

**Meeting of Town Board of Caroline
11-18-19**

Public Hearing on the 2020 Caroline Preliminary Budget

Attendees: Councilmember Snow, Tim Murray, John Fracchia, Irene Weiser and Supervisor Witmer, Velvet Lyke (Bookkeeper and Assistant to Supervisor, Scribe)

Residents: There were nine residents in attendance

Supervisor Witmer called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Pledge of Alliance led by Supervisor Witmer

Public Hearing Portion of Meeting

Supervisor Witmer presented a small presentation regarding the FY2020 Preliminary Budget.

Pete Hoyt indicated that the 5.2% Levy Change is concerned regarding this increase versus the fund balances held by the Town.

Councilmember Murray indicated that the Town Board made the conscious choice to leave a nice reserve due to the Town Barn Building.

Mike Moran inquired about the duties related to the Bookkeeper, Assistant Bookkeeper, Assistant to Code Enforcer and the Supervisor's Assistant. The assigning of duties were moved from other positions. Supervisor Witmer indicated that the new position was planned for years in advance and the Town Board budgeted appropriately. The Town Highway Assistant budget did increase due to a new Superintendent and more hours budgeted.

Don Barber has a few considerations for various line items.

The Preliminary Budget Hearing for A and DA was adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Public Hearing on the 2020 Caroline Fire Protections District Budget:

Public Hearing called to order at 8:27 pm

The Preliminary Budget Hearing for the Fire Protection District was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Public Hearing on the 2020 Caroline Lighting District Budget:

Public Hearing called to order at 8:30 pm

The Lighting tax base doesn't include any exemptions.

The Preliminary Budget Hearing for the Lighting District was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Town Board Meeting

Business Meeting

Meeting called to order at 8:40 pm.

Privilege of the Floor:

Mike Moran was interested in the Privilege of the Floor policy and the intent of the new policy. Councilmember Weiser indicated that the new policy was to ensure personnel issues of non-elected positions were not discussed at Board Meetings. The Board did reach out to Tompkins County to see the County position on this issue. It is the plan of the Town Board to create an email that the public can address the Board of their concerns regarding personnel issues.

Pete Hoyt asked for clarification on the Code Officer. His understanding of the new policy means that issues related to the Code Officer would not be able to be addressed at Board meetings. The Town Board stated that if the issue was personnel related no it would not be part of the Board Meeting. However, if it was a concern over a policy of the Code Officers Office it could be addressed at the Board Meeting.

Supervisor's Report

2020 budget work

Geothermal heating and cooling project at Historic Town Hall are now complete and operational. Thanks to Susan Barr for spearheading the grant application to the Office of Court Administration that secured \$30,000 for the project, and to the court for providing access to the Halco crew during construction. Thanks to Barry Goodrich and Brook Greenhouse for recommending geothermal after we reviewed air-source heat pump proposals, and to Brooke for assistance with oversight of project.

Energy Independent Caroline: Brighten Up Caroline distributed LED bulbs and home energy improvement information during October community events. Volunteers have been working steadily at sewing cloth bags for Brighten Up materials. The project will continue into the spring.

Watershed Committee: Terry Carroll and Osamu Tsuda will be helping conduct a Climate Vulnerability Assessment for Caroline. They will be joining us at our November 19 meeting to discuss the work.

Department, Committee, & Liaison Updates

Memo from Mike Moran: Regarding the Memorial

A small group of volunteers were unable to completely refurbish the Memorial by Veterans Day 11/11/19.

The grounds were cleaned, stones and marble cleaned, moss taken off concrete, trees and brush cleared back to show Memorial.

Town Highway Department picked up the brush and limbs.

We attempted to open the Name case to fix fallen names but were unable to do so. Dave Moesch (who did much of the work on a previous cleanup of it) was able to loosen all but 4 of the stainless-steel screws. This part of the project will have to be done in better weather next spring prior to Memorial Day.

The Old Mill newsletter did two articles requesting volunteers for the 1 day cleanup of the site.

John Carson offered his crew. Greg Clark, Kayrn Scott, and Emily Adams also volunteered to help. We eventually did not need the 1-day work as it had been done over a period of time.

At your suggestion, I researched solar powered flag pole lights. At Lowes, the single light mounted on the pole shining upwards is \$99, a dual light (pole and monument) is \$199.

The single light also might be a solution for the Town Flagpole.

I will try to keep you up to date on continued efforts. Thanks for your support on this.

Planning Board

Councilmember Murray: Draft of Comprehensive Plan will be done after Thanksgiving. This plan was developed by the Town Planning Board.

Broadband

Councilmember Weiser: Haefele has been contacted and work is progressing on the Broadband issue.

Town Roads:

Councilmember Weiser: Jeff Smith (county) was contacted regarding a traffic study on Coddington Road, and he indicated he will do his best to get one completed. Councilmember Weiser is helping get people together to get a petition to change the traffic speed.

Discussion and Action Topics

Adopt 2020 Budget:

Resolution 153 of 2019

Resolved, the Caroline town board makes the following budget changes to the Preliminary 2020 Budget:

- increase the DA5110.42 to \$287,000 for the Ekroos Road Grant Project
- Update Unexpended Balance for the A Fund to cover changes in budget
- Update Unexpended Balance for the DA Fund Balances for changes in budget
- Decrease A9060.8 by \$15,000
- Increase community services A8989.4 by \$15,000.
- Increase A8989.41 to \$30,000

Supervisor Witmer proposed the Resolution and Councilmember Snow seconded the Resolution. All Board Members were in favor. Resolution passed.

Resolution 154 2019

Resolved, the Caroline town board adopts the 2020 Budget

Supervisor Witmer proposed the Resolution and Councilmember Murray seconded the Resolution. All Board Members were in favor. Resolution passed.

Transition Plans for Town Clerk and Highway Superintendent's Office

Due to the election results the Town will need Deputy Town Clerk and Assistant to Superintendent. Supervisor Witmer contacted the Tompkins County Civil Service and they indicated that there are job descriptions for those positions. Thus, posting for the jobs will be easier.

Councilmember Weiser recommended that the Jobs be posted as soon as possible so that the jobs can be filled by January 1, 2020. The new Town Clerk and Superintendent will make the decisions on hiring.

Supervisor Witmer will have Civil Service post the jobs, and he will inquire as to how these situations are usually handled.

Town Hall Forums:

Councilmember Weiser wants to consider getting more people in the community involved in town matters. She suggested possibly a Town Hall every quarter and change locations outside of the normal meetings locations. Don Barber suggested that the Board get together with the political parties to get more of the Town involved. The possibility of setting specific topics might bring people to the meetings.

Update to Privilege of the Floor Policy:

Supervisor Witmer put together the following:

Privilege of the Floor Policy at Caroline Town Board Meetings

Privilege-of-the-Floor is offered at the beginning of town meetings as an opportunity for individuals to provide input to the town board. Speakers have up to three minutes, subject to modification depending upon time constraints of a meeting. Each citizen is provided one speaking opportunity per meeting; written input is also welcome.

Speakers agree not to speak about Town staff personnel matters. Personnel matters should be directed to the appropriate Supervisor or Department Head.

Comments should be directed to the Town Board. The Supervisor or Councilpersons may answer questions brought forward or defer to allow for further research and thought.

Respectful discourse is required.

Councilmember Fracchia suggested that the board investigate this issue and to decide on a mechanism that the town residents can use to discuss personnel issues.

The Town Board decided to hold on and not vote on this until further information can be obtained and work be performed on this. It will be discussed at next meeting. Councilmember Weiser will do additional research with the county.

Transfers:

Budget Transfer Resolution

Resolution 155 of 2019

Resolved, the Caroline town board makes the following budget transfers:

Amount	From	To
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	General Fund	
\$1,000	A1110.404 Trial Exp.	A1110.4 Court CE
\$80	A1110.2 Court EQ	A1110.4 Court CE
\$300	A1220.2 Supervisor EQ	A1220.4 Supervisor CE
\$1,050	A1989.4 Contingency	A1420.4 Legal CE
\$2,600	A1620.2 Town Hall EQ	A1620.41 Town Hall IT
\$1,000	A1620.4 Town Hall CE	A1620.41 Town Hall IT
\$2,500	A1990.4 Contingency	A1910.4 Insurance
\$300	A5010.2 Support of Hwy EQ	A5010.4 Support of Hwy CE

\$360	A1989.4 Contingency	A8810.4 Cemeteries CE
\$2,700	A1989.4 Contingency	A9060.8 Medical Ins.

Highway Fund

\$38,000	DA5142.4 Snow Removal CE	DA5110.4 Gen. Repairs CE
\$28,000	DA5130.2 Machinery EQ	DA5130.4 Machinery CE
\$1,100	A1990.4 Contingency	DA9060.8 Medical Ins.

Supervisor Witmer proposed the Resolution and Councilmember Fracchia seconded the Resolution. All Board Members were in favor. Resolution passed.

Budget Amendment

Resolution 156 2019

Resolved, the Caroline town board makes the following budget amendment:

\$80,625 Increase DA5112.2 Improvements EQ

\$80,625 Increase DA3501 CHIPS (highway improvements)

Supervisor Witmer proposed the Resolution and Councilmember Murray seconded the Resolution. All Board Members were in favor.

Resolution passed.

Review of Abstracts:

Resolution 157 of 2019

Supervisor Witmer, seconded by Councilmember Snow, made the motion to pay the A vouchers in the amount of \$64,067.30. All in favor, the motion passed

Resolution 158 of 2019

Supervisor Witmer, seconded by Councilmember Facchia, made the motion to pay the DA vouchers in the amount of \$195,700. All in favor, the motion passed.

Resolution 159 of 2019

Supervisor Witmer, seconded by Councilmember Weiser, made the motion to pay the Street Light Vouchers in the amount of \$460.03 All in favor, the motion passed.

Brooke Greenhouse Status

Mr. Greenhouse can be moved to permanent status and this would start his probationary period. The Board has until December 6, 2019 to decide. His probationary period would be from 6 weeks to one year. Supervisor Witmer suggests to retroactivity grant permanent status to October 7th when he became eligible. This needs to be decided during the work meeting on December 3, 2019. Councilmember Murray and Councilmember Snow both suggest 6 months probationary period. All the Town Board Members agree to a six- month probationary period.

Supervisor Witmer and Councilmember Murray will meet with Brooke per his request.

Local Laws:

Supervisor Witmer would like to propose a local law to allow hiring of personnel from adjacent towns.

Supervisor Witmer would like to propose a Local Law changing the announcement period for public hearings to 3 days.

This will be on the agenda for work meeting and a then a public hearing at the business meeting.

Informational Meeting on the Trail:

Board suggested waiting until after January 1, 2020.

At the informational meeting announce that we are looking for other alternatives and give the information of the alternative.

Supervisor Witmer would like to keep it simple.

This will be discussed at future meetings.

Supervisor Witmer, seconded by Councilmember Facchia made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:17 pm

Prepared by:

Velvet Lyke

Bookkeeper