

Caroline Town Board End-of-Year Meeting Minutes of December 28, 2018

The Town Board Business Meeting held on December 28, 2018 at the Caroline Town Hall was called to order at 4:35 p.m. by Supervisor Mark Witmer.

Attendance: Mark Witmer, Supervisor
John Fracchia, Councilmember
Irene Weiser, Councilmember
Cal Snow, Councilmember
Megan Barber, Councilmember

Recording Secretary: Jessica L. Townsend, Deputy Clerk

Also Present: 6 people of the public attended

Supervisor Mark Witmer led the Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

Privilege-of -the-Floor:

No one spoke under privilege of the floor

Resolutions

**Resolution 177 of 2018
2018 Encumbrance Resolution**

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by John Fracchia
Resolved, the Caroline Town Board makes the following 2018 Encumbrances:

\$62,000.00	DA5130.2	Machinery EQ	Purchase of new Truck
\$141.55	A3620.4	Code Office	Code Office forms
\$950.00	A1670.4	Printing and Mailing	Tax mailing
\$220.00	A1440.4	Clerks	2 office chairs

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

**Resolution 178 of 2018
Budget Transfers**

A motion made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Irene Weiser
Resolved, the Caroline Town Board makes the following 2019 Budget Transfers:

Amount	From		To	
\$292.50	A1990.4	Contingency	A1220.4	Supervisor CE
\$1,200.00	A8020.4	Planning CE	A1420.4	Legal CE
\$239.94	A1220.103	Superv. Asst.	A1010.1	Town Board
\$1,890.09	A1220.103	“	A1410.101	Deputy Clerk

\$350.00	A1990.4	Contingency	A1620.41	Town Hall IT
\$346.02	A1220.103	Superv. Asst.	A5010.1	Hwy. PS
\$9,065.92	DA5140.1	Misc PS	A5110.1	Gen Rep PS
\$3,831.45	DA5112.1	Improv. PS	DA5110.1	“
\$1,837.85	DA5140.111	Misc Vac/Sick/Hol	DA5110.1	“
\$2,248.22	DA5110.4	Gen Rep CE	DA5130.4	Mach CE
\$6,832.75	DA5140.111	Misc Vac/Sick/Hol	DA5142.1	Snow Rem PS
\$6,569.64	DA5110.4	Gen Rep CE	DA5142.4	Snow Rem CE
\$52,291.00	DA5112.2	Improv. EQ	DA5130.2	Mach. EQ
\$4,946.00	A1990.4	Contingency	DA5130.2	Mach. EQ
\$4,763.00	DA5110.4	Gen Rep CE	DA5130.2	Mach. EQ
\$8,035.99	DA9010.8	Retirement	DA9060.8	Med Ins.
\$3,529.83	DA9030.8	Soc Sec	“	“
\$1,940.86	DA9040.8	Workers' Comp	“	“

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

**Resolution 179 of 2018
Budget Amendment**

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Megan Barber
Resolved, the Caroline Town Board makes the following 2019 Budget Amendments:

\$1,990.19	Increase A3005	Mortgage Tax
\$1,990.19	Increase A9060.8	Medical Ins.
\$11,300.00	Increase DA2300	Intergov. Services
\$11,300.00	Increase DA5110.4	Gen. Rep. CE

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

**Resolution 180 of 2018
General Fund Abstract**

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Irene Weiser to approve payment for the General Fund voucher number 366 through 374 for \$5,672.16

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

**Resolution 181 of 2018
Highway Fund Abstract**

A motion was made by Mark Witmer and seconded by Cal Snow to approve payment for the Highway Fund voucher number 255 through 264 for \$35,002.13

Adopted: Witmer: Aye; Fracchia: Aye; Weiser: Aye; Snow: Aye; Barber: Aye

Discussion of Brighten-up Caroline Project Coordinator Position

Supervisor Mark Witmer started the discussion by distributing copies of the Brighten-up Caroline Coordinator Scope of Work to those that did not have a copy. EIC has been working on this project for over a year. Received a grant and have been working on implementing the grant. Working to transition over to LED light fixtures throughout the town and helping town residents transition as well. It has been an evolving process. When they wrote the grant, they did not ask for a coordinator position therefore made a budget line of \$10,222 for LED bulb contractor for residents. Supervisor Witmer then went over CEC Grant Project Milestone Payment Table with town board members. Explained that EIC is now in the design phase. Councilmember Irene Weiser had questions regarding milestone dates. Supervisor Witmer explained that the dates are estimates based on phases of this 3-year projected project. NYSERDA is also helping in this project.

EIC has realized and agreed that the committee would like to engage a coordinator.

Councilmember John Fracchia states that at the last town board meeting, a proposal was made to offer the position to somebody, who he states is a very qualified somebody in his opinion, but it was someone who has a relationship with people involved. Supervisor Mark Witmer said that they (EIC) had started casual outreach to people they knew and who could manage this project. At that point, they didn't know what would be required to verify bulb installation. So, in late fall EIC members started to reach out to people they believed would be good fit for this project.

Councilmember Irene Weiser described that at last months' board meeting, Supervisor Witmer brought forward a resolution to hire Jonathan Bates as the Brighten-up Caroline Coordinator, who is also the husband of a town board member, and son-in-law to an EIC member. Town Board member Megan Barber recused herself and Councilmember Weiser asked questions about how this came to be and if it was put forward to the public to apply and what was the job description.

EIC committee member Steve Nicholas said that the EIC group determined that the work to be done was more than any of their members could do.

Councilmember John Fracchia tried to summarize the situation and gathered that they knew they needed someone as the project grew, so each member reached out to their networks to try and fill the role. No one at that point wanted the job, including the members of EIC.

Councilmember Weiser spoke from her viewpoint that even if a committee member would have wanted to fill this position it too would have been a conflict. She added that she is conflicted because she saw Mr. Bates' resume he's phenomenally overqualified and would be a wonderful candidate, but it gets dicey when he's the husband of a sitting board member and a EIC member and former Town Supervisor's son-in-law. She hasn't seen where this has been offered in any official way to anybody. She is concerned that the board will get backlash from anyone that was never given a chance to apply.

Councilmember John Fracchia agrees that there needs to be a job description and process the applications, so everyone has a fair chance.

Councilmember Weiser – Said it might come back to Jonathan Bates, but they need to see others and make it a fair process. Needs to be handled in a procedural way. Feels Don Barber should take a step back and not be a part of the hiring process and let the other committee members handle it in a procedural way.

Councilmember Cal Snow – Has known Jonathan Bates for quite a while. Wants to see someone that lives here in the community and is qualified and has integrity and can count on. This feels personal to him because he values putting someone you know and trust into doing the work. That has a lot of weight with him. We are a small community with a limited job opportunity and we are fortunate to have his interest in this job.

Resident Janice Burton– Not privy to this whole process. Thanked Councilmember Irene Weiser for speaking up honestly and for fairness. Her opinion is that this was all inter-circle. Members of the committee reached out to people they personally knew. Only fair to advertise and do it clean. She was in the room for heated conversations regarding the clerk/highway positions, appointed vs. elected, and the positions would be salary. There was a lot of vocalizing then about having a broadband of people and not limiting it to the inner-circle of Caroline. She questioned the town board about what happens next; who interviews? Who makes the decision to hire? EIC or town board? Councilmember Fracchia said that would be the next phase to figure out.

Councilmember John Fracchia – He believes EIC should write the description of the position and decide who inevitably gets that position. They have the expertise to decide who is qualified and a good fit for the job.

Councilmember Irene Weiser – Wants Don Barber to step back and not be a part of the interviews or selection process. Also, would like to see why there was a spike in the position and how it went from \$10,000 to \$15,600. It is a substantial increase and is unclear about how that change came about, would like the program fees specified.

Further discussion regarding the grant received and energy navigators. The committee will be advertising in the Old Mill looking for town residents to become energy navigators. They will start classes in March, be graduates by September/October when the bulbs are to be distributed. They will then be able to help other town residents tighten-up their homes and learn about energy saving.

Supervisor Mark Witmer – Explained that any increase of pay for this position above the original estimate of \$10,222 is just a decision of what is appropriate for the job. Potentially, those additional funds will come from the town if they don't free up from other parts of the grant.

Councilmember Irene Weiser again clarified that she's sure that Don Barber has nothing but good interest of the town, same as Johnathan Bates, and EIC committee. Just needs this to be clean and fair to the public. Recommends it go back to the committee and they need to go over the job description, how it will be paid out, put the details together and then we can announce the

position. EIC will be do the interviews and once they have a recommendation, let the town board know and they will announce it.

It was suggested that the committee bring it forward for the Business meeting in January/February and go from there.

Councilmember Snow is frustrated with this process. Thinks they have the great candidate for this position and all of this is just busy work to drag the process out. Councilmember Weiser disagreed and again said it was for the sake of advertising the position to the public.

Tim Murray – Doesn't see why it would take until February, certainly believes it can be done as soon as EIC has the info together and get it back to the board. Suggested that language be added to include that Caroline residents are desirable to apply.

Councilmember Weiser – Planning Board has found a student to help take minutes; suggested to the EIC committee that having a minute taker could help capture some of the action items they discuss.

---**Adjourn**---

A motion to adjourn made by Mark Witmer, seconded by John Fracchia and carried unanimously at **6:56** p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica L. Townsend, Deputy Clerk