

State of New York
County of Fulton
Town of Caroga

Minutes of the regular monthly Caroga Town Board meeting held Wednesday July 10, 2024 at the municipal building located at 1840 State Highway #10 at 6:30 pm with the following persons in attendance by roll call. The flag salute followed.

Supervisor Ralph J. Palcovic - Here
Council Member John Glenn – arrived at 6:35 pm
Council Member Barbara DeLuca – Here
Council Member Richard Sturgess – Here
Council Member Matthew Cooper – Here

Department representatives in attendance were: Jeremy Manning – Wheelerville Bike Trail, Steve Stedman – Golf Course Greenskeeper, Mike Kunath – BTI, three highway employees, Rachael Simonds and Anita Long members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, John Byrnes Zoning Board of Appeals Member, and five members of the public. Zack Vosburg facilitated the zoom portion of the meeting. There were six participants at the beginning of the meeting and a peak of thirteen participants on zoom during the meeting.

A moment of silence was held for former Town of Caroga Assessor Dorothy Parker.

At 6:32 pm Supervisor Palcovic made a motion to enter into an 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. The motion was seconded by Council Member Sturgess. All board members were in favor of the motion, Palcovic, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper.

At 7:10 pm Stan Koniszewski the highway department union representative leaves the meeting.

At 7:13 pm Council Member DeLuca made a motion to exit from the executive session. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cooper. All board members were in favor of the motion, Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper.

There were no decisions or further comments in regards to the executive session.

Council Member Sturgess made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes. Council Member Glenn seconded the motion. All board members were in favor of the motion, Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper.

Department Reports:

Wheelerville Bike Trail – Jeremy Manning reported that he is deep in festival preparations. He is finalizing the Department of Transportation (DOT) permit to secure roadside parking needed during the event. The permit should be done by the middle of next week. The schedule for the festival on August 24th is – guided group rides, skills clinics will be offered, there will be a downhill race, jump jam, height competition, and a wheelies competition. Mr. Manning stated

the after party this year is hosted by Pine Lake Lodge. He noted he is getting a lot of help from Fulton County Tourism on this. On day 2 there will be an enduro race, (a 4-lap race around the mountain) a kid's clinic will be sponsored by Saratoga Shredders and LL Bean. The Boot Mobile will be here this year. There will be vendors for food and beer.

Mr. Manning is beginning to look at developing the new trails for this season. It will be from the Smart Growth Grant for two beginners to intermediate level trails on the lower section of the mountain on the current parcel. It will not be expanded right now. It will be a four-mile lower mountain loop. This will help to build skill levels and ride safely. The project he hopes will start the beginning of September. The trails will go to the lake and back to the parking lot.

Some flagging was done earlier this week on the Wheelerville/Caroga Connector Trail. It would go from the current trails down to the town. They will go back in a couple of weeks for a final proposed trail that we can all look at and review.

Mr. Manning has talked to Mr. Voght about the two culvert pipes that were placed in the parking lot by DOT when new ones were installed. They are big, old, sharp, metal pipes. They need to be removed before the festival. The space is needed and he doesn't want anyone to get hurt on them. A highway employee suggested moving them to the pit. They are still usable.

BTI – Mr. Mike Kunath reported they are finishing up for the season. July 31st is the last day the town can treat using BTI under our permits. He thinks the whole team did a great job despite the wet beginning. They will treat until the end of the month. Sometime in September he will begin working on the reports. Supervisor Palcovic thought it was a huge success.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector/Registrar/RMO – Linda Gilbert submitted a monthly report. She noted the town wide garage sale is July 27th the last Saturday in July. Call the office to have your address listed. The Clerk talked to Mr. Manning about a future project regarding regulating food trucks. Examples of other laws were given to Mr. Manning. The clerk hopes to incorporate and update the 1970 hawking and peddler law.

The clerk gave the board members a report from the June 5th Board of Assessment Review (BAR) meeting on the various things that took place. There were a lot of things that went wrong, there is a lot of information that is wrong. She wanted the board to know about it. One observation was one BAR member could not make the second meeting date but was paid the same amount as others who attended both hearings. If the board so desires it should be looked at so all are compensated fairly next year. The clerk stated she had to step in for the Assessor who was unable to make it. "It was my pleasure to help her out." The town clerk stated after the meeting files were dumped on her that had to be scanned to the County. This was not her job and the town was charged for her work for ¾ of an hour after hours. Council Member Glenn asked why the Assessor could not attend. The Town Clerk noted the assessor's daughter was ill, and there were also some conflicts that never got ironed out. Supervisor Palcovic interjected that the Town Clerk's attendance was approved by the Fulton County Real Property Director.

Code Enforcement & Sanitation – Mr. Fancher submitted a written report. 25 permits were issued with a value of \$1,026,125.00 & \$5,375.00 in fees were collected. 45 inspections were

done on open permits. 23 letters with applications and inspections sheets were sent out for Short Term Rentals (STR) with 15 more letters to go out this week. 6 STR applications have been completed and filed more to come for next month. It was noted that several of the previously listed STR's/Air B & B's have changed hands and Mr. Fancher is trying to clear up who the owner is. He is working with the assessor on this. The Supervisor noted there is a growth spurt going on in Caroga. The Supervisor noted the ongoing cleanup of junk vehicles and property issues. Enforcement issues have taken place with some going in front of the judge. It is an ongoing process. Council Member Glenn stated the code officer is doing a heck of a job as far as blight is concerned. He noted it has been a problem for a long time. "Finally, someone is doing something about it." Supervisor Palcovic asks that certain things get looked at and it happens.

Dog Control – No report from Mr. Dutcher. Council Member Sturgess stated the mystery dog was caught. It was Facebook famous. It was running around town for a period of weeks. Various attempts were made to catch the dog. Colleen Graves caught the dog. Council Member DeLuca stated there is one in North Bush now.

Golf Course – Mr. Stedman reported that Soils and Waters requested that he contact the Adirondack Park Agency about the drainage project he is planning to do in the fall on the golf course across two holes. Water will be drained about 30 feet into the woods, checking into any wetlands.

The irrigation bladder tank has been fixed. It is holding pressure. The valve has not been tested yet. It will be done slowly.

Supervisor Palcovic had Mr. Stedman review the golf course inventory for the insurance company. That has been completed. Serial numbers, and purchase prices are now listed for the items on the list. There are 45 items on the database. Mr. Stedman thanked his crew publicly, they are – Tim Putman, Paul Kidder, Brady Vanaeran, Kenny Holliday, and Tyler Hutchenson. He has had the same crew for the past 5 years. (applause) Some are full time others are part time. The golf course he thinks looks outstanding right now. They are a trained staff which allows him to do other things that need to get done.

There are 24 outings left this season. Those outings will gather over 5,000 people who are just coming up to play golf in an outing. He has seen play pick up.

The clerk asked the board about an advisory board for the golf course. She noted Mr. Cummings has also discussed this with the town Supervisor. It would be a civic group that brings ideas to Steve or Mr. Cummings, on improvements they would like to see on the course. Supervisor Palcovic noted his lack of expertise in this and deferred to Council Member Sturgess. Council Member Sturgess noted Mr. Cummings has talked about this in the past. At the beginning of the season comment cards were distributed, but this hasn't been touched upon since then.

Council Member Sturgess noted on the Friday after the 4th of July holiday there was a record cash intake on the golf course that day. There wasn't a tournament just regular play.

Highway – Mr. Voght submitted a written report. After the paving project access was given to driveways. Now shoulder work will commence this coming week. The shoulders will be built up so you don't hook tires off the edge and this also preserves the pavement from breaking away.

NYS DOT has notified the town of a defective bridge on Cape Horn Road. Temporary corrective action has been taken. The materials and labor estimate for repairing it is \$55,000.00. The town will supply equipment. Council Member Cooper asked for the inspection report so it can be compared to the work being done to correct the deficiencies. Council Member DeLuca asked who was paying for this. Supervisor Palcovic responded part will come out of CHIPS funding and part from highway repairs. Council Member Glenn thought once the bridge is repaired it will be turned back over to the state for maintenance. The Supervisor replied, "No, it is a town bridge." Years ago, the county offered to maintain the town bridges, however at the time the town refused their offer. The clerk will look into it.

The clerk prompted that the project didn't have to be bid out.... the response was because it is an emergency repair. Mr. Voght submitted the following information to the town board: the quote for the rail on Cape Horn Road – job with materials and labor from R & B Construction LLC 1094 Bulls Head Rd Amsterdam NY 12010 will be \$55,000.00. the town would supply a backhoe. The materials would come from DI Highway Sign & Structure Corp 40 Greenman Ave New York Mills NY 13417 the quote submitted was \$28,040.40

Lakes Management Program – Marcus Harazin highlighted his written report. He could not share a video. He noted Mr. Olm is out of town today. Based on the data from Adirondack Water Shed there were 840 boats inspected with 71 of them being decontaminated. The fourth of July holiday was extremely busy. He thought over 1000 boats have been inspected at this point in time. Caroga continues to be one of the busiest programs in the Adirondacks. Boats being inspected have originated from over 40 different water bodies; most are known to contain invasive species. People seem to be a little more aware of the rules and the law. Mr. Harazin reported that he is working with the local marina to refer any boats or trailers that come in on trade from out of town to make sure they are decontaminated.

A training was held on June 28 in conjunction with the Canada Lakes Conservation Association (CLCA) and the Adirondack Watershed Institute. Seventeen people participated in the event including volunteer stewards and inspectors from the CLCA and volunteers from West Caroga Lake, Pleasant Lake, Stoner Lake and the program staff from the Town of Caroga. Mr. Brett Wimsett the aquatic invasive species program director from Paul Smiths conducted the training on the proper technique for inspecting and decontaminating water crafts and trailers. Demonstrations were done on various types of crafts including jet skis, pontoon boats, motor boats, canoes, and kayaks. They learned a new trick to provide better safety to the staff at the West Lake site which does not have cell phone coverage. They learned how to utilize the emergency SOS satellite phone functions now on the Apple 14, Android, and newer phones. Mr. Harazin stated they are looking into obtaining a satellite phone through the CLCA. Mr. Harazin noted he has been working with Encon officers to do better patrols and facilities support. Sometimes people have abandoned things like refrigerators and bicycles. They want to discourage this as it is a nuisance and safety issue.

Lori Mott and John Olm were thanked for setting the meeting up, and making sure there was coverage at the sites during training. At the last meeting Mr. Harazin mentioned having some informational meetings with various lake associations on terrestrial invasive species which are a

problem in our town. Another problem he stated was road salt.

Council Member Glenn added that Mr. Hogan was not available tonight. Numbers were not available on the Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting (DASH) program. Council Member Glenn noted that ProcellaCOR was applied to specified areas on East and West Caroga Lake with dramatic improvement in Eurasian milfoil- almost total irradiation. The dissolution of the ProcellaCOR in the water was absent after 48 hours. There were similar results as Lake George. Supervisor Palcovic read that report yesterday. Council Member Glenn will get the reports from Mr. Hogan so they can be posted on the website. In the future, if need be, Council Member Glenn stated he would be looking for continued use of this product. The DASH program would also continue. It is an Adirondack/North East problem that needs to be addressed and controlled.

The Clerk asked how long it took before the milfoil died. Supervisor Palcovic stated the divers working in the area could see the weeds within days they laid over. The analogy was plowing your driveway. It usually takes about four days. It appeared to be effective with some immediate results.

Suzy Snyder stated the difference is night and day in her area. She can paddle without being tangled in milfoil.

Supervisor Palcovic noted some of the grant requirements are that we still need to continue to use the DASH program in parallel. He is on the Adirondack Local Government Committee for the county. He hears the results from others but noted grant money will not continually maintain a parallel program. That is where DASH will continue to some extent through the future.

Town Hall Building – Supervisor Palcovic noted our maintenance guy is doing an outstanding job on a bunch of things. Council Member Cooper stated while the board was in their executive session someone came and picked up metal scrap.

The clerk reported that the heating/cooling unit in the Assessor's office has not worked in quite a while. Also, the carpet in the hallway near the bathrooms is damp. She was not sure if there was moisture in the basement coming up through. These items will be looked into.

CTC (former PLRT) – Council Member DeLuca reported the tourism commission is looking for assistance with their website.

Short Term Rental (STR) Committee- Council Member DeLuca thought this could become part of the Code report in the future. Supervisor Palcovic noted the process is ongoing, verification as to what is an active rental. Initially we had a list of what was being rented, now some of the properties have been sold and no longer being rented. We cannot go by what is currently being listed on websites. We have a long way to go. Council Member DeLuca noted that she reached out to the Treasurer – Heather Scribner yesterday and she is working on a report of people who pay the county the occupancy tax so we can compare to what we have. She will share the

information with the Code Officer.

Supervisor’s Report:

Supervisor Palcovic was informed by the insurance company NYMIR that a report was lacking. A few years ago, highway garages were burning down due to large trucks having electrical deficiencies. All municipalities were required to install electrical battery disconnect switches when the operator is out of the truck. We complied, but the paperwork was not submitted. The town received a notice of conditional policy renewal. The Highway Superintendent was notified and verification was made that every truck had the disconnect. The paperwork was promptly submitted. We were at risk of losing a lot of coverage.

At 7:50 pm the public comments and questions portion of the meeting was opened.

Assemblyman Smullen thanked the board for having him at the meeting this evening during his summer rounds to his constituents. He offered his card for those who want to get touch with him. He was thanked for attending the meeting tonight.

There were no other public speakers this evening in the room or on zoom.

Old Business:

Grant Writer – Supervisor Palcovic reported nothing new on a grant writer.

Each year the town contracts with the Fulton County Planning Board. They sent out a survey asking if the town expected to contract with them next year. It is budget time.

Supervisor Palcovic announced that the Town was the successful bidder on an excess front end loader from the County. “This will save the town thousands of dollars in rental costs.”

New Business:

Supervisor Palcovic noted the clerk already touched on revising the Hawking and Peddling Law from 1977 to incorporate food trucks.

Correspondence: None

RESOLUTIONS:

RESOLUTION #2024-079 to respond to the Fulton County Planning Survey for services in 2025 was offered by Supervisor Palcovic at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on July 10, 2024.

WHEREAS, the Fulton County Planning Department sent out a survey asking if the town plans to contract for their services in 2025 in the amount of \$1,500.00, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to anticipate utilizing the assistance they would give the town in technical assistance for the Comprehensive Plan update and does authorize Supervisor Palcovic to inform the Fulton County Planning Department that the Town of Caroga plans to continue with a contractual agreement for the 2025 calendar year.

Seconded by Council Member Sturgess

Discussion: Council Member Cooper asked if this was the same amount that we do every year. If we spend that amount Supervisor Palcovic explained then we would get billed. The clerk asked if the town would still get the 10 free hours of service from the Planning Department. Supervisor Palcovic responded affirmatively.

Adopted by a vote of 5 Ayes: Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper

Council Member DeLuca reported that last night the Comprehensive Plan Committee held its initial meeting. She felt it was pretty productive. She offered the following resolution to appoint a chairman of the Comprehensive Plan committee.

RESOLUTION #2024-080 to Appoint a Chairman of the Comprehensive Plan Committee

was offered by Council Member DeLuca at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on July 10, 2024.

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan Committee held its initial meeting on Tuesday July 9, 2024 and

WHEREAS, the Caroga Town Board desires to appoint a chairman of the committee, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to appoint Chris Foss of South Shore Road East Caroga Lake to serve as the chairman of the committee.

Seconded by Council Member Glenn

Discussion: Council Member Cooper asked about the other positions. Council Member DeLuca stated they would be decided by the committee at their first meeting. Mr. Foss will schedule the next meeting.

Council Member Glenn asked if the town board would be informed of their meeting schedule. Council Member DeLuca replied absolutely.

The clerk apologized for not being available last night to have a full (joint) board meeting. Council Member DeLuca stated it was not a problem. Supervisor Palcovic stated the clerk goes above and beyond and thanked her for that.

Adopted by a vote of 5 Ayes: Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper

Council Member Sturgess made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 12th and June 18th Town Board meetings. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cooper. All board members were in favor of the motion; Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper.

Council Member Sturgess made a motion to approve the bills as presented for audit. The motion was seconded by Council Member Glenn. All board members were in favor of the motion; Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper.

At 7:58 pm Council Member DeLuca made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Council Member Glenn. All board members were in favor of the motion; Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper.

Submitted by Linda Gilbert, RMC, CMC

Caroga Town Clerk

General #'s 226 to 259 \$9,579.93

Highway #'s 96 to 107 \$23,337.55

Prepaid #'s 164 to 190 425,751.98

General Park #'s 51 to 60 \$2,735.15