

Caroline Town Board Business Meeting Minutes of September 12, 2018

The Town Board Agenda meeting held on September 12, 2018 at the Caroline Town Hall was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor Mark Witmer.

Attendance: Mark Witmer, Supervisor
John Fracchia, Councilmember
Irene Weiser, Councilmember
Cal Snow, Councilmember
Megan Barber, Councilmember

Recording Secretary: Marilou Harrington-Lawson, Town Clerk

Also Present: 2 people of the public attended

Supervisor Mark Witmer led the Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

Privilege-of -the-Floor:

Barry Goodrich – Asked the board members how many of them had read the New York State Health Care Act in its entirety. He is opposed to supporting it.

Marian Goodrich – Has concerns about the Health Care Act. It will pull the funds for Medicare and ultimately eliminate private insurance. Added that it feels unconstitutional.

Additions or Deletions from Agenda

Wil Lawrence – [See Attachment pgs 3-4](#) - Gave a report on the Age Friendly program. Office of the aging is working to promote the whole age friendly program in New York State. Spoke with Mark Witmer about having a town committee; seeking 4-5 residents to get involved and attend meetings.

Reports

Mark Witmer, Town Supervisor – The Supervisor’s Report is as follows:

Correspondence of Note:

1. Report from Brooke Greenhouse on improvements in the Code Office.
2. Letter from John Mazzello of TC Human Services Coalition on age-friendly initiative by HealthlinkNY Community Network.
3. Local Law #1 of 2018 Subdivision Review Law and Local Law #2 Site Plan Review Law filed with NYSDOS by Clerk Harrington-Lawson.
4. Letter from Brooktondale Fire Company noting that political signage is not allowed on their property. There were recent violations of this policy.

Supervisor’s Notes:

1. Attended TCAT Operating and Capital Budget Presentation and Strategic Plan Open House, August 28.
2. Prepared Request for Bids for heat pumps at Historic Town Hall with help of Code Officer Greenhouse and Clm. Fracchia.
3. Energy Independent Caroline: Discussion of Brighten-up Caroline Project. Signed contract with NYSEDA for Caroline's Clean Energy Communities grant. LED for street light conversion. City of Ithaca will be working with Light the Town of Caroline will be dovetailing on it He is putting information together. Shared services project. Clean energy coordinator is helping Terry Carol. \$43,000 buy back price. NYSEDA grant \$23,000 and Town of Caroline \$20,000. To buy back the existing poles and arms. 77 street lights in this town. Councilmember Weiser questioned do we need this many street lights? The grant is a 3-year grant. The time line – purchase the infrastructure first. Hopefully by December 2017 or January 2018. Contractor George Woodberry. Terry Carroll is from NYSEDA. In the grant we budgeted for \$10,000 with people putting LEDs in their homes. Students for community service -distributions within the Town. Each household would get 12 bulbs.
4. Watershed Committee: No August meeting. Submitted Army Corps of Engineers sign-out for Buffalo Road Creek Stream Bank Stabilization II for in-stream work; guide rail work is being completed. Discussed Ekroos Road culvert with Superintendent Whittaker, status of BridgeNY grant, and short-term stabilization.
5. Barry Goodrich spoke: A meeting in the morning with the contractor and Engineer; Dondi and Cindy Whittaker. Work out what has to be done. Try to eliminate some of the guard rails. Project to be done by the end of September.
6. Began work on 2019 town budget. Tentative budget will be done by the end of the month. Jessica "Jessie" Townsend is working for the Town Supervisor a few hours on Fridays.

Brooke Greenhouse, Code Officer – [See Attachment pgs 1-2](#)

Marilou Harrington-Lawson, Town Clerk – Reported \$1,077 that has come in so far in September. That sum includes fees collected for dog licensing, building permits, and selling hunting and fishing licenses. In August, the total collected was \$1,180. The office has been busy with residents coming in to buy hunting licenses. Have several projects going on and working on records management. The DEC failed to send out all the Lifetime Sportsman Licenses, so we have been busy printing replacement licenses and tags. Has been in touch with the DEC office in Albany to rectify those specific license holders. Also, concerned about the Code Office being \$5,000 over budget.

Cindy Whittaker, Highway Superintendent – Busy with road work; roadside mowing surface treating roads and filling potholes, etc. Still waiting on pavers, fell behind schedule because of all the rain. Waiting to hear back from NYSEG concerning gas line replacement on Creamery Road. Finalized contract with Teamsters! Yay! The Highway Superintendent has been trimming brush manually. Councilmember Cal Snow asked about hydro-seeding the ditches after work is done in areas. Also provided a letter from NYS Association of Highways on the procedure to request changes to a speed limit on a town road. Bill Case will be taking down the 2 compromising trees in the cemetery on Central Chapel Road.

Irene Weiser, Councilmember – Had hoped that students would take interest in investigating Medical Emergency task-force and unfortunately, they did not. She will continue to explore options on her own. Looking for an Ambulance outpost, possible cost share with Varna, Town of Ithaca if perhaps outpost for Bangs was at the new East Hill Plaza location.

Megan Barber, Councilmember – Met with Cindy regarding Capital Planning. Has a list of equipment and her list of which equipment that takes top priority.

John Fracchia, Councilmember – None

Cal Snow, Councilmember –. None

Dan Klein, County Representative Report – Discussed County budget. Has spent about 8 weeks going through the budget. What they have now is a proposed budget, then it will be modified and voted on in November. A levy increase of 1.4%; this is a \$15 increase on a medium priced home. Average cost of a medium-priced home in Tomkins County is \$185,000. \$3 of that \$15 increase goes to a solid waste fee. The tax rate has gone down this year (5th year in a row). Sales tax revenue up 6% this year. One of the 2019 highway construction project is Coddington Road. Will re-pave from the Tioga County line to the Danby town line, about 4 miles worth of Coddington Road.

Councilmember Weiser added that another piece that is incorporated into the budget and was recommended by the County Administrator is an additional half-time equivalent at the department of emergency response. Restructure will support the initiatives that were recommended by our emergency services taskforce. There is going to be new recruitment of volunteers and also coordinated training programs in the county.

Discussion and Action Topics

Resolution ____ of 2018 General Fund Abstract

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by John Fracchia to approve payment for the General Fund voucher number 244 through 268 for \$33,089.43.

Discussion on Code Office bills and budget.

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

Resolution ____ of 2018 Highway Fund Abstract

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Megan Barber to approve payment for the Highway Fund voucher number 158 through 140 for \$149,391.04.

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

Resolution ____ of 2018
Streetlight Fund Abstract

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by John Fracchia to approve payment for the Streetlight Fund voucher number 16 through 17 for \$600.78.

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

Resolution ____ of 2018
Age Friendly Program

A motion was made by Irene Weiser and seconded by Mark Witmer Resolved the Caroline Town Board hereby, supports and applauds Wil Lawrence and her initiative in the “Age Friendly” program in the Town of Caroline

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

Resolution ____ of 2018

A motion was made by Megan Barber and seconded by John Fracchia

RESOLUTION OF THE CAROLINE TOWN BOARD SUPPORTING THE ENACTMENT OF A UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE SYSTEM AS PROPOSED IN THE NEW YORK HEALTH ACT

WHEREAS, the New York Health Act (NYHA) establishes the New York Health program, a comprehensive system of access to health coverage for all New York State residents; and

WHEREAS, the NYHA would provide universal health coverage with no limitations to selection of health care providers; and

WHEREAS, the NYHA is estimated to save upwards of \$45 billion for New Yorkers by eliminating current administrative costs and by providing lower cost health care coverage for 98% of residents; and

WHEREAS, the NYHA would eliminate deductibles and co-pays, and all health care costs would be covered by a payroll tax similar to Medicare and a tax on non-payroll premiums, such as interest, dividends, and capital gains; and

WHEREAS, the NYHA has support from a broad range of professional organizations within the health care sector, organized labor and community and good government groups; and

WHEREAS, the NYHA has passed the New York State Assembly every year since 2015, including in 2018, but has not yet passed the New York State Senate;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Caroline Town Board finds universal health care coverage is needed *in the interest of* the residents of the Town of Caroline and all New Yorkers; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Caroline Town Board supports the passage of the New York Health Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Governor Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Flanagan, Democratic Conference Leader Senator Stewart-Cousins, Speaker of the Assembly Heastie, Republican Leader Assemblymember Kolb, Senator Seward, Assemblymember Lifton.

Tabled: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

Discussion: Barber brought this forward because the need for more affordable health care coverage for people. Benefits local economy. Witmer supports it. Recognizes current health care costs are high-priced and unaffordable. Encouraged by the legislative support. Fracchia sits on the Health Consortium Board and looking at the numbers from a Towns perspective, it is not going to be sustainable at 4% over the next several years, it will increase annually and will have a significant impact on our taxpayers. Weiser is in support of it. Believes this is an important direction to be going in. Snow asked for it to be tabled until after the New York Health Act Information Session September 25th at 7:00pm at the Brooktondale Community Center.

Resolution _____ of 2018

A motion was made by John Fracchia and seconded by Cal Snow

Resolution in support of the Town of Caroline’s participation in the Cornell Cooperative Extension Multiconnect Conduit program.

Whereas, Cornell Cooperative Extension has approached the Town of Caroline to ask for its participation in a county-wide multiconnect conduit initiative, which would connect the Town into the county-wide “Internet of Things,” at less than the cost of operating a 9-watt light bulb, and

Whereas, *participation will provide information on the energy use in Town buildings and identify possible improved efficiency*, therefore be it

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board authorizes participation in the Multiconnect Conduit Program and connecting a multi-tech conduit loRaWAN Gateway to Cornell Cooperative Extension’s county-wide system.

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

Discussion: Fracchia – This device monitors energy use in Town Hall buildings and is fed back into the County. This device collects data and will be set in the Town Supervisors Office.

Discussion

Planning for information meeting on allowing ATV's on town roads - change the meeting day from September 25th at 7:00 p.m. to September 20th at 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Councilmember Fracchia recommended having someone facilitate the meeting other than a board member or the town attorney who will be acting as the resource person; possibly Don Barber, or CDRC member, Bill Polduka? Supervisor Witmer will contact and ask Bill Polduka. Councilmember Barber suggested breaking in smaller groups for discussion. Councilmember Fracchia wants to know what liabilities there are? How does a law like this fit into consequences and benefits? More info from NYMR. Councilmember Weiser; nuances; hours and days? Wants clarification opening all roads/what roads. Councilmember Cal Snow doesn't like the idea of breaking into small groups. Believes that this has become a bigger issue than first expected. Sees ATV's on town roads anyway, now we have a group that has come forward and wants to do it legally. Have the special meeting and get the questions answered so this can move forward.

Town Employee Handbook update. Revisions being made to the contract. Supervisor Witmer encourages everyone to look at it. Helpful provisions have been added.

The Town Board discussed the minutes of May 10, 2017, October 11, 2017, October 12, 2017 and October 30, 2017. It was decided that the Town Clerk would pull together those final drafts and send on to the board and they will be voted on at a later date.

---Adjourn---

A motion to adjourn made by Mark Witmer, seconded by John Fracchia and carried unanimously at **9:35 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilou Harrington-Lawson, Town Clerk