

Caroline Town Board Business Meeting Minutes of July 15, 2020

The Town Board Business Meeting held electronically via Zoom teleconference on July 15, 2020 at 7:02 p.m. hosted by Supervisor Mark Witmer and co-hosted by Councilmember John Fracchia

Attendance: Mark Witmer, Supervisor
John Fracchia, Councilmember
Irene Weiser, Councilmember
Cal Snow, Councilmember
Tim Murray, Councilmember

Recording Secretary: Jessica L. Townsend, Town Clerk

Also Present: 11 members of the public attended the teleconference.

Supervisor Witmer opened with welcoming everybody to the Business Meeting. This meeting is being recorded and will be posted along with meeting minutes on the Town Website.

Privilege-of-the-Floor

Wil Lawrence – Made the town board aware that there is a Senate bill (number S5696) to support broadband data collection.

Additions or Deletions from Agenda

None

Reports

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

Correspondence of Note:

Received letter from Theresa Albert of T.C. Youth Services Department that in response to COVID-19 fiscal impacts the Recreational Partnership voted to reduce 2020 partner contributions by 18.5%. We will be receiving a refund. The Recreational Partnership has also provided flat and -12% budget scenarios to Jason Molino, at his request.

Received notice from David Sprout, CEO in Dryden, of a Public Hearing on July 16, 2020 at 6:05 pm regarding adoption of a local law which would amend Dryden Zoning Law 1 of 2015 to “add definitions, amend district descriptions and reduce density of allowable development in the Hamlet of Varna.” The Town Board is also considering adoption of a revised map for the Hamlet of Varna.

Letter from Barbara Knuth endorsing Clm. Snow’s initiative to investigate safety measures at Rt. 79 and Landon Rd.

Supervisor’s Report:

Health Consortium Board of Directors is considering a one-time premium offset in 2021 for municipal partners because of COVID-19. The board adopted adding additional health care benefits for eye glasses and hearing aids.

Streetlights: materials for purchase of Caroline Streetlight infrastructure will be submitted to NYSEG later this week. Casey Mastro will be providing us a maintenance authorization by next week; once we do

that, he'll draft a maintenance contract. If we take possession prior to executing the contract, NYPA will provide interim maintenance service. Anticipate 90% design plan from NYPA for our review in July.

Attended Hazard Mitigation Plan/Resiliency Planning Meeting on July 13. Working on updating our Annex, which identifies critical and lifeline facilities.

Completed bid process with T.G. Miller for Town Hall Site Improvement Project.

Brooke Greenhouse, Code Officer – None.

Jessie Townsend, Town Clerk – None.

Bobby Spencer, Highway Superintendent – The Highway Report is as follows:

Roadwork

Patching pot holes; Milling Asphalt (with county highway dept); Grading gravel roads; Fixing wash-outs from storm damage; and Roadside mowing

Capitol Highway Projects

Buffalo Road has been paved; shoulders will be done in the next few weeks with help from the County highway dept.; and Working on pricing for surface treating

Equipment

Truck 284 need a new hoist; replacement hoist has been ordered

Miscellaneous

Hauling in washed sand for winter when and where available.; Working with DEC on a resolution for gravel and stream diversion in Shindagin Hollow. Still waiting for the permit.; On March 11, 2020 I voiced concerns about the log trucks on gravel roads and the damage that was being caused by them. I also recommended we come up with a plan for bonding or another way to protect the towns assets. What is the status of this process as the logging season is upon us once again? The current highway barns are in need of major repairs/upgrades: All four entry doors are rotten and uninsulated, main N/G heater tubes have burnt threw and need to be replaced, overhead doors need repair, front of the building needs to have new tin and door headers, The building itself needs insulation as you can see threw the walls. The new cold storage building needs to be insulated and have a heat source installed so the building can be used for plow trucks (2 one ton trucks, 1 single axel plow truck and 1 loader) this needs to be done to make the main highway barn a safe work environment as plow trucks are inches apart when parked currently. These repairs have been needed for years but with talk of a new highway facility being built have been put on hold these repairs can no longer wait with a new highway barns being years away. With the building being overcrowded and the lack of repairs it poses a serious threat to the health and safety of the employees

Irene Weiser, Councilmember – None

Cal Snow, Councilmember – None

Tim Murray, Councilmember – Planning Board meeting tomorrow night at 6:00 p.m. The Comprehensive Plan draft is very close to being finished. Will have more information after tomorrow night's meeting. There has been a large increase of trash haulers traveling on Route 79 in recent months.

Has contacted the NYS Troopers regarding this and was told to contact the Sheriff's Department. He is planning to do that. He will also be in contact with Barbara Lifton's office.

Dan Klein, County Representative Report – Dan Klein did not attend tonight's meeting but forwarded the following information: Sales tax revenue is coming in about one-third lower than budgeted for. No one can predict if this level of decrease will continue for the rest of the year. For now, it might be a good number to use as a ballpark figure when making your sales tax revenue estimate for your 2021 budget.

We expect road work to be done on Coddington Rd starting in August. It would start on the County line and proceed north for 2 to 4 miles. The work would consist of paving, canopy-clearing, and ditch work. This project is based on several assumptions:

- Our workforce returns as expected in August
- NYS CHIPS money comes in as promised at 80% of the originally budgeted amounts
- All highway projects are subject to weather and to other emergency road work situations that arise elsewhere in the county.

Review of Thomas Road Wetlands Conservation Proposal

Kris West from the Finger Lakes Land Trust presented. The proposal is a transfer of 57 acres of land located on Thomas Road, to the Town of Caroline and the FLLT will hold a conservation easement. This effort is to protect the wetlands on Thomas Road. She believes that this is in line with the town's current Comprehensive Plan and is also an opportunity to create a public accessible conservation area. The FLLT has partnerships in neighboring towns which include the Town of Ithaca, the Village of Freeville and several in the Town of Dryden. The current landowners would like to see this move forward and if the town agrees to move forward, they would like that to happen by this winter/spring. If the Town takes ownership, this will not stay on the tax roll and is responsible for all maintenance. FLLT will do an annual survey and monitoring visits and could help with land management if needed. The board will review and discuss further.

Caroline Climate Vulnerability Assessment Presentation

Terry Carroll and Amy Gonzalez from Cooperative Extension gave an overview of their assessment. The top assessments reviewed were flooding, heatwaves, extreme snow and water quality. The study found that there could be upcoming threats of flooding in Brooktondale, Speedsville and Slaterville Springs with specific sites identified at Six Mile Creek, Canaan, Valley Road, and Rejemer Rd. Recommendations given included community plans checklist, vulnerability and risk assessments, public outreach and engagement, integration of municipal plans, disaster preparedness and recovery, and hazard mitigation implantation. The Town of Caroline was recognized as a Climate Smart Community and received a bronze status in 2019. The full report will be completed next week and will be available for public view in the near future.

Discussion of Diversity and Inclusiveness Initiatives and Commitments

Councilmember John Fracchia recommended drafting a statement of inclusion. Would like to acknowledge the town's history of slavery and memorialize that in some way. Brief discussion regarding a town road that was named after the owner of slaves and one suggestion was to rename the road to honor that enslaved family. Councilmember Murray added that there is language of inclusion that has been added into the revised Comprehensive Plan and that the Planning Committee also wishes to include an

acknowledgment of our habitation of indigenous lands, which he also hopes we can make at the opening of every Board meeting. Supervisor Witmer would like to revive the initiative on having some place where we recognize the racial history of Caroline.

Resolutions

Resolution 97 of 2020

Extending the expiration of building permits issued before March 7, 2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19

A Motion made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Tim Murray

Whereas, Covid-19 has resulted in delays in construction projects; and

Whereas, Bill S8236a provides for the Town to allow the extension of building permits for up to 120 days; and

Whereas, the Town Code Enforcement Officer has recommended the Town approve extensions of up to 90 days by request of the permit holder; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Caroline Town Board hereby authorizes the Code Enforcement Officer to extend any permits issued prior to March 7th by 90 days for projects that will be completed within that time, and further be it

Resolved, that building permits which are granted this 90 day extension and require renewal shall have a 9 month permit renewal to account for the 90 day extension, and further be it

Resolved, that this resolution shall take effect immediately and expire and be deemed repealed December 31, 2021.

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

Resolution 98 of 2020

Transfers

A motion made by Mark Witmer and seconded by John Fracchia

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby approves the following account transfers:

\$50.00 from A5010.4 Support of Hwy CE to A5010.2 Support of Hwy EQ

\$800.00 from A8020.4 Planning CE to A1440.405 Engineering Creeks

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

Resolution 99 of 2020

General Fund Abstract

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Irene Weiser to approve payment for the General Fund for \$40,637.65

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

**Resolution 100 of 2020
Highway Fund Abstract**

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by John Fracchia to approve payment for the Highway Fund for \$177,842.57

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

**Resolution 101 of 2020
Streetlight Fund Abstract**

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Tim Murray to approve payment for the Streetlight Fund voucher for \$27,603.62

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

**Resolution 102 of 2020
Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Irene Weiser to approve the Business Minutes of June 10, 2020 and the Agenda Meeting Minutes of July 7, 2020 as submitted by Town Clerk, Jessica Townsend

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

Executive Session was called by a motion made by Supervisor Mark Witmer and seconded by Councilmember John Fracchia to discuss personnel issues and was carried unanimously at 9:49 p.m. and ended at 10:08 p.m.

---Adjourn---

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica L. Townsend, Town Clerk