

Caroline Town Board Business Meeting Minutes of August 10, 2022

**** This meeting was recorded and has been posted on the Town of Caroline webpage****

The Town Board Business meeting was held hybrid at the Caroline Town Hall and was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Supr. Witmer.

Attendance:

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

Recording Secretary:

Jessica L. Townsend, Town Clerk

Also Present: Hwy Supt, Bob Spencer, new Building Inspector, Cliff Babson,
3 members of the public in-person; 7 members of public via zoom

Supr. Witmer led Pledge to the Flag

Privilege-of-the-Floor

None

Introduction of Building Inspector Cliff Babson

Cliff shared that he was raised in Boston. His father was a builder. He joined the Navy after high school and spent 25 years working on commercial ships. Retired from the Navy as a Captain, and he then became an Energy Efficient Engineer. He will continue to do that work part-time, as well as being the Code Enforcement Officer here. He is planning to start next week and is looking forward to it.

Interview with Michael Brown for Energy Independent Caroline membership

Mike also shared his previous employment and his interest in climate change. Was previously on the Committee back in 2007/2008 and is excited to rejoin and focus on community sustainability efforts.

Reports

- **Supervisor Mark Witmer** – Broadband: Attended informational meeting of town supervisors with Hunt Engineering on options towns may take to address shortcomings. TCCOG will be continuing to investigate this.
- Health Consortium: Joint Committee on Plan Structure met on August 4. Wellness initiatives. Benefits administrators trainings coming up.
- Drafted letter to highway retirees and spouses explaining Medicare transition: if both spouses are currently on the town's family plan, the spouse reaching 65 enrolls in Medicare A & B, while the younger spouse is covered on the town's plan as an individual until age 65. Enrollee pays for Medicare A & B premium; the town provides a Medicare Supplement Plan.
- Zoning Planning: submitted Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant for zoning work.
- Emergency Services Planning: Met with Caroline fire departments to discuss needs and solutions. TCCOG Emergency Services Planning Subcommittee continuing work on countywide solution.
- Recommend engaging T.G. Miller engineers for recommendation on town hall water management.

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- Energy and Sustainability: continuing work with Speedsville Community Center and Speedsville Residents to provide information for a feasibility study proposal for Community Geothermal in Speedsville.
- TCAT Transit Services Committee meeting (as TCCOG representative):
- Proposing service reductions because of labor and parts shortages, to be effective August 21. Virtual Public Hearing on service reductions scheduled for Monday, August 15, 5-6 pm.
- Free Ryde program now for ages 17 and younger. Starting this fall qualifying riders age 14+ will need to have a Free Ryde pass.
- Fare collection methods under evaluation.

County Legislature Rep., Dan Klein – Dan was not present at tonight's meeting, but offered the following report: I've been telling you about the Community Recovery Fund. We hope to settle on the final details this month. One question that has been unanswered is whether or not municipalities themselves would be eligible to apply for grants. The answer is probably yes. However, the money the County is using for these grants comes from ARPA – the American Recovery Plan Act. The Town of Caroline itself also received ARPA money (\$338,000). I can only imagine it would be taken into account in scoring grant applications if and how a municipality has already used their own ARPA money

The County just accepted the Tompkins County Resiliency and Recovery Plan, a 604-page document. I searched for the word "Caroline" in the document, and below are some of the things I found. If you want more information about any of these items, or want to discuss any of them, I suggest contacting the County Department of Planning and Sustainability who helped develop this report.

Town Clerk, Jessie Townsend - The following collection fees for July were: 18 dog renewals; 6 building permit fees; 1 impoundment fees; 1 marriage license and 1 marriage transcript; 2 hunting permits and a donation to the History Room for \$250.00. Check #281 in the amount of \$1,233.60 was given to the Supervisor on August 2, 2022. Has received 8 FOI requests since the July Business Meeting. All items listed per request brings the total number of requests to 126 since January 1st, 2022.

Highway Supt, Bob Spencer – Submitted the application last week for the first CHIPS reimbursement. He will be submitting another one in the fall. Buffalo Rd streambank project is currently underway and will hopefully conclude next week. Bob and the Board discussed road signs relating to safety; Right to Farm, tractor, horse, your speed is signs, etc. Clm. Goldberg and Bob plan to meet next week to discuss. Bob will decide if and where such signs would be the most appropriate in the town.

Clm. Goldberg – Ag Committee – Meeting next Thursday, August 18 from 7pm-9pm at the Town Hall. The Board discussed and agreed that it would be constructive to seek advice from the zoning planner, Nan Stolzenberg on the creation of a Municipal Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan.

Clm. Murray – Zoning Commission– Meeting next Tuesday, August 16 from 7pm to 9pm. Code Office-Met with Cliff and Steve to discuss the transition of Officers and he expects it to be very smooth.

Resolutions

Resolution 93 of 2022. Authorizing Town of Caroline Partnership in Safe Streets and Roads for All Planning Grant

Motion by: Kelley-Mackenzie Second: Witmer

WHEREAS, in 2022, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law established the new Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) federal grant program, with up to one billion dollars appropriated in FY22, and with a local match of 20% of the project cost; and

WHEREAS, local municipalities are eligible to apply for funding to create a detailed transportation safety “Action Plan”, either individually or in collaboration with other municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the FY22 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO, available here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=340385>), states that applications with multiple municipalities partnering to create a plan will be more competitive for funding than applications from a single municipality; and

WHEREAS, successful creation of an Action Plan in this grant cycle would make the partnering municipalities eligible to apply for implementation grants in future years of this grant program, either individually or in collaboration again; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca has agreed to be the “Lead Applicant” on this planning grant application, with multiple neighboring municipalities expressing interest in applying as “Joint Applicants”, including the following in alphabetical order (*note: the list is as of 7/25/2022*):

- Town of Caroline
- Town of Danby
- Town of Dryden
- Town of Ithaca
- Town of Lansing
- Village of Cayuga Heights
- Village of Lansing

WHEREAS, the role of the City of Ithaca as Lead Applicant will be to complete the online application on behalf of all partnering municipalities for FY22 funding, with an application due date of September 15, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca is presenting a resolution to its Common Council, requesting a budget to fund the study in whole at \$750,000, to be eventually reimbursed 80% by the grant, with individual municipalities reimbursing the City of Ithaca for its share of the 20% local match. The Town of Caroline’s share of the local match will not be in excess of \$7,000 then be it

RESOLVED, that the *Town Caroline* agrees to partner with the City of Ithaca and other neighboring municipalities to jointly apply for the SS4A planning grant opportunity to create an Action Plan that uncovers both regional and municipality-specific transportation safety problems, as well as presents detailed regional and municipality-specific solutions; and further

RESOLVED, that the *Town of Caroline* agrees to reimburse the City of Ithaca for its share of the 20% local match (\$150,000 total local match for a \$750,000 total project cost), specifically that the *Town of Caroline* will reimburse the City of Ithaca an amount not to exceed \$7,000.

Motion carried.

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

Nays: None

Resolution 94 of 2022. Updating Caroline’s Living Wage Rate

Motion by: Witmer Second: Murray

Whereas, the Town of Caroline has committed to be a Living Wage Employer, as determined by the Tompkins County Workers’ Center and Alternatives Federal Credit Union; and

Whereas, the Tompkins County Living Wage for a single person was updated to \$16.61/hr on July 27, 2022 based upon local cost of living measures; therefore be it

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Resolved, the starting wage rate for the positions of Town Hall Custodian, Town Hall Maintenance, Deputy Clerk, and Highway Assistant shall be updated to \$16.61/hr, effective July 29, 2022.

Motion carried.

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

Nays: **None**

Resolution 95 of 2022. Amendment of Resolution 25 of 2022, Part-time Employee Five-year Service Benefit

Motion by: Witmer Second: Goldberg

Resolved, part-time employees will receive a 5% wage increase for each five-year period of cumulative service with the Town.

Motion carried.

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

Nays: **None**

Resolution 96 of 2022. 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 \$12,473.55 for the General Fund, \$46,868.83 for the Highway Fund, and \$194.57 for the Streetlight Fund.

Motion carried.

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

Nays: **None**

Resolution 97 of 2022. Amendment of Resolution 8 of 2022, Reimbursed Mileage Rate

Motion by: Witmer Second: Murray

Resolved, the reimbursement rate to be paid to Town Officials and Employees for the use of their personal vehicles for Town business has been updated to \$0.69.5 beginning July 1, 2022. (IRS rate)

Motion carried.

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

Nays: **None**

Approval of Minutes

The Town Board reviewed and approved the Business Minutes and Public Hearing Minutes of July 13, 2022, the Special Meeting Minutes and the Public Hearing Minutes of July 25, 2022, as submitted by Town Clerk, Jessie Townsend, and the Agenda Minutes of August 3, 2022, as submitted by Bookkeeper, Velvet Lyke.

Other Discussion

Status of New Highway Facility – Hwy Supr. Bobby Spencer inquired about the RFQ submission. Supr. Witmer has thought about this and recommends they hire T.G. Miller to construct an RFQ (or RFP) for an Engineering Firm that will facilitate funding opportunities, building, and the construction of the new building at the existing highway site. Bobby recommended reconstructing the highway committee to assist in the development of the new building. The Board would like to move forward with the RFQ and go from there.

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Streetlights – Clm. Snow inquired about the LED Streetlights project. Supr. Witmer shared that the project is completed. A software training session has not been scheduled yet, but he will follow up and try to get it scheduled.

A motion to adjourn by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Murray at 8:32 p.m. and was carried unanimously.

----Adjourn----

Respectfully Submitted,
Jessie Townsend, Town Clerk