

Caroline Town Board Business Meeting Minutes of September 15, 2021

The Town Board Special Meeting was held electronically via zoom teleconference on September 15, 2021 beginning at 7:03 p.m. hosted by Supervisor Witmer.

Attendance: Mark Witmer, Supervisor
John Fracchia, Councilmember
Cal Snow, Councilmember
Tim Murray, Councilmember
Katherine Goldberg, Councilmember

Recording Secretary: Jessie Townsend, Town Clerk

Also Present: Dan Klein and 2 members of the public attended the teleconference.

Privilege-of-the-Floor

None

Reports

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

- Twenty streetlights (outages) replaced with LEDs controlled by solar sensors as a temporary measure by NYPA. LED streetlight conversion will be completed when contractor receives cellular modules, which allow modulation of each light. No estimated timeline yet.
- Tentative budget work.
- StairGlide installation for the Historic Town Hall scheduled for Thursday, September 16.
- Signed JCAP grant application upon assurance that requested changes had been addressed. Learned later that the application does not clarify shared-use of Town Hall rooms or a provide a cover letter recommended by the grants office.
- Provided notice to the justices of Town key policy and requested keys for any locks that they have changed.
- Rick Morgan from Speedsville Volunteer Fire Co. provided cost estimate for supplies for dry hydrant on McGrath road of \$1,500.
- Superintendent Spencer and County Highway Superintendent Jeff Smith implemented traffic control and safety measures on Bald Hill Road.
- Code Officer Williams is addressing large land disturbance at 144 Middaugh Road. August report received from Mr. Williams.
- Work proceeding with other Supervisors and Planners on Easement Agreement for use of NYSEG property in Caroline for extension of the South Hill Recreation Way Trail.
- Tyler Mix has begun the work to paint the decks and rails of the Historic Town Hall.
- Met w/ Supervisor’s designated Governor’s shared panel. Tossed around ideas for shared services between towns such as IT services, highway depts, broadband, centralized court arraignments, etc. Other suggestions can be made before November 4.

Town Clerk, Jessie Townsend – Report on license fees collected in August are as follows: 47 Dog Licenses; 7 Hunting and Fishing Licenses; and 8 Building Permit fees. Total fees collected were

\$1,660.00 less \$521.25 in non-local revenues. Check 253 to Supervisor on September 7th in the amount of \$1,138.75.

Hwy Supt., Bob Spencer – Attachment #1

Dan Klein, County Rep. Report – Budget: 2.7% increase in tax levy, that's a \$42.00 increase based on the average of a medium sized home in Tompkins County (\$205,000.00).

ARPA Fund: County has agreed to allocate \$7 million to go to outlaying communities through grants. No further planning of who or where, but the amount has been set.

Redistricting: County is seeking volunteers to join a redistricting committee. Redistricting is done every 10 years based on the U.S. Census.

Broadband: The County has received negative feedback from the advisory committee regarding the broadband study that's been underway for several months now. There was some confusion on what the expectations were and how the study has been conducted thus far. Because of these reasons, the County will not be accepting any contributions from towns towards this initiative and will continue to move forward with the study the way they intended to. Currently gathering information from existing broadband providers in the area to determine what the total cost would be to build out to those underserved areas. They are also still considering a municipally owned broadband service. Still believes there will be a good outcome from the study.

Clm. Murray – Zoning Commission met last night and will meet again on September 28th from 7:15p.m. to 9:15p.m. The Commission is looking at three potential districts: an Ag District; Hamlet Districts; and a potential small Commercial District. There will be several more meetings to put together different scenarios before presenting information to the public. Patrick Braga, who joined the Planning Board and Zoning Commission just a month or so ago, has moved to Detroit, MI and has therefore resigned.

Clm. Fracchia – New Highway Committee is tentatively set to meet next Wednesday, September 22nd at 3:30pm. It has not been confirmed yet but the group hopes to be meet in-person.

Resolutions

Resolution 125 of 2021. Reaffirming Town of Caroline COVID-safety Policies

A motion made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Murray

Whereas, the COVID-19 Pandemic is ongoing and new cases are increasing, and

Whereas, basic precautionary measures are known to be effective in reducing virus transmission, and

Whereas, the Caroline Town Board implemented COVID-safety measures in both its [Reopening Plan](#) and [COVID-19 Safety Guidelines](#), therefore be it

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby reaffirms the following protocols for Town departments to protect and promote the welfare of both employees and the public:

1. All town personnel and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, shall wear masks in all town buildings, in town vehicles, and on work sites, when more than one individual is present and six-foot distancing cannot be maintained.
2. Frequently touched surfaces (door handles, digital locks, stamp machine) will be wiped with antiseptic wipes at first entry, after use during the day, and at daily office closing.
3. Town personnel who feel sick are required to stay home. If an employee has been in close contact with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in past 14 days, they will be required to quarantine.
4. Each department will maintain a visitor log to facilitate contact tracing.

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

Resolution 126 of 2021. Approval of Testing or Vaccination by Town Personnel

A motion made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Fracchia

Whereas, vaccination is highly effective at preventing infection by COVID and, in breakthrough cases, reducing the severity of the disease, and

Whereas, the delta variant of the COVID virus has been demonstrated to put both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals at higher risk of contracting COVID, and

Whereas, the Town of Caroline has a duty to provide a safe work environment and to enact policies that have been demonstrated to decrease the risk of COVID exposure within the community, and

Whereas, the Governor of New York State and the President of the United States have recommended that local municipalities implement testing/vaccination policies for the public welfare, therefore be it

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby approves joining with Tompkins County's testing/vaccination program to require personnel to undergo weekly surveillance testing as recommended by the Tompkins County Health Department or be fully vaccinated for COVID-19, and further be it

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board authorizes the Supervisor to collaborate with the County to establish testing procedures for employees who are not vaccinated.

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

Resolution 127 of 2021. Resolution to Proceed with Bioretention Project at Town Hall

A motion made by Supr. Witmer and Clm. Goldberg

Whereas, in 2019 the Town of Caroline committed to a bioretention feature at the Town Hall grounds and received a \$6,000 grant from Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District, and

Whereas, the bioretention feature would support the Town's goal of constructing a beautification feature at the Town Hall, and

Whereas, the bioretention feature would buffer stormwater runoff and promote infiltration and purification of ground water, and

Whereas, the bioretention feature would provide a model for responsible management of stormwater runoff at a prominent location for individual property owners and businesses, and

Whereas, John Andersson and Donald Harner (T.G. Miller) have produced engineered plans for the bioretention feature at the Town Hall, therefore be it

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board hereby authorizes the Supervisor to work with Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District to define a planting plan and proceed with project construction.

Discussion: It was shared by Supr. Witmer that Hwy. Superintendent, Bob Spencer, is opposed to this project and believes that there are other areas in the town where something like this would be more beneficial. Councilmembers and Supr. determined that this discussion should be tabled until Bob had an opportunity to weigh in on this discussion.

Supr. Witmer made a motion to table.

Tabled

Presentation of 2022 Tentative Budget

Supr. Witmer introduced the Tentative Budget for 2022 and presented an overview of each department's line items and described his process of arriving at those numbers. He explained that the total estimates are based on what was adopted in 2021, what has been expended thus far and what the projected totals will be through the end of the year. Some highlights of the presentation included a 4% increase for all non-union

personnel; purchasing a lawn mower for our maintenance worker for town grounds and cemeteries; a slight decrease in highway equipment, this was because this line was increased last budget season for the purchase of a new snow plow truck and a new one-ton.

Discussion of Process for Speed Limit Change Requests

A Petition with 37 signatures was received on August 11, 2021 to reduce the speed limit on Landon Rd. Supr. Witmer spoke with County Superintendent, Jeff Smith regarding the process of such request and first is to complete a T9 Form. After the T9 form is received, the the State DOT will conduct a traffic study on the road and based on that, they will make the determination if a change is necessary. Clm. Murray wondered if a town-wide speed limit of 45mph should be set. Discussed the possibility of integrating a town speed limit into the zoning process. Further information will be provided once they have more communication with the zoning planner and DOT.

Resolution 128 of 2021. Budget Transfers

A motion made by Supv. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Snow

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

\$1,500	from A5132.2 Garage EQ	to A5132.4 Garage CE
\$6,000	from A1990.4 Contingency	to A9060.8 Medical Insurance
\$16,000	from DA5112.1 Improvements PS	to DA5110.1 General PS

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

Resolution 129 of 2021. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding

A motion made by Supr. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Snow

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board authorizes the Supervisor to sign the Memorandum of Agreement to adjust the 2021 HRA contribution to employees with the Town's health plan to meet the increased out-of-pocket maximum amount.

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

Resolution 130 of 2021. Approval of Vouchers for Payment of Town Bills

A motion made by Supv. Witmer and seconded by Clm. Murray

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board approves payment of vouchers for bills in the amounts of \$29,890.67 for the General Fund, \$47,587.11 for the Highway Fund, and \$325.85 for the Streetlight Fund.

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

Approval of Minutes

The Town Board reviewed and approved the Minutes of September 7, 2021, Agenda Meeting as submitted by Town Clerk, Jessica Townsend and was carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn by Supervisor Witmer and seconded by Councilmember Snow and carried unanimously at 9:16p.m.

----Adjourn----

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica L. Townsend, Town Clerk

(ATTACHMENT #1)

Town of Caroline Highway Department
Superintendents Report
09- 15 - 2021

Roadwork

- New signs have been installed on Bald Hill to deter direct traffic
- Woodland Rd. was paved
- Snyder Hill was paved
- Middaugh Rd. is scheduled for paving late Sept.
- Chestnut Rd. is scheduled for paving late Sept.
- Currently working on ditching and ditch stabilization on chestnut in preparation for paving.

Equipment

- New loader scheduled for late Sept. delivery
- New 10-wheeler scheduled for tentative delivery at the end of Sept but waiting to hear back from the dealer

Miscellaneous

- The new bench for Dallas will be delivered in the next couple of days. I have been working with Shawn Jordan to install this bench in the Speedsville Community Park. I will be arranging a small get together with Dalla's family when we get it all set up.

Bobby Spencer