

Caroline Town Board Meeting of April 13, 2016

The Town Board Business meeting held on April 13, 2016 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
Gary Reinbolt, Councilmember
Calvin Snow, Councilmember

Recording

Secretary: Marilou Harrington-Lawson, Town Clerk

Also present: 27 people of the public attended

Privilege of the Floor

Councilmember Weiser spoke about the resolution to stop NYSEG from laying gas lines along Boiceville Rd to run natural gas to the Schickel Rental properties. She spoke in length about the non-wire alternatives, non-pipeline alternatives and non-fossil fuel alternatives. She said there was comparable cost alternatives for \$350,000 instead of fossil fuel. She talked about heat pumps being a safer and cost effective choice.

Bruno Schickel, who is the owner of the rental properties on Boiceville Rd (that will be directly affected by the natural gas pipeline), spoke against the resolution. He said he started with 19 rental properties built with propane units used for fuel. NYSEG approached him about the use of natural gas and laying pipeline down the road supplying those units with Natural Gas. The tenants were happy with the change. On the other side of the road there are 36 cottages with natural gas but they put NYSEG at capacity. Mr. Schickel has proceeded with propane until NYSEG could run additional pipe and continue with Natural Gas. That is what NYSEG wants to do now. This will affect 80 residents. Most people like "on demand" natural gas hot water heaters, because it is very cost efficient; residents pay as they use.

Linda Adams - Energy usage, no matter what the choice, is complicated. Energy challenges face us every day because we want to do what is best for the environment. But it is hard not to understand why natural gas, compared to propane, is so attractive.

Ann Marie Adams – She said it was appropriate to look ahead; prevent and mediate. She said she thought the resolution should be tabled but needed consideration.

Robert Chapman – Mr. Chapman lives in Boiceville cottages. He favors renewable energy, but was not for the resolution.

Peter Hoyt – Pete said he thought the resolution was a bad idea. He said he felt this resolution has Town wide impact.

Ken Miller- Ken said he owns 60 acres. He is all for reducing greenhouse gas, and having another alternative to propane. But he said, Natural Gas is less expensive. Natural gas is less than solar. He said It would cost him thousands that he didn't have to try and convert to solar and how would he run his farm without Natural Gas?

Linc Adams - The people who live in the residences that are directly affected should be able to make the choice.

Jeff Delander- Mr. Delander said the people who are using the propane and have the opportunity to make the choice of what fuel to use should be able to make that choice. He asked the board to please reconsider the resolution.

Elisa Evett- Liz, said it reminds her of hydrofracking; climate catastrophe. She is for the resolution

Mary Aylce Kobler –She does not want to have to pay a rate increase for something she does not believe in. She uses heat pumps. She is not for the resolution

Emily Adams- Emily said she has used natural gas all of her life and she understands why people love it so much, but she is for the resolution.

Kelly Schmitt- Kelly said she grew up South Jersey It would be great if solar and/or wood were being offered as choices but they are not. With the resolution you (the town board) is taking away a person's choice.

Wyndom - They are against the resolution. It should be a person's choice to choose whether they want to use natural gas or not.

Kendra Mead –She would like to move away from the use of fossil fuels

JoEllen - She is against the resolution She wants the choice to pick her own heat source.

Lance Mead- Mr. Mead likes the choice of natural gas. He is against the resolution.

Johnathan Comstock-Johnathan mentioned equity and fairness.

Pat Dubin- What is under consideration? It does not need say you won't get natural gas, the resolution is just saying choices should be viewed before a choice is made.

Nelly Farnam- Nelly is for the resolution.

Emily Lloyd - Did you ever consider when you gave out the building permit for building the homes to tell them (Bruno Schickel, the builders) they couldn't have natural gas then? This just doesn't seem kosher. She is against the resolution.

Kim Whetszel- Kim said he owns a lot of land of in the Town of Caroline. He said he has paid \$4.50 a gal for propane 10-12 years ago, and now he pays \$1.95 a gal for propane, and Natural Gas is even less expensive. He is not in favor of the resolution.

Tony Tavelli - Tony said he is against the resolution that cost the residents more money.

Mark Dietrich- He said he is anti-fracking; recycle the resolution.

Cyrus Umrigler- He is for the resolution.

Milt Taam- see attachment 1. Milt is against the resolution.

Reports**Cindy Whittaker, Highway Superintendent**

No report

Mark Witmer, Town Supervisor**Gary Reinbolt, Town Board****Cal Snow, Town Board**

Clean up week for the Town is next week at the Highway Barns.

The employees at the Town Highway Department are CPR trained.

The Highway Superintendent has talked about extending the parking lot at the Town Hall.

The Town Highway department has salt storage in the Town of Danby

The Town highway Department is doing road work on Perkins Rd and Buffalo Rd

The Town highway Department is waiting for money from FEMA/SEMA (Barry Goodrich) to do creek work.

John Fracchia, Town Board**Irene Weiser, Town Board****Dan Klein, County Representative**

T CAT Bus routes- There is summer route cuts made and there will be Fall cuts made as well. These Route changes will be permanent.

County Highway- There will be road construction through 2018- on King Road, Coddington Road and German Cross road. The county is working on making the intersection where the 3 roads interconnect safer.

Karen Scott, Liaison to the Town Board

Joint Youth Commission - One of the classes offered is a “body imagine” class

Recreation Partnership – There will be 16 scholarships given out for summer camp.

Resolutions**Resolution 81 of 2016****RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ALTERNATIVES TO NATURAL GAS EXPANSION**

A motion was made by Irene Weiser and seconded by Gary Reinbolt

Whereas NYSEG’s rate case (15-G-0284) currently being considered by the Public Service Commission (PSC) proposes the \$17 million Freeville-Lansing natural gas pipeline project across the Village of Freeville and Towns of Dryden and Lansing, and the \$350,000 Boiceville natural gas pipeline project in the Town of Caroline – projects designed to address existing peak demand for space and water heating as well as up to 20 years of load growth, and NYSEG customers, including Town of Caroline residents, will be required to pay for these projects; and

Whereas in 2012 (case 12-G-0297) the PSC encouraged natural gas expansion because it would create jobs and provide cheaper, cleaner heating fuel than propane or fuel oil, and utilities receive financial incentives for adding new gas customers, and the New York Energy Research and Development Authority provides incentives for conversion to natural gas appliances; and

Whereas in the historic COP21 Climate Accord in Paris earlier this year, the nations of the world agreed to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to prevent global warming from reaching the catastrophic 2 degrees Celsius threshold, and New York State and Tompkins County have both set GHG reduction goals and the Town of Caroline is a Climate Smart Community that recognizes that climate change is a real and urgent public issue that must be addressed by reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency improvements, lifestyle changes, and use of renewable energy; and

Whereas natural gas (methane) is 100 times more potent a GHG than CO₂ over the next critical 20 years, and decreasing our use of natural gas now is the only thing that can slow the rate of global warming and buy precious time while moving aggressively toward a renewable energy economy¹.

NOW therefore be it

Resolved that the Caroline Town Board urges the PSC and NYSERDA to recognize that expanding markets for natural gas is contrary to municipal and state goals for reducing GHG emissions, will forestall the transition to renewables that we must make, will result in stranded assets when we do transition, and will increase costs to society from climate change impacts - and for all these reasons expanding natural gas markets is not in the public interest, and further be it

Resolved that the Caroline Town Board urges that the PSC, prior to authorizing natural gas expansion projects, directs the utilities to investigate non-fossil fuel alternatives such as energy efficiency, electric heat pumps and demand response that can meet reliability needs while saving ratepayers money and reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and be it further

Resolved that the Caroline Town Board asks the PSC and NYSERDA to curtail incentives that result in natural gas expansion, and instead that they develop incentives to reduce the number of natural gas customers and support installation of non-fossil fuel appliances for water and space heating.

Additionally, be it resolved that the Caroline Town Clerk will send a certified copy of this resolution to NYS Governor Cuomo; PSC Commissioner Audrey Zibelman; Honorable Kathleen Burgess, Secretary to the Commission to be filed as part of the public record for case 15-G-0284; Mr. John B. Rhodes, President and CEO at New York State Energy Research and Development Authority; NYS Senator James L. Seward; NYS Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton; Tompkins County Legislature; Town of Dryden Town Board, Town of Lansing Town Board, Village of Freeville Trustees, Tompkins County Planning Department and the Tompkins County Area Development agency.

Adopted Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Reinbolt: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Nay

¹ 2014, Howarth, R. A bridge to nowhere: methane emissions and the greenhouse gas footprint of natural gas. In *Energy Science and Engineering* http://www.eeb.cornell.edu/howarth/summaries_CH4.php accessed April 10, 2016

Resolution 82 of 2016

Planning Board Committee Member

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by John Fracchia
Resolved, the Town Board hereby appoints Val Warke to the Planning Board for the term of 5 years.

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

Approval of Abstracts

Resolution 83 of 2016

Streetlight Fund Abstract

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Cal Snow to approve payment for the Streetlight Fund voucher number 7 and 8 for \$510.10

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

Resolution 84 of 2016

General Fund Abstract

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Irene Weiser to approve payment for the General Fund voucher numbers 106 through 145 for \$11,741.31

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

Resolution 85 of 2016

Highway Fund Abstract

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Cal Snow to approve payment for the Highway Fund voucher numbers 73 through 92 for \$ 40,153.61.

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

Presentation

Cassie and Taylor, students from Ithaca College gave a presentation about the Artesian well (outside the Historic Town Hall) water usage.

----Adjourn----

Adjourned on a motion by Mark Witmer and seconded Gary Reinbolt at **10:05** p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilou Harrington-Lawon, Town Clerk