

Caroline Town Board Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2013

The Town Board Business meeting held on March 12, 2013 at the Caroline Town Hall was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor Don Barber.

Attendance:

Don Barber, Supervisor
Dominic Frongillo, Councilmember
Linda Adams, Councilmember-Absent
Aaron Snow, Councilmember
Irene Weiser, Councilmember

Recording

Secretary: Marilou Harrington, Town Clerk

Also present: Tony Tavelli, Mark Witmer and Jackie Cassaniti of the Town of Caroline attended the meeting.

Privilege of the Floor

Tony Tavelli-Tony asked the board if they had any idea why it seemed that there was a large increase in the tax assessment for large landowners. He said the town should be concerned for the consequences; that the rate increase is contrary to what the Comprehensive Plan is trying to achieve. What will people have to do? Possibly have to sell off lots to be able to pay the taxes. There is a talk of a lawsuit brought by landowners in Tioga County. Whether this is a class action suit or just a large number of landowners that have come together to fight the increase, he wasn't sure. He was also wondering whether it is just large land owners that our targeted.

Supervisor Barber responded that Tompkins County does a countywide assessment, whereas Tioga County has individual assessors for each specified area in the Towns. The two counties should not be connected in any way in how the property assessment is done, unless Tioga County assessment is following what Tompkins County is doing with their assessment procedure. The County assessment procedure is objective, it is not political, or subjective. Supervisor Barber continued mentioning some of the key points (that he referred to as mentioned by Tony Tavelli) is that "farm to farm" sale, helps determine what amount the Agriculture land is selling for, which sets the assessed value. Undeveloped rural land will see a \$1000 increase making an acre assessed at \$2,300. That is a 130% increase in assessment on land. What you see on your taxes is the full value of the property based at 100% value but if you have an Agriculture exemption that amount will be the taxable amount. To get an Agriculture exemption, it can be applied for at the Assessment office until April 1, 2013. There will also be a question and answer session held by the Tompkins County Assessment Department on Thursday, April 4th at 7 P.M. at the Brooktondale Fire Hall.

Mark Witmer – Mark spoke about the Solarize Caroline Campaign and the work with Energy Independent Caroline. He says he appreciates solar electric and solar usage. Information can be found about the program as solarizetompkinsse.org. There will be workshops held in April and May.

Reports

Cindy Whittaker, Highway Superintendent (Given by Councilmember Irene Weiser)

No report

Don Barber, Town Supervisor

Correspondence of Note:

1. Letter from TC Highway asking for long range highway needs and priorities
2. Letter from Water resource Council to Congressman Reed regarding funding for USGS Gauge Stations
3. GadZukes! Celebration Grant Application
4. Response from Taitem Engineering about fire escape on Town hall
5. Haefele increasing rate \$2/month
6. Route 79 could be updated. Still be a two lane highway, Meeting next Tuesday, Ithaca Tompkins County council (ITCTC) , 29 min.

Report:

1. No news from Conversations with Congressman Reed's office about FEMA reimbursement of Beaver Creek \$66K and approval of stream bed plan for Banks - \$300K
2. Second Road Preservation Forums 2/21 – reviewed engineering of road structures, how they respond to loading, ESAL's and axles, introduced the road system in Town, costs of road maintenance and repair, and summarized LaBella Load Carrying Capacity report
3. Final forum 3/21 - legal frame work and committee discussing factors they are considering in developing thresholds and administration procedure

Frank Proto, County Representative

Road Reclassification: (Route 79 East- Slaterville Rd.) from downtown Ithaca to Whitney Point. The Town would receive more money for road, bridge repair and maintenance. Route 79 East is considered the 2nd most direct route to 81. New design standards will work better with higher levels of traffic.

Congressman Reed: The federal government is thinking about withdrawing money from all of the gauging stations in the County. There was a letter sent from the County to Senator Gilabrand and Senator Schumer. Senator Gilabrand responded to the letter and will contact the appropriate people in Washington about the situation.

Health Committee meeting: The Foodnet-Meals on Wheels has absorbed about \$100,000 shortfall of the cost to feed nutritional meals to seniors and those disabled who are in need in the County. The County helped them with about \$60,000.

Challenge Industries, Unity House and the Racker Center has a 6% decrease in their funding. Which transfers, for example, to 2 million dollars for the Racker Center and the County does not have those kinds of funds to make up the difference. This cut is State wide so many places will be affected

State Reallocation of funds: the State is talking about reallocating funds from Better Housing for Tompkins County (BHTC) and Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services (INHS). They get \$65,000.00 and the State wants to cut that to \$56,000.00 and move both agencies under one umbrella. This will mean that BHTC will lose its support for rural housing programing. It could eventually cause BHTC to close in a few years.

Broadband- There is hope some people in Speedsville will get internet service as the Taft Road tower in Caroline and the Tower in Danby will be used by Clarity Connect. The County received a 2 million dollar grant for broadband, however, there was not enough funds to include the Towns of Enfield of and Caroline.

Energy Independent Caroline- NYSEG rate increases, as a surcharge on our bills to support Milliken Station. There will be a rate increase on the every household of \$1.11/mos., on every small commercial business, \$29.00/mos., and large commercial business of \$1600.00/mos.

Youth Employment- Setting up a meeting at BOCES Youth Services with Tony Delucci.

Aaron Snow, Town Board

The Watershed meeting got cancelled on the 11th, they will reschedule

Youth Annual Report- A copy is in the correspondence file.

Recreation Partnership will follow up if they can come in April to talk with the board. Aaron will follow up with Janice Johnson about the date

Dominic Frongillo, Town Board

Energy Independent Caroline- Climate Ready, Climate Smart Conference with Barbara Lifton, April 18th-21st. For information on renewable energy; climatesmartclimateready.org

Irene Weiser, Town Board

No report

Linda Adams, Town Board

No report-Absent

Approval of Abstracts**Resolution 67 of 2013****General Fund Abstract**

A motion was made by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mr. Snow to approve payment for the General Fund voucher numbers 62 through 91 for \$12,466.27.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Discussion- There is a 10 % increase on the bill number 66; Community Science Institute. The Town has paid for many years the water monitoring of Six Mile Creek. There are 6 sites being monitored in Tioga County (Red Flag testing) which the Town of Caroline is being asked to pay for 3 sites for the amount of \$294 (which is half of the cost). Councilmember Weiser had spoke with Steve Penningroth at budget time and through miscommunication assumed that the 10% increase was standard. There is also another Red flag testing charge of \$350.00, for West Owego Creek, testing for "signature chemicals". Supervisor Barber asked the board for suggestions about the extra charges. Councilmember Weiser suggested that if we have money remaining in the budget at the end of the year (in that budget line) that we pay the extra charges. The board agreed.

A motion was made by Mr. Barber and seconded by Ms. Weiser to amend voucher number 66 to \$2817.00, and to pay the General Fund abstracts is the amount \$11,822.27.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Resolution 68 of 2013**Streetlight Fund Abstract**

A motion was made by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mr. Frongillo to approve payment for the Streetlight Fund voucher numbers 5 and 6 for \$587.81.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Resolution 69 of 2013
Highway Fund Abstract

A motion was made by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mr. Snow to approve payment for the Highway Fund voucher numbers 28 through 47 for \$79,758.10.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Resolutions

Resolution 70 of 2013

Town of Caroline Assessment Review Committee

Motion made by Mr. Barber; Seconded by Ms. Weiser

Resolved, that the Caroline Town Board hereby appoints Alan Karasin and Len Porgozala to the Town of Caroline Assessment Review Committee, and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Caroline Town Board hereby sets the Assessment Review to occur on May 22, 2013 from 3 -5 PM at the Caroline Town Hall.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Resolution 71 of 2013

Computel Consultants

Motion made by Mr. Barber: Seconded by Mr. Frongillo

Resolved, that the Caroline Town Board hereby directs the Supervisor to sign a contract with Computel Consultants of Earlville NY for the purpose of auditing the Town's utility bills and cable franchise fee payments.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Resolution 72 of 2013

Resolution in Support of Legislation for Contact Information of Vacant Structures

Motion made by Mr. Barber: Seconded by Mr. Frongillo

Whereas, vacant, abandoned, and foreclosed homes and structures have proliferated throughout NYS over the past five years; and

Whereas, vacant structures that are not maintained for months at a time degrade and depreciate the value of that vacant structure as well as surrounding properties; and

Whereas, lending institutions that hold mortgages on said vacant structures do not always provide the contact information of a responsible party; and

Whereas Assembly Bills A.88 and A.824 would make it mandatory for lending institutions to provide contact information of responsible parties of vacant structures to local governments; and require good faith in obtaining a foreclosure;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the Caroline Town Board hereby supports passage of said Bills and respectfully request the NYS Assembly and Senate to pass such legislation; and

Be It Further Resolved, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to Senator James Seward and

Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Resolution 73 of 2013

Tompkins County Tourism Sign

Motion made by Mr. Barber: Seconded by Mr. Frongillo

Resolved, that the Caroline Town Board hereby directs the Supervisor or Highway Superintendent to sign the NYS Dept. of Transportation sign installation permit for a Tompkins County Tourism sign to be installed on NYS Route 79 at the Tioga County border.

Table Aaron and Irene,

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Resolution 74 of 2013

Resolution to Urge NYS Legislature and Governor to Stop Using Records Management Reserve Funds for other purposes

Motion made by Mr. Barber: Seconded by Mr. Snow

WHEREAS, New York State has long understood the importance of efficient records management policies and procedures to ensure the continuity of government, protection from liability, and preservation of historical documents, and

WHEREAS, in 1987, the Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund was created in New York State with the clear intent to provide funding for programs for local governments to establish, create, and maintain procedures and programs to ensure the integrity and preservation of government records, and

WHEREAS, County Clerks across New York State collect this money on recording of land records and civil court filings and forward all such money so collected to the New York State Commissioner of Taxation & Finance to be placed in a DEDICATED FUND in accordance with statute, and

WHEREAS, a total of \$3,394,000 has been taken from this dedicated fund to offset deficiencies in the New York State Budget for at least the last four years, and,

Now therefore be it,

RESOLVED, That the Town of Caroline Town Board does hereby petition the Governor of the State of New York and our state representatives to direct that the New York State Division of Budget authorize the application process for grants through the Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund,

RESOLVED, further, That the Town of Caroline Town Board does hereby petition the Governor of the State of New York and our state representatives to immediately end the practice of sweeping money collected for a dedicated purpose and using it for other purposes,

RESOLVED, further, That the Town Clerk of the Town of Caroline send certified copies of this Resolution to the Governor of the State of New York and our state representatives.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Resolution 75 of 2013

Authorize Supervisor to Sign Information Technology Services Contract with Brightworks

Motion made by Mr. Barber: Seconded by Mr. Frongillo

Whereas, the Caroline Town Board recognizes that electronic communication makes sense on many levels for conducting and communicating Town business, and

Whereas, the Caroline Town Board recently passed a resolution supporting universal access to high speed internet, and

Whereas, developing a reliable, efficient Town government IT system will save costs in the long run in maintenance and equipment purchases, and

Whereas the Town incurred 30 hours of maintenance time in 2012 to just keep the system running,

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Caroline Town Board hereby directs the Supervisor to sign a contract with Brightworks Computer Consulting of Ithaca for Information Technology Services, and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Caroline Town Board assigns the authority to release any work orders to Brightworks to the Town Clerk and in their absence, Supervisor Don Barber, and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Caroline Town Board establishes the following priorities for system work to be assigned to Brightworks

1. Analyze the current system- software, hardware, and security protection and recommend an action plan'
2. Institute those action steps approved by the Town board with consultation with the CIT Committee,

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Nay

Resolution 76 of 2013

Communication Specialist Services

Motion made by Mr. Barber: Seconded by Mr. Frongillo

Resolved, that the Caroline Town Board hereby directs the Supervisor to negotiate a contract with Mike Ludgate for Communication Specialist Services for 2013 for an amount not to exceed \$2,000 without prior authorization by the Town Board.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Abstain

Resolution 77 of 2013

CIT Committee Member

Motion made by Ms. Weiser: Seconded by Mr. Barber

Resolved, that the Caroline Town Board appoints Alan Karsin to the Communications Information and Technology Committee.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye.

Agenda

Discussion and Action Topics

- Approve Abstracts: Highway, General, Lighting (8:05)
 - Appointment of Assessment Review Board & Date for Assessment Review (8:10)
 - Authorize Supervisor to Sign Contract with Computel for Utility Invoice Research (8:15)
 - Resolution to Support NYS Assembly Bill A “Require Lending Institutions to Notify Local Government” (8:20)
 - Authorize Supervisor to Sign NYS Dept of Transportation Permit Application for Welcome Sign at Route 79 at Tioga County Border (8:30)
 - Resolution to Urge NYS Legislature and Governor to Stop Using Records Management Reserve Funds for other purposes (8:35)
 - Authorize Supervisor to Sign Information Technology Services Contract with Brightworks (8:40)
 - Authorize Supervisor to Enter Into Contract for Communication Support Specialist (8:50)
 - Approve Minutes of meetings on 2/12/13 meeting (9:00)
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Approval of Minutes

Resolution 78 of 2013

Minutes of the Business Meeting held February 12, 2013:

A motion was made by Mr. Barber and seconded Mr. Snow to accept the minutes of the February 12th, 2013 meeting as submitted by the Town Clerk.

Adopted Barber: Aye; Frongillo: Aye; Adams: Absent; Snow: Aye; Weiser: Aye

Adjourned on a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Ms. Weiser the meeting adjourned at 10:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilou Harrington, Town Clerk