

Caroline Town Board Agenda Meeting Minutes of February 2, 2021

The Town Board Agenda Meeting was held electronically via Zoom teleconference on February 2, 2021 beginning at 7:00 p.m. and was hosted by Town Supervisor Mark Witmer

Attendance:

Supervisor Mark Witmer
Councilmember John Fracchia
Councilmember Cal Snow
Councilmember Tim Murray

Recording Secretary:

Velvet Lyke, Bookkeeper

Also present: 9 members of the public including Katherine Goldberg Forrest and Kathy Mix

PUBLIC HEARING on Law to Increase Planning Board Membership to Seven Persons BUSINESS MEETING

Supervisor Witmer asked if anyone would like to speak and no one wished to comment. With no comments the public hearing was closed at 7:07pm.

TOWN OF CAROLINE LOCAL LAW NUMBER 1 of 2021

Amendment of Town of Caroline Local Law #1 of 2002 to Increase Membership on the Town's Planning Board to Seven Persons

The Town Board of The Town of Caroline, New York, pursuant to a Resolution dated February 2, 2021 does hereby pass a local law as follows:

Section 1. Authority

This Local Law is adopted pursuant to the authority granted in the New York State Town Law, Section 271 of Town Law (Planning board, creation, appointment).

Section 2. Title

This Local Law shall be known as "Local Law Number XX of 2021", titled "Amendment of Town of Caroline Local Law #1 of 2002 to Increase Membership on the Town of Caroline Planning Board to Seven Persons."

Section 3. Purpose and Scope

The Town wishes to increase total membership on the Town's Planning Board from five to seven persons to enable additional participation by residents in Planning Board initiatives. Otherwise, all other provisions of Local Law #1 of 2002 shall remain in effect.

Section 4. This local law shall take effect following its adoption.

Privilege-of-the-Floor

Don Barber wanted to address the Board regarding the importance of diversity on the Zoning commission. The Economic Development Task force spoke about the amendment to the site plan local law and tie it to Zoning. He would recommend a special committee to work on the site plan local law before the moratorium ends.

Bruce Murray wanted to address the Board regarding increasing the number on the Planning Board. The Planning Board law states the term is equal to the number of Planning Board Members. This would make each term 7-years, and this is a rather long term. The Board may like to investigate this. He would also reiterate Don Barber's comments on the diverse members of the Zoning Commission.

Supervisor Witmer would like to consider assigning 5-year terms to Planning Board Members. He also indicated that the moratorium has language to extend the moratorium until the Zoning Regulations are put into place.

Councilmember Murray inquired if a new Public Hearing would be needed if the Board changed the term to the Planning Board. Mr Witmer said he would check on this.

Additions or Deletions to Agenda

Supervisor Witmer offered the following items to be offered to tonight's agenda: Reopening of the Reading Room; , and final budget transfers for 2020.

Interviews with Applicants for 2021 Town Board Seat

Katherine Goldberg Forrest

Katherine indicated that she has been interested in Town activities since the Noise Ordinance was passed. She has been a member of the Planning Board for the last two years and her interest has increased.

Councilmember Fracchia asked Katherine what you feel is the most critical issues facing Caroline. Katherine stated growth of Caroline, how new residents perceive Caroline, and how our community can welcome them and keep the culture that exists today.

Councilmember Murray asked Katherine about her feelings on the Economic Development Taskforce work. Katherine was excited about the work performed and how the members were able to get it completed during such a short time. She feels that the taskforce document and the Comprehensive Plan are common goals in the community and the Board should be mindful of the results.

Councilmember Murray asked Katherine her feeling regarding the Budget Process and its challenges. Katherine stated that the budgetary allotments and line items should match what the town values and expressed the Budget Process is something new to her and she is excited to get involved.

Supervisor Witmer asked Katherine what you treasure most about Caroline. Katherine has many animals and values the beautiful views, neighbors, and animals. She would like to see this rural commitment continue.

Kathy Mix:

She has been a volunteer in the Town for over 30 years. She would like to be a voice for her community on the Board and another set of ears to identify the issues important to the community.

Councilmember Fracchia asked Kathy what the pressing issues for the Town are and she responded Comprehensive Plan guidelines are great and feels that there may be some opposition of Zoning. Keeping Caroline rural is very important but the Board should consider the community and those visiting our area. The budget is always a concern.

Councilmember Murray asked Kathy is she has had a chance to read the Economic Development Taskforce Study and unfortunately, she has not had the time as of yet. Councilmember Murray also asked Kathy about the budget and she would like it to be fair and equitable to all and we will have to come up with some creative ways to keep taxes low and keep the town moving forward with the goals that would like to be accomplished.

Councilmember Fracchia asked Kathy her impressions on the Comprehensive Plan and she stated that the maps are great, and the goals are worthy and not sure how the Town can get there but is hopeful to get things rolling. She has a big concern about EMS and how to protect the community.

Supervisor Witmer asked Kathy what she treasures about Caroline and she said family. She has been here for over 30 years and raised a family, just built a new home, and plans on living out her life. She treasures the nature and the special things that occur in our community.

The interviews were concluded, and the Town Board will vote via messenger to Velvet who will then let Supervisor Witmer know the results.

The newly appointed Town Councilmember is Katherine Goldberg Forrest. Supervisor Witmer thanked Kathy Mix for putting herself out there and her willingness to help the Town. Councilmember Murray would like to ask Kathy to help with the EMS issue.

Resolution to Form a Town of Caroline Zoning Commission

Discussion: Formation of a Town of Caroline Zoning Commission

Proposed Resolution:

Whereas, from public input and the judgement of the Town's Planning Board based on increasing growth pressures and few development guidance tools to promote the goals of the Town, the Town's updated Comprehensive Plan recommends consideration of a zoning scheme appropriate for Caroline; and

Whereas, for towns like Caroline considering adopting zoning for the first time, a Zoning Commission must be established, which has the responsibility "*to recommend the boundaries of the original zoning districts and appropriate regulations to be enforced therein, make a preliminary report, hold public hearings and submit a final report to the local governing board...*"; therefore be it

Resolved, upon the recommendations of New York State and a local professional planner (Joan Jurkowich), and after consultation with the Town's Planning Board, the Caroline Town Board

hereby establishes a Zoning Commission of seven members, which shall include 3 members of the Town's Planning Board and additional Caroline residents appointed by the Town Board. A member of the Town Board shall serve as liaison to the Zoning Commission; and

Be it Further Resolved, the Town's Zoning Commission is a separate body with its specific charge and shall be disbanded upon submission of its final report to the Town Board.

The board expects the Zoning Commission would have a rigorous meeting schedule, approximately two meetings a month, and it could utilize the Land Use & Economic Development Taskforce research. There will be assistance from a professional planner. The Commission itself will determine how it will be meeting and how it will operate. The Board will discuss further how the Commission will be established.

The Resolution was discussed but it will be voted on at the February Business Meeting.

Resolution #61 of 2021: Adoption of Town of Caroline COVID-19 Guidelines:

Town of Caroline COVID-19 Guidelines

How Does COVID-19 Affect Town Operations

Employees should work remotely, if possible. If not able to work remotely and New York State permits opening of public buildings for business, employees shall follow pandemic distancing measures (6-ft. distance, wear a mask when closer than six feet or when others not members of your household are present, wash hands, and disinfect frequently touched surfaces). Employees shall also stagger their working times so employees are following capacity guidelines and not sharing the same space.

Essential Workers: Highway and Code Enforcement employees are classified as essential workers. If they are not showing any symptoms and there are no other employees available to do their work, they are allowed to work. Essential Workers must follow distancing measures at all times.

What are COVID-19 Protective Measures?

- Six-foot distance shall be maintained between all persons at town facilities (Historic Town Hall, Town Office Building, Highway Facilities). Visitors must sign in on the visitors' log.
- Face masks, positioned over nose and mouth, are required to be worn by anyone entering the town hall.
- Frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles, digital locks, stamp machine) should be wiped with antiseptic wipes at first entry, as needed throughout the day, and at last exit.

Who Should Quarantine?

- Any individual identified through contact tracing as someone who has been in contact with a known COVID-19 case, will be ordered into mandatory quarantine for 10 days from the last date of exposure to a known COVID-19 case (exposure is defined as having been within 6 feet of an infected individual for more than 10 minutes cumulatively over a 24-hour period). During this period, Health Department staff will contact the quarantined person daily to assess their health

status. If the individual remains healthy and does not develop symptoms during the quarantine period, the Health Department will release them from quarantine at the end of the 10-day period. The individual must then continue to monitor themselves for 4 additional days.

- If a member of an employee's household is quarantined, the employee is still allowed to go to work if the family is able to follow the quarantine instructions from the Tompkins County Health Department (the employee is not in quarantine, only the family member).
- Any individual who enters New York State from a non-contiguous state or Level 2 or higher U.S. Territory or foreign country (see NYS Out-of-State Travel Guidelines). The individual is responsible for monitoring their health for symptoms, getting tested if symptoms develop, and completing quarantine. Travelers may also "test out" by 1) obtaining a test three days prior to departure, 2) quarantining for three days after travel, and 3) obtaining a second test on day four. If both tests are negative, the traveler may exit quarantine.
- Anyone who was at a business or other public facility during the time noted on health alerts for possible exposure to COVID-19. Such individuals should obtain a test as soon as possible.
- Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19.

What if an Employee Tests Positive for COVID-19?

The Department Head will inform fellow employees of their possible exposure to COVID, but keep confidential the names of possible exposed employees due to privacy. The Department Head will also alert the Town Supervisor and the Human Resources Administrator (Bookkeeper). Employees who work directly with the infected employee will immediately quarantine in their home with the option to work remotely. The Town Supervisor will alert the Tompkins County Health Department of the positive case so they can start the contact tracing process. Essential Workers without symptoms may continue to work as described above.

Any areas that have been used for prolonged periods of time by the sick person should be closed off, according to CDC instruction. Twenty-four (24) hours should elapse prior to cleaning (to allow clearing of respiratory droplets from the work area).

An employee who has tested positive for COVID will not return to work until after they have been cleared by the Tompkins County Health Department.

What Support is Currently Available for Employees?

The Consolidated Appropriations Act (CCA) of 2021 did not extend employees' entitlement to benefits under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) beyond December 31, 2020. However, the Town of Caroline has elected to continue to provide these benefits to employees who cannot work remotely and are required to be quarantined, are sick from COVID-19, or have family care responsibilities as a consequence of COVID as follows:

- paid 2 weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at their regular rate if the employee is quarantined and/or is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms
- paid 2 weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at two-thirds (2/3) the employee's regular rate of pay because the employee is unable to work because of caring for an individual subject to quarantine or care for a child whose school or child care provider is closed
- given up to an additional 10 weeks of paid expanded family and medical leave at two thirds (2/3) the employee's regular rate of pay, if the employee has been employed for at least 30 days and unable to work due to care of a child whose school or day care is closed

- part-time employees are eligible for the number of hours of leave that the employee works on an average over a two-week period

Non-essential Travel

According to Executive Order 202.45, employees will forgo their paid COVID sick leave benefits if they engage in non-essential travel to any states other than contiguous states. If an employee chooses to travel, they will have to use their personal vacation time for quarantine.

See also **Town of Caroline COVID-19 Reopening Safety Plan**

The policy will be amended to add 4 hours of paid time for vaccination and COVID testing.

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

Committee Reports

John Fracchia, Councilmember –

Building and Grounds

- The deadline for Request For Qualifications (RFQ) submissions for the Highway Department Facilities project was January 31, 2021 and six proposals were received. The committee will be meeting to review them, interview finalists, discuss qualifications, and make a recommendation to the Town Board at the March 2021 Business Meeting.

Joint Youth Commission

- Attended the January board meeting and at it the JYC decided to conduct an analysis of best board practices and organizational effectiveness through the administration of a vitality checklist survey. The survey will be completed by JYC board members and town/village liaisons for discussion at a future JYC meeting.
- Starting in the next fiscal cycle, JYC has decided to fund an additional youth focused organization, the Youth Entrepreneurship Marketplace (YEM). Information about this innovative organization can be found at: <https://yemithaca.com/>
- Caroline JYC Representatives Karyn Scott and Nancy Kane would like to present on current JYC activities and initiatives at the March Board Meeting.

Cal Snow, Councilmember – None

Tim Murray, Councilmember – Planning Board is working on a Solar Siting Law and it should be completed in the next month or so. Supervisor Witmer and Councilmember Murray did a quarterly review with Cory Williams, Code Officer and it is going very well.

Library Discussion – Gale Moran wrote asking the Library to be reopened due to many people relying on the library for media and books. The library users only stay around 15 minutes and

the COVID related steps are clear and well enforced. The volunteers are willing to serve the community in any limited capacity that the Board sees fit. The Tompkins County library personnel offered to speak to the board about their COVID measures. Supervisor Witmer feels okay with the library re-opening with the COVID measures and a time limit.

Councilmember Fracchia asked that the Board check on Town liability and put into place a time limit.

Councilmember Murray would like to see a limited time in the library and to revisit the opening each month.

Councilmember Goldberg-Forrest asked if there was a contactless way to get books. Supervisor Witmer will ask Gale to join the meeting next week.

2020 Final Budget Transfers

Proposed by Supervisor Witmer and seconded by Councilmember Murray

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

Resolution #62 of 2021. 2020 Final Budget Transfers

Resolved, the Caroline Town Board makes the following 2020 budget transfers:

<u>Amount</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
\$274.26	A1620.12 Maintenance	A1620.1 Cleaning
\$483.94	A1990.4 Contingency	A1910.4 Insurance
\$ 3.21	A5132.2 Garage EQ	A5132.4 Garage CE
\$16,623.72	DA5130.1 Machinery PS	DA5110.1 Gen. Repairs PS
\$82.13	DA5130.1 Machinery PS	DA5110.11 Gen. Rep. OT

Approval of minutes of [January 13, 2021](#)

A motion was made by Supervisor Witmer and seconded by Councilmember Fracchia to accept the Business Meeting minutes (dated January 13, 2021) as submitted by Town Clerk, Jessica Townsend Supervisor Witmer proposed the approval and seconded by Councilmember Fracchia.

Only change is the end of RFQ is end of January instead of end of March.

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

Agenda items for January Business Meeting

• Agenda items for February 10 Business Meeting

- Resolution _____ to Adopt Local Law to Increase Planning Board Membership to Seven Persons
- Discussion and Vote on 2021 Association of Towns Legislative Agenda
- Approval of 2021 GML-119-o Agreements for Cooperative Purchasing of W/C Insurance with Slaterville and Brooktondale Fire Districts

- Resolution ____ of 2021. Completion of 2021 Annual Audit of Caroline Court Office
- Resolution ____ of 2021. Completion of 2021 Annual Audit of Supervisor's and Clerk's Offices
- Resolution ____ of 2021. Renewal of Planning Board Terms. The Caroline Town Board hereby renews Planning Board member terms as follows:
 - Bill Podulka, 2021 through 2025
 - Wilma Lawrence, 2021 through 2024
 - Michele Brown, 2021 through 2024
 - Barbara Knuth, 2021 through 2024
- Resolution ____ of 2021. Renewal of Review Board Term. The Caroline Town Board hereby renews the Review Board term of Craig Modisher from 2021 through 2025.
- Zoning Commission Resolution
- Asking Gale Moran to speak about opening the Library
- Planning Board keeping a 5-year term instead of staggering 7-years terms. There will be two open seats on the Planning Board, and you can give your resume to the Town Clerk or complete the Volunteer Form on the website.

Discussion

----Adjourn the meeting ----

The meeting adjourned on a motion by Supervisor Witmer and seconded by Councilmember Murray at 8:53 p.m. and was carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Velvet Lyke, Bookkeeper