

Meeting of Town Board of Caroline
2/12/2020

Attendees: Supervisor Witmer, Councilmember Murray, Councilmember Fracchia, Councilmember Snow, Superintendent Spencer, and 4 residents
Absent: Councilmember Weiser

Meeting called to order at 7:04 pm.
Salute to the Flag – Led by Supervisor Witmer

EMC Report: Steve Nicholson

Tom Shelley is the new Chairman

Committees: Climate Standing Committee, Waste Reduction Committee (started the ban on plastic bags in 2008 – beginning March 1st State-wide), Unique Natural Areas (8-year project to revise the property boundaries for unique natural areas)

County asked them to look at the Forest Management Plan and they put together a 131-page informational packet for the County.

Additions to Agenda:

Highway Superintendent's Report:

1. Plowing, slating and sanding roads
2. Repairing equipment
3. Patching (weather permitting)
4. Plows were ordered expected delivery late November 2020
5. New 2020 Ram Truck to replace the 2017 expected delivery in March 2020
6. The Highway Department is having issues with roadside parking and would like the residents to be mindful of the weather and park where the roads can be cleared.
7. Turned in snow and ice reimbursements to the County for November - January

Supervisor's Report:

Correspondence Note:

- Nancy Kane submitted application to serve as a representative to the Joint Youth Commission
- Kris West from Finger Lakes Land Trust proposed a Conservation Easement for wetlands along Thomas Road. She has offered to speak with us at our March 11 Business Meeting.

Supervisor's Notes:

- Ekroos Road: contract documents provided to DEC for WQIP project (culvert replacement and stream bed and bank stabilization); final contract provided by DEC. T.G. Miller is drafting project plans and we will be submitting for DEC/ACOE permits.
- LED Streetlights: seeking information on the Design Plan and public meeting from NHPA. Group call is scheduled for February 19 and Casey Mastro has offered to attend our March 11 Business Meeting to provide an update. We have submitted documents to NYSEG for purchase of SL facilities and provided the SL registry and 2-years' of electrical billing to NYPA.
- January 24 TCCOG meeting: we will be forming working committees in the following four areas: Emergency Planning/Response, Transportation, Water Quality, Energy.
- Transit Services Committee:
 - Tconnect (Gadabout/TCAT partnership) being developed for Dryden. April rollout. First mile/last mile concept.
 - Caroline Turnaroud (Tioga/Tompkins border) – we will be proposing expansion of year-round Park&Ride.
 - Repair and renewal of TCAT Shelter at Town Hall.

- Transit Development Plan beginning March/April
- Met with Osamu Tsuda about planning a public meeting on Caroline's Climate Vulnerability Assessment he and Terry Carroll have developed after meetings with town groups. Planned for Wednesday April 1, 7 pm, at the Brooktondale Community Center. FYI: Osamu said that he and Terry can provide assistance in submitting for Climate Smart Communities - facilitated funding for highway barns.
- Leaks in steam pipes in Historic Town Hall repaired by Halco.

Town Clerk's Report:

Jessica received a request to fly the Irish Flag in March.

County Representatives Report:

Dan Klein –

NYS is considering putting deposits on other types of bottles. The glass bottles that are being recycled by residents at the curb are not being recycled since there is not a lot of reuses, thus if there were deposits it would then make the manufacturers deal with the bottles and take the costs away from the towns. The Association of Towns is not in favor of this policy while the Association of Counties is in favor. Counties pay for Medicaid with a cap with the rest being paid by state. Currently, the Governor is considering removing this cap and if it goes through it could be a significant amount (\$1M - \$12M) which would put the county over the tax cap.

Abstracts

Resolution 61 of 2020

General Fund

A motion made by Mr. Witmer and seconded by Councilmember Fracchia to approve General Fund in the amount of \$41,307.34

ADOPTED Witmer;Aye Fracchia; Aye Weiser; absent Snow; Aye Murray; Aye

Resolution 62 of 2020

Highway Fund

A motion made by Mr. Witmer and seconded by Councilmember Snow to approve Highway Fund expenditures in the amount of \$75,866.64

ADOPTED Witmer;Aye Fracchia; Aye Weiser; Absent Snow; Aye Murray; Aye

Resolution 63 of 2020

Streetlighting Fund

A motion made by Mr. Witmer and seconded by Councilmember Murray to approve Streetlighting Fund expenditures in the amount of \$574.39

ADOPTED Witmer;Aye Fracchia; Aye Weiser; Absent Snow; Aye Murray; Aye

Resolution 64 of 2020

Brooktondale and Speedsville Fire Protection Fund

A motion made by Mr. Witmer and seconded by Councilmember Fracchia to approve Fire Protection Fund expenditures in the amount of \$74,868

ADOPTED Witmer;Aye Fracchia; Aye Weiser; Absent Snow; Aye Murray; Aye

Resolution 65 of 2020

Board Minutes Approval

A motion made by Mr. Witmer and seconded by Councilmember Snow to approve the Town Board minutes from 12/3, 12/11, 1/7, 1/15, 1/22, 2/4.

ADOPTED Witmer;Aye Fracchia; Aye Weiser; Absent Snow; Aye Murray; Aye

Resolution 66 of 2020. Appointment of Code Officer Brooke Greenhouse to Permanent status

Supervisor Witmer, seconded by Councilmember Fracchia, made the motion to appoint Code Officer Brooke Greenhouse to permanent status. A discussion was made that a six months probationary period will be stated.

Whereas, Mr. Brooke Greenhouse successfully completed Building Code of New York State courses as of February 21, 2019; and

Whereas, Code Officer Greenhouse passed the Zoning/Code/Fire Enforcement Officer Civil Service exam on June 22, 2019, and Tompkins County Civil Service provided a Certified List on October 7, 2019; therefore, be it

Resolved, Code Officer Greenhouse is hereby moved from Provisional to Permanent status as of December 5, 2019, marking the beginning of his required Probationary Period of six months starting December 5, 2019.

ADOPTED Witmer;Aye Fracchia; Aye Weiser; Absent Snow; Aye Murray; Aye

Recommendation of Hands-off Policy to Promote Old-growth Forests on County Lands.

A motion was made by Councilmember Murray, seconded by Supervisor Witmer to approve the proposed Resolution:

Comments: Supervisor Witmer suggested to add a via proforestation strategy to the last paragraph

Steve Nicholson made a comment that by not doing anything is the slowest way to achieve old growth forest. A problem with not managing it is that all the trees are about the same age.

Councilmember Murray would like to revise the title to: Recommendation of Hands-off Policy to Promote a Proforestation Strategy for Forests on County Lands, thus the proposed resolution was modified to state the following:

Resolution 67 of 2020. Recommendation of Hands-off Policy to Promote a Proforestation Strategy for Forests on County Lands

Whereas, forests provide many benefits to our residents and the environment, and old-growth forests (those that are undisturbed by human intervention for centuries) are among the rarest habitats and pieces of biodiversity, and

Whereas, forests are in a natural state of flux where trees get sick and die, insects kill trees, wind blows trees over, and fire sometimes burns forests, and

Whereas, none of these natural phenomena need automatically trigger human intervention, and

Whereas, strategies of proforestation, the practice of purposefully growing an existing forest intact, benefit nature-based biological carbon sequestration and ecosystem services such as biodiversity enhancement, water and air quality, soil health, flood and erosion control, public health benefits, low impact recreation, and scenic beauty, and

Whereas, a proforestation policy is a low-cost/low-effort approach that avoids the impacts of logging on the landscape and the related erosion and costs to the County and Town of Caroline, and

Whereas, Tompkins County's Environmental Management Council has produced a draft report with different management options, noting, among them, that the forests will naturally develop to an old-growth state, and

Whereas proforestation will sequester quantitatively more carbon over the critical next few decades than cutting and re-growing forests,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Caroline Town Council requests that Tompkins County allow the land it owns to grow intact toward its full ecological potential via a proforestation strategy without commercial logging.

ADOPTED Witmer; Aye Fracchia; Aye Weiser; Absent Snow; Aye Murray; Aye

Association of Towns Proposed Resolutions

The Town Board discussed each resolution and voted to support or disapprove of the stated Resolutions. Supervisor Witmer will vote accordingly at the Association of Town's Annual Meeting next week.

Proposed 2020 Legislative Program of the Association of Towns of New York State

1. **Preserve and Support Home Rule** Councilmember Fracchia, seconded by Supervisor Witmer put in for discussion **Resolution Supported - 4 in favor passed**
2. **Support and Fund Local Roads, Bridges and Highway Operations** Councilmember Snow, seconded by Supervisor Witmer put in for discussion **Resolution Supported - 4 in favor passed**
3. **Support Town Services and Operations by Increasing State Aid, Authorizing New Local Revenue Sources and Evaluating Mandates** Councilmember Murray, seconded by Supervisor Witmer put in for discussion **Resolution Supported - 4 in favor passed**
4. **Support the Expansion of Cellular and Broadband Service while Preserving Local Authority** Supervisor Witmer, seconded by Councilmember Fracchia put in for discussion **Resolution Supported - 4 in favor passed**
5. **Amend and Fund Criminal Justice Reforms** Councilmember Fracchia seconded by Supervisor Witmer to put in for discussion. Comments were that the resolution regarding the charges is vague. **Resolution Not Supported - 4 nays this resolution was not supported**
6. **Share Potential Cannabis Revenue and Support Local Option** - Councilmember Snow, seconded by Supervisor Witmer put in for discussion. **Resolution Not Supported - 4 nays this resolution was not supported**
7. **Comprehensive Real Property Tax Reform** - Councilmember Murray, seconded by Supervisor Witmer put in for discussion. **Resolution Not Supported - 4 nays this resolution was not supported the Board to clarify and be more specific**
8. **Support Optional, Town-Initiated Justice Court Restructuring** - Supervisor Witmer, seconded by Councilmember Fracchia put in for discussion **Resolution Supported - 4 in favor passed**
9. **Support Municipal Recycling Programs** Councilmember Fracchia, seconded by Supervisor Witmer put in for discussion. **Resolution Not Supported - 4 nays this resolution was not supported the Board to clarify and be more specific**
10. **Support Ways to Reduce Municipal Health Benefit Costs** - Councilmember Snow, seconded by Supervisor Witmer put in for discussion. **Resolution was Supported - 4 in favor this resolution was supported**

Trail Meeting Dates:

April 16, 2020 will be the Trail Meeting @7pm location TBD

Computing Center:

Computing Center indicated to Supervisor Witmer that we could add a ticket for immediate assistance. Supervisor Witmer will do a service plan with Computing Center. One Drive backup details were provided to the Town Board via email.

Supervisor Witmer, seconded by Councilmember Snow made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 pm

Prepared by:
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Bookkeeper