

State of New York  
County of Fulton  
Town of Caroga

Minutes of a Caroga Town Board Budget work session held on Tuesday October 26, 2016 at 7:00 pm at the Caroga Municipal Building located at 1840 State Highway #10 Caroga Lake NY 12032. The meeting was open with the salute to the flag.

Deputy Supervisor Sturchio – Here  
Council Member Glenn – Here  
Council Member Morris – Here  
Council Member Manning – Here

Other Department heads in attendance were Lita Hillier – Budget Director, Steve Putman – Highway Superintendent, Deputy Hwy. Superintendent Chuck Wager, Don Travis- Building maintenance, and Jennifer Blowers – Code Clerk. There were 6 members of the public in attendance.

Mr. Putman noted the board has been going over his budget. He asked that the board not take anything away from the department. The part time request is new for us. He appreciates all the board can do for him. He will work with the board. Many don't know what the job entails. The board should know what he does. He is 24/7. When he started he had a renegade shop. He had guys fighting physically. That does not happen anymore. He had a shop that had over 21 OSHA violations. He saved town thousands of dollars in fines. Mr. Putman works with vendors, he watches what they charge us and what we charge. He won't do business with some vendors. He gets the parts for the shop as he knows what is needed. He sneaks up on his men. There used to be sightings of our trucks in St. Johnsville and Stratford for no obvious reason. He has addressed this situation. When he took office he came into a worn out battleship. Vehicles were going down the road with parts falling off them. He keeps records and noted that pre trip checks are now being done every day. It is a state and federal law. Mr. Putman wants it on the record that he has an excavation job on the side. His highway job comes first before anything else. He wants us to think about all these things. He stated he has never asked for a raise except this year. He will hold off on things this year. He talked to the clerk in Bleecker, they put away money every year for highway equipment. We have to keep up on things. Council Member Glenn noted he has tried to help. (The 3 year old was turned in and now the new Loader doesn't have to turn wrench on it.) It used to be that 1/2 the lights didn't work on the before on trucks. When his trucks roll now they are safety checked. "Please don't take money away from me."

Mr. Putman stated he does not spend every cent he gets. He is trying to do his job for the least amount of cost. The new Garbage truck is in. It arrived on Monday. He has to complete the paperwork to get it on the road. Council Member Glenn asked if he has thought about a capitol plan. He would like to do that. This will keep us going not turning wrench every day.

Mr. Putman noted the State was here looking into the speed limit and cross walk request. They are going to do the Cross walk at town hall to the park and extend speed limit 800 ft. by the school. They told Mr. Putman that we only have 2 legally posted roads with speed limit signs on them. They are East Shore Rd. and Kasson Drive. There is a process to have the speed limits set on all the roads. The process starts with a resolution from the board. The board needs to set the speed limits on all town roads. The resolution needs to be sent to DOT and they send it to the state. He noted they won't go to 20 (only in a school zone) the lowest is 25mph. Mr. Putman was asked what the state thought about one way streets. He discussed cross walks on East Shore Road. As far as he is concerned all town roads should be a maximum 25 miles an hour. Council Member Glenn asked for a seasonal road what do we have to do to make it one way. More than likely the town may have to do a resolution – he does need more information on this. The state is sending us regulation on signs. The clerk noted the files were sent to the county to be printed.

At 7:16 Deputy Supervisor Sturchio made a motion to go in to executive session to discuss the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation; Council Member Morris seconded the motion. All board members were in favor of the motion.

At 7: 27 pm Deputy Supervisor Sturchio made the motion to exit and Council Member Morris seconded he motion. All members were in favor of the motion.

The board began working on the budget: They discussed A1410.1 – Town Clerk Personal services. Deputy Supervisor Sturchio noted we will have to wait for Election Day to see what 2016 is. Council Member Manning noted the board is not changing anything for 2016. Deputy Supervisor Sturchio suggested putting the salary the same as 2016 with a 2% increase. Council Member Manning thought if the adjustment is approved then it should stay in the budget. If public approves it why would we not keep it for the next year. Council Member Morris and Deputy Supervisor Sturchio thought it was not a salary increase it was an adjustment. Council Member Manning was not in favor of reducing the salary from one year to the next. Council Member Morris noted in January a \$20,000.00 increase was crammed down the taxpayer throats in another department. Council Member Glenn thought the matter should be tabled until after the election. A discussion on when the public hearing was going to be held on this budget. Mrs. Hillier noted once the public hearing is held an elected official's salary cannot be changed unless another public hearing is held. The last day to adopt the budget is November 20<sup>th</sup>. Deputy Supervisor Sturchio again stated the salary for the clerk would go back to \$31,449.00. The clerk objected stating that the Highway department got a 14% raise last year and she wants the same amount they received last year. If it passes it could go to \$36,449.00 Deputy Supervisor Sturchio noted. Council Member Glenn suggested tabling the issue. Council Member Manning wanted \$37,078.00 that includes \$5,000 plus 2%. Council Member Manning stated the law was passed based on the adjustment was justified given the person, position, and experience. Council Member Morris stated more was put on the Clerk because we were without a code officer. She stated that I am an asset. Council Member Manning noted the salary is less than that of a teacher starting in NYS after 20 years of experience.

There will be another work session next month. A public hearing will be set at the November 9 meeting

Deputy Town Clerk A1410.11 ran out of money this year. The town clerk asked for a \$9000.00 line item. It is an hourly job. Last year the salary went up 25% but the line item was reduced.

A1410.2 – the computers in the office are 5 -6 years old and older running Windows 8.

Attorney A1420.1 Lots of money being spent on Morey Road. It was asked does that come out of legal or attorney. Year to date spent is \$11,929.00. The board passed a resolution to spend up to \$14,000.00 for title search a few months ago... Mrs. Hillier stated we could use judgement and claims. There is \$1900.00 in there. The budget director stated she will create a new line for eminent domain. It will probably come out of legal line. There is \$15,000.00 in contingent. There is \$20,000.00 in A1420.4.

Mrs. Hillier was asked if she got the figures for the amount of over time for the past ten years. She has it almost done. The board was concerned about staying under the tax cap. The board discussed the hiring part time employees on the highway department. He stated now since the Hwy guys were given more time off now others may have to pick up the slack. Council Member Glenn thought the number of hours needed to be known. The board thought they should start with \$5000.00 total see how it goes. Take money out of the new part time line item rather than safety equipment. The amount has to be in both summer and winter. Mrs. Hillier the budget director noted you can't transfer from salaries down by law. Page 9 will have two new line items DA5142.11 - snow \$5000.00 and DA5110.11 \$2,500.00 is summer for part time help.

Engineering A1440.4– reduced to \$5000.00

Elections – The Board of Elections changed the hourly rate for their workers. Mrs. Hillier will request an updated cost for 2017.

Buildings A1620.1 reduced by \$5,000.00. He is paid hourly. This was based on what he can put in hourly. He did not used in the past. Mrs. Hillier thinks \$15,000.00 will be enough. At organizational there will be a 2% hrly rate. Equipment A1620.2 was left at \$5000.00 in case anything goes wrong.

A1620.4 is for any repairs, toilet paper, cleaning supplies, mileage, all utilities including internet.

A1620.41 for the Park across the street was reduced to \$500.00.

A1620.42 Golf Course Stayed the same – includes phone, utilities

A1620.43 Sherman's mowing, shoveling, utilities \$4,200.00 used so far. The board wants to add a security system in 2017 Put \$10,000.00. Council Member Manning noted the board agreed to accept a donation from the music group for concerts in 2017. The other three board members did not know if that had been decided on yet. Council Member Glenn then said he approved the

concept of getting 50% of proceeds of the concerts. Agreed to have the concerts. Any money we get should be put back into the line item.

A1670.4 Central Mailing & Printing was left at \$3,500.00

Jennifer – John Duesler left information with her. Mr. Duesler's rate of pay is \$20 per hr. He is first on civil service and has been offered other positions. As part timer he can make almost \$22.00 with benefits and days off paid. He is a valued person. If he leaves here it would be a huge loss. She asked the board does anyone know what he does during the day. He is called by the banks when people want to purchase homes in Caroga and there are no records on the properties. Mrs. Blowers stated he has done 145 inspection since June. She thinks it was a slap to him when the board offered someone with zero experience a position for \$20.00 an hour. Deputy Supervisor Sturchio noted Jerry was not offered the position. He was not offered the current salary of \$32,000.00. The applicant stated he could do it for \$22,000 this year and \$25,000.00 next year. Mrs. Blowers noted the last 2 -3 code officers had to get training. Mr. Duesler goes to free trainings. She stated he is asking for \$21.50 per hour. He has done over 200 permits this year. This is the first time in 3 years the Assessor has been given documentation. Mrs. Blowers has almost completed the complaint module. First a letter is sent, then in 10 days they will get a second letter. Everything he has done will be recorded.

Lending institutions call to ask if there are open permits or complaints on a property. Many can't get loans for lack of paperwork. He can go to the place and have the owner to sign a waiver. Mrs. Blowers doesn't want to see him leave here it is not to our advantage. Has a good filing system, and tracking of complaints. He has been out taking pictures. She stated that some people are allowed to do things and it is not fair. Then it is not taken care of in court. There was recently an agriculture issue with blight there too. They can't keep doing what they are doing and then the end result is halted in court. The property owners on 29A do not realize how bad the place looks until you see a picture. The Sheriff had to issue tickets. They don't accept certified letters. It was noted that the court works separately from the town. She noted that four buildings have been torn down. One of them was really bad.

Mrs. Blowers stated that she doesn't think any of the board members would get out of bed for \$12.00 an hour. She thought \$14.00 is not even close to what she has done. She was asked to come to work here, she did not apply. She asked for \$14.00 per hour. She left the meeting with her kids.

Mrs. Hillier stated she will call Elections for the amount for next year

Insurance liability OK A1910.4

Sherman's A1910.41 no change

Judgement and claims. A1930.4 Assessments or judgements that come against the town.

All Special items lines stayed the same.

Contingent A1990.4 is a lean on/slush fund.

Signs A3310.4 was new this year. The clerk noted he just ordered a bunch.

Control of Dogs salary change to 2%

Humane Society A3520.4 stayed the same.

A3620.1 this is Code Officer Council Member Morris noted he has only been here for 7 months. Deputy Supervisor Sturchio noted he has been offered more than this – not doing as much. He promised us a year. Council Member Morris stated we have to be fair have to show fairness. Other employees have been here for decades. When he was hired the board wanted to start at \$18.00. He wanted \$20.00 and was given it. This is a slippery slope to change the salary every year. It has been a problem not to have him on Saturdays. The Board has made concessions. A 2% increase was discussed. The board thought that after a year the town may lose him. He is holding it over our heads that he is doing the job. Don Travis noted comes in early. John has done a good job. Not seeing what he is doing. The Dept. is running as it should be run. Town employee can't hold the town hostage. We stand to lose good people Council Member Manning stated. Council Member Morris noted we have to show a level of fairness, that is what got us to this point to begin with. Council Member Glenn agrees we have to draw a line in the sand. Council Member Manning thought if you give them a little bit more they do a better job.

Council Member Morris noted there is a clerk who has been here for 18 years and a 29 year employee, and a 22 year employee. How can we be generous to an employee who has been here less than a year and turn our backs to others?

Council Member Manning stated we have to establish a base salary with a consistent increase over time. We need to have a bench mark to go back to. Start with a base salary for a new employee. Lita suggestion please think about it -2% is nothing for those of us who have been here for years. That is all she has gotten other than a salary adjustment to take on more duties. Mrs. Hillier wanted to revisit issue of longevity for both clerks, has to lump Linda, have a policy after 10 years they get longevity. The Town Clerk noted it has to be for over 25- 30 hours a week. Set parameters to even things out.

Mrs. Barrett noted each time a new code officer comes in they don't know what they are doing and they give permission for something that is not right. Council Member Morris stated we start with a base. A 2% increase for code was given.

The clerk hoped the longevity could be implemented this year.

Code A3620.1 \$20,400.00

A3620.11 Clerk - Code Last year when Ms. Yates was given a large raise she stated she would not need a clerk. The line item was reduced to \$2,500 for 2016. Mrs. Hillier put in \$10,000.00 this year. The board put the line item at \$5,000.00. No one knew what Mrs. Blowers hours are. Is she a clerk for Assessor or Code? She has made \$5,720.00 year to date. A 2% on the hourly rate was given. Code clerk A3620.11 was set at \$8,000.00.

Board of Health - Health Officer based on a per call. A4010.4 was reduced to \$1,000.00 this may be lowered more next year.

Registrar of Vital statistics is a separate job. Most are making \$2,000.00. This line item has never increased in 18 years. Marriage, birth and death records fall under this. Lots of people are retiring

the cases are increasing. Mrs. Hillier noted it is also records management. The line was set at \$750.00.

BTI Mr. Delesky did not ask for a raise. He has been the director for about 3 years, 2% was given to him and the techs. At the next board meeting Mrs. Hillier will do a transfer to purchase chemicals for next year before the price goes up. Mrs. Hillier will find out how much is needed next year to license and train the staff.

A4010.4 is lake testing water samples. Mrs. Hillier thinks \$1,000.00 will be ok.

A4560.4 is the health officer this was brought down to \$1,000.00

Superintendent of Highways all P.S. line items all had 2% increases

Garage services stayed the same

45 new flags are needed for the poles. The Town of Wells has better quality flags and poles

Publicity the only change was ads/tourism/website down to \$750.00

Sherman's publicity was reduced to \$500.00

Veterans services 0

Programs for the aging bus trips \$3,000.00 and meals \$500.00

All golf course ok with the 2% raise

Equipment we have leases not sure if they are done yet. Leave \$11,000.00 Mr. Jennings is looking for a rough mower in 2017 \$11,000.00 should cover it. A7180.4 CE is for repairs, parts, fertilizer, everything. He is going to work on the greens this year. The line item was left at \$28,000.00

Youth- we have to find an aquatics director. Mrs. Hillier knows someone she thinks can do it. Council Member Morris wanted to get the kids back on the water. Council Member Morris will help with the paperwork. All get 2% CE will be fine at \$3,600.00

Library A7410.4 the same

Museum A7450.4 same Mrs. Holliday said it covers the insurance and employee

A7510.1 Historian 2% CE -\$300.00

Celebrations A7550.4 were available for fireworks. It was noted that flags come out of Buildings A1620.4 - A 3 x 5 flag was suggested.

Zoning/Planning all the same. A8010.1 is for the clerk A8010.4 – School or dues, legal notices

County Planning services - Will more be needed next year? This is what we pay Jim Mraz. So many hours are free. Council Member Morris went to a summit yesterday where they talked about smart water. More money may be needed on the line item. The county wants to promote tourism. Mr. Long noted the APA sent another round of changes on the update to the zoning ordinance. The line item A8010.4 line item was increased to \$2,500.00

Council Member Manning did not know what direction this program is moving in. Weed harvesting may be getting a grant next year. Mr. Centi noted the grant money is offered to lake associations. If we don't get divers next year we are in trouble. What are the effective ways to harvest in our lake? Chemicals are very expensive. The state of the art is harvesting with divers. The State is bagging fragments create more plants. Bagging under water is labor intensive. If we had enough divers we could get a head of it. There is a cutter that cuts 4 ½ inches below the water. Hand harvesting creates more fragments and is labor intensive. One man operates the cutter. If you don't have the attachment to the machine then a second person is needed to off load the weeds. Mr. Centi thought it was very efficient. Maybe in 3 years we would be a head of the problem. Council Member Manning asked if there were any lakes in Adirondack using this – there were not, most using this are down south, southwest and west. The company is in Wisconsin. Mr. Centi will be traveling this winter and will be close to where a machine is operating one North Florida. He hopes to be able to see it in operation.

There are two types of machines ones that cut and ones that pull. The drum method is not very efficient because it breaks it up more. In his conversation with company they were not trying to sell him but giving him information. The hydraulic systems can be very inexpensive and there will be expensive problems down the road. Very few use divers we are one of two. Council Member Manning was concerned about the mechanical system having ridge parameters under which they can work. Lake bottoms are not flat can they get in-between rocks and close to shorelines and around docks. Mr. Centi noted they could not get in close but they get more than the divers do. The machine only goes down 4 feet. The price of a new machine is about \$62,000.00. Deputy Supervisor Sturchio asked if they had a leasing program – he thought they did. They also had 3 used machines. Two are 2014 with less than 20 hours on them. They train you on the machines one is \$48,000.00 the other with a trailer and conveyor belt to offload was an \$89,000.00 new machine. This used machine with the extras it is \$62,000.00. Council Member Glenn thought a budget of \$65,000.00 would cover it. The budget Director Mrs. Hillier stated the board would have to decide if they were going to bond for it or maybe there is a grant for it. She noted some money was put aside. However Mrs. Hillier noted the lake stewards and weed harvesting program budget is overdrawn. Deputy Supervisor Sturchio wants to change to another method. Mr. Centi noted if we can't get divers chemicals are cost prohibitive. Council Member Morris wishes this conversation could have taken place last year before the money was invested in the harvester.

Mrs. Hillier began reviewing the budget with the board. She noted this year was a bad year with weed harvester – about \$24,000.00 above the budget alone for the work on the machine. \$9000.00 of that was labor paid to Dave Egert to work on the machine. Then the town had to buy a boat washing station for \$7,500.00. We have not gotten anything back yet for the grant. We are currently overdrawn almost \$3,100.00 - in payroll this year. The stewards put a lot of extra hours in for the boat wash station. The town is supposed to be paid back by grant money.

Tony read a correspondence that Council Member Glenn gave him on the DEC approval progress report from Megan Phillips – DEC invasive species office our progress report will be approved

clearing the way for submission of the financial report to request state aid. A package of material needs to be mailed to Albany ASAP to get the reimbursement process started. Mrs. Hillier noted she has had the information on her desk for 2 months waiting for someone to pick it up. Mike Durkee is not around. Marcus Harazin was supposed to pick it up all the work she printed out about the expenses and payroll. Council Member Manning will contact Mr. Harazin.

The board will look at the weed harvesting line item next time. More may have to be added to it for the other machine. On page 7 at the top \$5,000.00 was budgeted for weed harvester reserve plus we closed out another \$5,000.00 last year - there is a start. Maybe more was closed out for it the year before also. Mr. Centi will make some calls tomorrow about the other harvester. Council Member Manning wanted to explore the lake association getting a grant. This affects only two lakes in the town they should want to pay for it. Mr. Centi doesn't agree with theory people who don't live on the lakes use it and still fish on the lakes.

Mrs. Barrett noted she worked in a greenhouse when you cut a plant off two more shoots are sent up. It gets bigger and thicker. So cutting 4 1/2 feet below the water the stem is still there. Seeds or pieces must come out of the water. The clerk noted Dave Egert talked about using a boom around the area they are working. That is a start to removing the fragments in the water. Mr. Long noted Saranac Lake was pulling 500 bushels of weeds out and then they got it down to 80. You can get ahead of it with the harvesting. Cutting does not get us ahead of the game. Mr. Centi will bring more information to the next meeting. It is his passion/desire to clean up the lake. Carp are too expensive.

Back to the budget Refuse and garage will stay the same. Three people leave the meeting at 10.01 pm

She will pull figures for A8090 series and then A8160 will have 2% for the salaries to pick garbage. Landfill testing will be reviewed.

On page 7 is capital projects. She did not know if the board wanted to keep them the same \$55,000 for a capital project fund was for buildings, there was \$5,000 under weed harvester and there was \$25,000 was for a garbage truck. We just bought one so that can be removed or put it up for the harvester. Conservatively there is \$30,000.00 for weeds.

Mrs. Hillier wanted to discuss some numbers in revenues Special Recreational Facilities 2025 golf course revenues are not coming in for the last few years it has been considerably low. Mr. Jennings and Mrs. Hillier decided to take it down from \$180,000.00 to \$150,000 in revenues. She noted sales tax is up so she may be able to raise sales taxes to cover. Everything else Mrs. Hillier stated is hers to look at. She did not know if revenues for the rental of the cell tower would stay at \$12,000. The cell tower is 2410.1 revenue. Rental of equipment under that line item is the Bleecker contract for garage. The Bleecker contract remained at \$21,000.00. Council Member Manning asked if the money is designated to a specific fund to finance a future truck. Mrs. Hillier stated it didn't as this money goes in for revenues against the expenses.

Deputy Supervisor Sturchio wondered why the golf pro gets to keep the revenues from the carts. He owns them. The town would have to purchase carts and then pay someone to maintain them.



The comptroller looked at the contract. Mrs. Hillier pointed out “do we want to take the liability on?” He is the one taking responsibility. Council Member Manning asked what the current point of sale system is at the golf course. All the pro shop proceeds go to Mr. Jennings- Candy, shirts, clubs are all his. The course fees go to the town. He gets the money for lessons. There is accountability for the credit card sales. Mr. Jennings keeps his own business log. After the credit card service charges go through Mrs. Hillier does a percentage with Mr. Jennings and the town. That is the only accounting as far as his sales go. Council Member Manning wondered if there is a better way of point of sale. Council Member Morris noted there was a break out for the fall special. Council Member Manning stated you have to trust your employees.

The town clerk noted the town usually contacts the Bleecker Supervisor to discuss the garbage contract as a courtesy. We have a contract with them.

At 10:15 pm the clerk asked if there were any decisions made as a result of the executive session. The board decided to send Dave Egert a letter that he won't be rehired for next year.

The board set another Budget Work Session for next Wednesday at Nov 2, at 7 pm. It was noted that the Planning Board is also meeting that evening. The board may have to work to keep the budget under the cap. The board will also conduct an interview for the Assessor position next Wednesday.

Deputy Supervisor Sturchio and the board made a list of things they want him to do in the morning. Council Member Glenn noted he needed to call the Bleecker Town Supervisor about garbage He was trying to think of his name, he noted that he and his wife were both his patients.

At 10:18 pm Deputy Supervisor Sturchio made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Morris seconded the motion. All board members were in favor of the motion.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda M. Gilbert RMC, CMC  
Town Clerk/Collector