

## **Caroline Town Board Agenda Meeting Minutes of August 11, 2021**

The Town Board Business Meeting was held on August 11, 2021 at the Caroline Town Hall and electronically via zoom teleconference was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

### **Attendance:**

Supervisor Mark Witmer  
Councilmember John Fracchia – via zoom  
Councilmember Tim Murray – via zoom  
Councilmember Cal Snow  
Councilmember Katherine Goldberg

### **Recording Secretary:**

Jessica L. Townsend, Town Clerk

**Also Present:** Judge Barr, Highway Superintendent, Bob Spencer, and 2 members of the public via zoom

**Pledge of Allegiance was led by Supr. Witmer**

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### **Privilege-of-the-Floor**

None

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### **Discussion of Justice Court Assistance Program grant application for video security system**

Judge Barr led the discussion by letting the Board know that in a formal setting, such as this, that she be addressed as Judge Barr.

Supv. Witmer shared the grant application that the Justices have prepared for a video security system and believes that the building, being a shared space, be included in the application. He had spoken to an Attorney for the Court Administration, and he recommended that the Judges provide a cover letter stating the rationale for a security system and that it may be helpful to include any incidents that may have led to the necessity of having such system. Another question was for any information on how this will affect other users of the building outside of Court hours. Lastly, he noticed on the application that the small conference room was referenced as the Court's records room and should be processed as such. He acknowledged the work it took for the Justices to put this together and is only asking for clarification.

Judge Barr shared the location of the panic buttons that are there currently for security use and explained that anyone in the building can access as they are not exclusive to the Court. The camera will be used mostly by the Court Clerk, to provide more access to the public, outside of Court hours, when the Clerk is alone. The Court has also been asked during a security inspection to have a system installed.

Clm. Goldberg asked if this was a true necessity of the Court, because if it is not, and the system is not funded by the grant, then the Town will need to cover its cost.

Judge Barr clarified that it is a high priority in the State's point of view, and she does not anticipate that this will not be funded. Also, during an inspection, the Court failed the security check, and that Caroline is the only Court in the County that does not have cameras.

Clm. Murray asked for information on how the locking system will work and who will have control of who gets inside the building. Judge Barr explained that an electronic lock, which will work with the camera, will replace the outside lock. When someone comes to the door, they will hit a buzzer and from there, the Court Clerk will have the ability to talk to them and determine whether they can come in. If yes,

she can let that person in electronically. Lastly, everyone that has a key to the front door will get a key fob and she confirmed that there will not be a camera installed in the small conference room.

Cltm. Murray asked for clarification regarding the cost sharing, should the State deny the grant. Judge Barr again described the purpose of the cameras being for the Court and if they keep emphasizing this as shared space, it seems the town should be liable for half of the funding. She is confident they will get the funding.

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## Reports

**Supervisor** – The Town Supervisor’s Report is as follows:

Correspondence of Note

- Finger Lakes Land Trust Newsletter lead article on Lounsbery Farm Conservation Easement
- Notice of improvements to snowmobile trail received from Scott Doyle at Tompkins County Planning Department

Supervisor’s Notes

- Met with Mark Ruhnke from NYPA to discuss streetlight outages that have accumulated with the delayed LED project start. The LED project is held up because of a supply bottleneck for the cellular nodes. NYPA will proceed with LED conversion for the streetlights that are out using solar sensors that will later be switched out with the cellular nodes. Documented 20 outages and provided list to Mr. Ruhnke. This remedy should happen very soon.
- Budget requests sent to departments and liaisons. Budget work underway.
- Requested advice from NYMIR on installation of residential versus commercial StairGlide for the History Room. Commercial unit is required, and we are scheduling installation.
- Received the justices’ draft grant proposal for town hall security system from Mr. Fracchia. Thank you. Confirmed with the NY Court System that the system would be for a shared building and therefore subject to town/court cost-sharing. Shared additional information from my conversation with councilmembers and the justices. Based on this information and limited opportunity for board review, I recommend a meeting with the justices for review and clarification of the project prior to submission. The Court System strongly urged that the court provide a cover letter making the case for the need for the security system in our court. Please note that the Small Conference Room is a town meeting space.
- Met with Caroline fire departments to discuss measures for mutual support and planning.
- Rick Morgan from Speedsville Volunteer Fire Co. sent request for the town to consider supporting development of dry hydrants. We have previously budgeted for engineering costs. Propose budget discussion.
- Concern from a resident about traffic on Bald Hill Road due to Central Chapel Road Bridge construction. Superintendent Spencer and I had conversations with her about her safety concerns. Mr. Spencer is working on signage and is monitoring the situation.
- Received memo from Katie Borgella, Commissioner of Planning for Tompkins County, on the Southern Tier Network middle mile broadband study. Spoke with Lee Haeefele about broadband buildout in Caroline. He is developing a grant proposal.
- County Administrator Holmes and I received and returned final paperwork for grant funds disbursement of \$13,117 from Empire State Development for Old 600 Creek Project. Yahoo.

**Town Clerk**– Fees collected in July are as follows: 42 Dog Licenses; 1 Fishing License; and collected fees for 5 Building Permits. Total fees collected were \$1685.00 less \$97.12 in non-local revenues. Check# 250 to Supervisor on August 3rd in the amount of \$1,587.88.  
Hunting – Hunting Licenses are available.

**Highway Report** – Oil and Stone has been put down on Level Green, sections of Old Level Green Rd and Blackman Hill. Paving to be done on Woodlane Rd on Friday. A new employee was hired and joined the crew on Monday. He has received a lot of calls regarding the Central Chapel Rd bridge project. Since the bridge has closed 76 Rd, some drivers are now using Bald Hill Road as a detour, although it is not the posted detour. Bob has addressed the dust issue caused by the increase in traffic and has also added an LED billboard signage at the bottom of the Bald Hill to let traffic know that it is a single lane road ahead and to share the road. The new 2022 truck that was ordered might come a little early. Met with Rick Morgan regarding looking into more voluntary sight locations for dry hydrants in areas where they would be most helpful to the fire departments. Spectrum has pulled out of the project on Bald Hill and has left a mess for the highway. They are now moving to Grove School Rd where he's been told that most lines will be run above ground but some areas will need to be dug. Bob wants to hold them liable for any damage that may occur.

Cal Snow – Received a Petition with 37 signatures to lower the speed limit on Landon Rd. Has handed the petition off to the Clerk.

**Dan Klein, County Rep. Report** – Dan was not in attendance but provided the following via email: The County Legislature continues to debate what to do with the Recovery Act funds we received (\$10 million this year and \$10 million next year). We are debating whether or not we want to spend a specific amount each year, or whether we want to spend the money as needs and projects arise. We are also debating whether we want to make a plan with specific categories with specific dollar amounts (for example, \$1 million for childcare, \$1 million dollars for tourism, etc.) or whether we would prefer not to constrain ourselves in that manner.

We are debating whether to require County employees to be vaccinated, or if they are not, they would be required to get Covid tested each week. The catch in this is that currently the federal government pays for all Covid testing. That funding expires October 1. If it is not renewed, the County would need to pay for that testing. Our estimate is that the bill for this would be \$1.5 million per year.

The County is foreclosing on a 14.6 acre property on Coddington Rd. for failure to pay taxes. We are recommending that before the property goes to auction, we attach a conservation easement to the eastern portion of the parcel. The eastern portion is part of the White Church – Willseyville Swamp Unique Natural Area. There is ample room on the western (Coddington Rd.) portion of the parcel to build a house. The Town has been notified about this and you should have maps available to you if you want a visual.

**Clm. Murray – Zoning** – Met on Tuesday, August 10th next meeting on 8/24 at 7:30. Will be a hybrid meeting. COURT – Sept 30 meeting between attorney for the sixth judicial Judge, the Justices and Mark, him and Guy.

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### **Discussion of ARPA funds process**

The Board will need to decide how to use the funds and whether it will be one large sum to one item or whether they want the funds to be divided into several items. Broadband has been largely considered to be most needed in the community, but Supv. Witmer would like to see how the county-wide broadband initiative results are founded and how much, if any, the county will be distributing towards that. TCCOG should be having a discussion about that at their next meeting. They also thought about other areas where the funds could potentially be used. Supv. Witmer's 3 areas are: eviction prevention; parks & trails; or

court backlog. Clm. Murray suggested rent relief as an option. Clm. Fracchia shared his interest of a community fund to help our neighbors that have been affected the most. There is still much to learn about the ARPA funds, and more will be discussed at future meetings.

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## **Resolutions**

### **Resolution 120 of 2021. Formation of a Town of Caroline Capital Planning Committee**

Motion by: Supv. Witmer                      Seconded by: Clm. Snow

Whereas, the New York State Comptroller's Office encourages multi-year capital planning and provides guidance and resources; and

Whereas, the Town Board recognizes the usefulness of multi-year capital planning to facilitate efficient use of taxpayer dollars and to promote sound budgeting practices; therefore be it

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby establishes a Capital Planning Committee consisting of the Town Supervisor, a Councilmember, and up to four additional members appointed by the Town Board; and further be it

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby solicits applications for membership on the Capital Planning Committee (name, phone, email, statement of interest in serving on this committee) by email to [clerk@townofcaroline.org](mailto:clerk@townofcaroline.org) or by the Volunteer Application Form under Documents on the town website.

Discussion: Bob would like an idea of how many people will be on the committee. Supv. believes that 5 or 6 people should be enough. Bob recommended that Barry Goodrich be on the committee. Further discussion regarding the committee liaison and whether Clm. Snow could be on it as well. Clm. Snow was concerned that he would have enough time to be on the committee. Clm. Goldberg had been named as liaison.

**Passed:** Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Snow: Aye; Murray: Aye; Goldberg: Aye

### **Resolution 121 of 2021. Budget Transfer**

Motion by Supr Witmer                      Seconded by Clm. Goldberg

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board makes the following 2021 budget transfers:

\$1,000	from A5132.2 Garage EQ	to A5132.3 Garage CE
\$2,000	from DA5112.1 Improvements PS	to DA5110.1 General PS
\$1,500	from DA5112.1 Improvements PS	to DA5110.11 General PS-OT

**Passed:** Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Snow: Aye; Murray: Aye; Goldberg: Aye

### **Resolution 122 of 2021. Approval of Vouchers for Payment of Town Bills**

Motion by Supv. Witmer                      Seconded by Clm. Snow

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board approves payment of vouchers for bills in the amounts of \$15,456.22 for the General Fund, \$111,503.36 for the Highway Fund, and \$174.91 for the Streetlight Fund.

**Passed:** Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Snow: Aye; Murray: Aye; Goldberg: Aye

### **Resolution 123 of 2021. Resolution authorizing the Town of Caroline Court to apply for a JCAP grant**

Motion by Clm. Fracchia                      Seconded by Clm. Snow

**Whereas** cameras and access control systems have been identified as a best practice for court security, and;

**Whereas** the Caroline Town Court does not have cameras or access control system installed, and;

**Whereas** money for the purchase and installation of cameras and access control system is available through the Justice Court Assistance Program (JCAP),

**Therefore** the Caroline Town Council authorizes the Town of Caroline Court to apply for a JCAP grant in the 2021-22 grant cycle in the amount of \$11,973.

Discussion: Supv. Witmer shared concerns regarding clarification issues. Firstly, he would like to hear back about the language distinction in the grant by saying “Court” because the building is a shared space. Judge Barr stated that she would contact Judge Keene’s office to discuss and let the board know. He would also like to discuss the possibility to utilize the security system for all town offices since they will have the infrastructure to do so. He doesn’t believe that this is a pressing issue and would prefer to wait until more is clarified. Clm. Murray offered clarification language in the Resolution, but Clm. Fracchia felt this was a logistical issue and not an authorization issue and if a provision is recommended, they can do that later. Clm. Goldberg agreed that it was getting overcomplicated. Clm. Murray stressed that the submission would need to be signed off by the Supervisor and agreed that if there are revisions to be made, they can make amendments later. Clm Fracchia does not believe that this Resolution should be held up until the next board meeting and that the vote should be made tonight.

**Passed:** Witmer: Nay; Fracchia: Aye; Snow: Aye; Murray: Aye; Goldberg: Aye

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### **Approval of Minutes**

The Town Board reviewed and approved the Minutes of August 3, 2021, Agenda Meeting as submitted by Town Clerk, Jessica Townsend.

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### **Discussion on New Town Barn**

Hwy Sup. Spencer brought up a 3<sup>rd</sup> potential sight to build the new highway barn, which is located next to the Brooktondale Fire Hall. Phil from the Labarge would like to see a 3<sup>rd</sup> sight if there is one suggested, as this was included in the agreement. Bob proposes that Labarge group be the ones to give their recommendation on the best sight since that’s what they are getting paid to do. Supv. Witmer was told by the Labarge engineer that was strongly recommended to look at the two locations that the town owns. Clm. Fracchia is currently working on putting something together and will pass along to the board when it is completed.

Motion by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Murray to adjourn at 8:49pm and carried unanimously.

**---Adjourn---**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica L. Townsend, Town Clerk