Commission member regarding protected streams and the regulations thereof. Encouraged the Board to meet with DEC Representatives in order to have a clear understanding of what restrictions are already in place before making a final decision on the water overlay.

*Pete Hoyt* – Does not agree that Caroline is a gateway town.

*Ellen Harrison* – Shared concern that the volunteer members of the Zoning Commission and the hired Professional Planner are being discredited by the public. Heard comments at the last meeting that diminished their work. Asked the Board to think about what their role is in the zoning process. They tasked a Commission to do this work and now it's their responsibility to move this to completion.

*Kathryn Seely* – Shared her gratitude for the Commission members and supports zoning.

*Bob Reminick* – Has been following the work of zoning. The Board has heard a lot of opposition but that doesn't mean that there are no supporters. Encouraged supporters to come forward and voice their backing of this law. As densities grow, the town will need these laws to protect what is here.

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**Report from Monika Roth, Ag Planner**

42 people came to the April 6<sup>th</sup> event. Received a lot of good information from the event and from the surveys that were returned. There are 28 properties here that receive farm/ag exemptions, totaling approximately 2500 acres. Some concerns shared were on land use, including zoning, taxes, suburbanites, and food sovereignty. Popular interests expressed were agritourism, equine, and local marketing tools. Goals include establishing channels for marketing and selling local products, building local food production, facilitating farmer community-building and collaboration, and promoting new enterprises, creative ideas and sound practices for farmers. Residents are encouraged to complete the survey (can be found on the website) and give input as they continue to collect data surrounding agriculture and farming in town.

**Resolution 82 of 2023. Authorize Supervisor to sign Memorandum of Agreement with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County for development of Caroline Agricultural Plan.**

Motion by: Witmer      Second: Goldberg

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby authorizes the Supervisor to sign a contract with Cornell Cooperative Extension for development of Caroline Agricultural Plan.

**Motion carried.**

**Ayes: Witmer, Snow, Murray, Goldberg, Kelley-Mackenzie**

**Nays: None**

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**Committee Reports**

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

- Working with Code Officer Babson, Town of Danby, and Tompkins County IT to correct addressing problems on DePutron Hollow Road.
- Subcommittee completed update of TCCOG Bylaws for consideration at 25 May meeting.
- Clm. Kelley-Mackenzie and I are meeting biweekly with Ryan Garrison on the broadband feasibility study. A brief broadband survey is now posted on the town website and will also be mailed with the next town newsletter. Please conduct your own speed test and complete the survey!
- Code Officer Babson submitted report on last month of building permit activity.
- Working on contract document with LaBella.

**Town Clerk, Jessie Townsend** – April Collection Reporting as follows: 4 fishing licenses, 27 dog license renewals, 6 building permit fees and 1 marriage transcript. Submitted Report to Supr. Witmer on 5/3 along with check #301 for \$951.42. Office Hours - Interested in receiving feedback regarding closing the office to the public on Wednesdays during the summer months (June-August). Is considering this change for reasons including weekly board meetings. These meetings consist of thoughtful discussions by both the town board and the public. Detailed Minutes are intensively thoughtful and time-consuming. Interruptions can be difficult when constructing. If this change is found to be a burden to the public, then the need to hire an assistant will be required.

**Clm. Kate Kelley-Mackenzie** – Continues meeting with County Municipalities on broadband funding opportunities.

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**Discussion of Proposed Zoning Law**

Water overlay – Clarified that the intent of creating the overlay was to combine the flood zones, DEC wetlands and riparian buffers into one. Any building in a floodplain would automatically trigger the Flood Damage and Protection Law in place, so what they need to determine is if additional buffers are needed. The Zoning Commission gave a recommendation to have an additional buffer, specifically, an inner buffer of 50' and an outer buffer of 50' (100 feet total). Continued discussing whether to combine the overlay with the existing Flood Law. Need to check with Nan (Planner) if the Flood Law should be entered into draft law or to remain separate laws. Contemplated setting one uniform buffer area rather than having an inner and outer. The buffers can be set differently in each district. After receiving public input from residents along the creek in Slaterville and Brooktondale, one recommendation was that the buffers be set lower in those areas, possibly 35' and then set higher in the Ag district, 50'-100'+. The members agreed to consider this and be prepared to have a decision at the next scheduled meeting. They will then move forward and focus on the Uses and Dimensions. Lastly, in order to make good progress, the zoning discussions are set to be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays from 5:00PM – 7:00PM.

**Resolution 83 of 2023. Designating May 21-27 as Emergency Medical Services Week**

Motion by: Witmer     Second: Murray

WHEREAS, emergency medical services is a vital public service; and

WHEREAS, the members of emergency medical services teams are ready to provide life-saving care to those in need 24 hours a day, seven days a week; and

WHEREAS, access to quality emergency care dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those who experience sudden illness or injury; and

WHEREAS, emergency medical services has grown to fill a gap by providing important, out-of-hospital care, including preventative medicine, follow-up care, and access to telemedicine; and

WHEREAS, the emergency medical services system consists of first responders, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, emergency medical dispatchers, firefighters, police officers, educators, administrators, pre-hospital nurses, emergency nurses, emergency physicians, trained members of the public, and other out-of-hospital medical care providers; and

WHEREAS, the members of emergency medical services teams, whether career or volunteer, engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance their life-saving skills; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to recognize the value and the accomplishments of emergency medical services providers by designating Emergency Medical Services Week; therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Caroline Town Board hereby proclaims the week of May 21 - 27, 2023, as *Emergency Medical Services Week*.

**Motion carried.**

**Ayes: Witmer, Snow, Murray, Goldberg, Kelley-Mackenzie**

**Nays: None**

**Resolution 84 of 2023. Designating May 24 as Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Day**

Motion by: Witmer     Second: Goldberg

WHEREAS, millions of children receive emergency medical care each year due to illness or injury; and

WHEREAS, the needs of children are different than the needs of adults in medical emergencies; and

WHEREAS, the goal of Emergency Medical Services for Children is to help states and communities prepare for an emergency involving a child through the provision of pediatric-ready emergency departments and emergency medical services (EMS) agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Emergency Medical Services for Children Program supports research and improvement science to drive transformation of emergency care systems; and

WHEREAS, Emergency Medical Services for Children relies on its established partnership within the EMS community, as well as multidisciplinary teams of healthcare providers across the emergency care continuum to help states and communities reduce child and youth disability and death due to severe illness or injury; and

WHEREAS, Emergency Medical Services for Children, the tens of thousands of prehospital and hospital-based clinicians and families it serves, and the professional organizations and federal agencies in which it partners are committed to ensure the delivery of high-quality of emergency care children; and

WHEREAS, it is proper and timely to bring recognition to the value and accomplishments of Emergency Medical Services for Children and the dedicated personnel who work tirelessly to improve the delivery of pediatric care across emergency care systems; therefore be it

May Business Meeting – Recorded and Posted on Town Website

RESOLVED, the Caroline Town Board hereby proclaims May 24, 2023, as *Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Day*.

**Motion carried.**

**Ayes: Witmer, Snow, Murray, Goldberg, Kelley-Mackenzie**

**Nays: None**

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**Resolution 85 of 2023. Update of employee health insurance terms for the Employee Handbook.**

Motion by: Witmer      Second: Snow

RESOLVED, the following health insurance policy changes shall be incorporated into the Town’s Employee Handbook.

1. Section 806 - Medical Insurance, Eligibility, Elected Officials, paragraph 1: The Town will make available medical insurance coverage to each Full-time Elected Official. For purposes of this section, “Full-time Elected Official” shall be defined as the Town Supervisor, Town Clerk, and Superintendent of Highways, provided they continuously work a minimum of thirty hours per week (from Resolution #31 of 2023).
2. Section 806 - Medical Insurance, Health Reimbursement Arrangement: Employees and officials currently covered by the Town’s health insurance may continue with a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) funded annually at 100% of the Out-of-Pocket maximum (OOPmax) or they may switch to a Health Savings Account (HSA) funded at 100% of the OOPmax for two years, then 50% OOPmax thereafter. This is a one-time irreversible option that must be made at the start of the year. New employees and officials eligible for the Town’s health insurance are eligible for an HSA funded at 100% OOPmax for the first 12 months, then 50% OOPmax annually thereafter (from Resolution #128 of 2022).

**Motion carried.**

**Ayes: Witmer, Snow, Murray, Goldberg, Kelley-Mackenzie**

**Nays: None**

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**Resolution 86 of 2023. Approval of Vouchers for Payment of Town Bills**

Motion by: Witmer      Second: Snow

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board approves payment of vouchers for bills in the amounts of \$20,175.22 for the General Fund, \$71,549.76 for the Highway Fund, and \$44,225.90 for the Streetlight Fund.

**Motion carried.**

**Ayes: Witmer, Snow, Murray, Goldberg, Kelley-Mackenzie**

**Nays: None**

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**Approval of Minutes**

The Caroline Town Board approved the Minutes of May 3, 2023, as submitted by Clerk Townsend

A motion to enter Executive Session was made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Murray at 8:57PM to discuss personnel compensation and ended at 9:12PM. A motion to exit Executive Session and adjourn the meeting was made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Goldberg and carried unanimously at 9:13PM.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessie Townsend, Town Clerk