

Caroga News Flash

Town Board Meeting Highlights

November 18, 2020

TownOfCaroga.com contains all issues of the ***Caroga News Flash***.

This meeting lasted 25 minutes at Town Hall & via zoom. More than 35 families participated. Supervisor Horton reported on the November 15 fire that tragically destroyed Caroga's golf clubhouse and equipment. He gave special thanks to all who helped. He added, "We immediately started to rally the wagons around and talked to ourselves back and forth about what direction we ought to go." In the meeting, he offered no plans or resolutions on the topic. For his proposal, see his press release: RecorderNews.com/news/local-news/182155.

Resolutions / Local Laws:

1. 2021 Revised Budget Hearing — Public comments of this 14-minute hearing noted:

- unaddressed written comments (see TownOfCaroga.com/finances/2021mail.htm);
- concerns about the Board's large tax increase with no specified financial plans in place;
- questions about Fund Balance allocation, Reserve transfers, and commingled accounts;
- needs for budget specification and public accountability of PLRT "Celebrations" spending;
- and the slippery slope of the Clerk's new \$3,000.00 Longevity pay with no policy in place.

The Supervisor responded, "Some of this is a little late ... We just didn't have time for a plan, and the public has been told that we are going to develop a capital plan in more detail ... As far as the 'Longevity' raise, we've thought about that and the raise for the Town Clerk will just be added to her salary. It will not be 'Longevity', because—as many people have pointed out—we do not have a policy, and so that's just an administrative issue and doesn't have an impact on the budget." In fact, at the last minute he changed the budget to cut longevity and raise the Clerk salary without Board consultation or resolution.

2. 2021 Revised Budget Finalized with 17.7% Property Tax Increase —

The Supervisor made a motion to accept the 2021 Amended Preliminary Budget and to adopt it as the Final Budget. Councilmember Glenn seconded the motion. During discussion, Councilmember Long emphasized the Town Budget Director's projected Fund Balance exceeding that recommended by the State Comptroller and the overwhelming public sentiment supporting deploying the Fund Balance to eliminate the 2021 tax increase, and he stated, "This is not a wise budget, and I cannot endorse it." The Clerk further noted that the titles in the budget need to be updated. With no resolutions to change the Preliminary Budget, the Board voted 4 to 1 to adopt the 2021 Final Budget.

3. Payment Authorization for the Wheelerville Bike Trail Project —

This project is funded by a NYS Smart Growth Grant (see TownOfCaroga.com/bike/). The Board authorized payment for rental equipment to build the Bike Trail (5 to 0 vote). They also authorized a 2020 budget transfer of \$6,000.00 from "Special Recreation Facilities: Personal Services" to "Contractual Expenses" (5 to 0 vote).

Next Meeting: Emergency Meeting without zoom as called by Supervisor Horton Meeting Regarding Golf Clubhouse Wednesday November 25, 2020 9:00am

Join Allen Farber's zoom Meeting ID: 998 9939 8596 Passcode: V7jfFU
or dial 646-558-8656 Meeting ID: 998 9939 8596 Passcode: 212723