

State of New York
County of Fulton
Town of Caroga

Minutes of the Caroga Town Board Budget meeting held Monday October 7, 2024 at the municipal building located at 1840 State Highway #10 at 6:00 pm with the following persons in attendance by roll call. The flag salute followed.

Supervisor Ralph J. Palcovic - Here
Council Member John Glenn – Here
Council Member Barbara DeLuca – Here
Council Member Richard Sturgess – Here
Council Member Matthew Cooper – Here

Also in attendance were Joanne Young Budget Director, and Jeremy Manning – Bike Trail Manager. There were three members of the public in attendance.

Mr. Manning submitted a one-page document of his 2025 budget requests. It showed the 2024 expenditures and revenues and the proposed 2025 expenditures and revenues. He wanted to make modification to the budget since the last meeting. He noted there is a carry-over from the Smart Growth Grant and RTP Grant. The difference between the proposed expenses and the revenues is \$12,203.00. That amount is the required match for our portion of the RPT Grant.

That amount has to be shown in the budget. The donations for next year were discussed. The A2705.2 line was put at \$5,000.00. This is conservative. YTD is \$10,132.00. Mr. Manning noted fees are still coming in for a race this weekend. He stated there is an active go fund me page. The desired salary for the trail manager was \$24,000.00. Mr. Manning stated there are many positions within this job. He stated the course is as good as he puts into it. He wants to keep doing the grant writing, the planning, the design, the management he stated was a 40 hour a week job especially in July and August. The previous salary was a number out of a hat. Other towns pay a trail manager \$75,000.00 - \$90,000.00 a year. The Smart Growth Grant will pay for \$8,000.00 of the salary, Next year \$6,000.00 can come out of the RPT Grant with an additional \$2,000.00 from the Smart Growth Grant. The first year Mr. Manning was paid in health insurance. He does not get the health insurance anymore. Council Member Glenn stated it was a significant number. Council Member DeLuca stated there have been significant changes in the use of the bike path and the amount of people it draws to the community. Supervisor Palcovic hears all good things from APA and DEC about the Wheelerville Trails while traveling around the state on town business. County Planning and the Board of Supervisors discuss the importance of the growth of the trails system and the future of this town. Council Member DeLuca has visited Lake Placid and they have an extensive trail system. They have 24 miles and are working on another 10 miles by spring. It draws people to the community.

Mr. Manning stated the job entails constant planning and design, grant writing (he is battling 1000) promotion and marketing, he does all the merchandise design and in person sales. He hires and manages all the employees, as well as managing all the social media stuff. Any one of those jobs is its own job. He has gone to trail events and covered the costs himself.

Council Member Cooper noted now there is little or no impact on the town budget because of the grants. Are the grants going to endure in 10 years and if not then what. Mr. Manning stated a side project is setting up the 501C3 status then fund raising can be handled directly. That will help finance and fund the trails project. The other trails are organized and funded by separate 501C3's. This is something for the town to decide how the trail is funded in the future. He is looking to the county for funding too. Supervisor Palcovic stated should the grand funding dry up in 1 – 5 years the salary may be readjusted.

The clerk asked if a bike group has been formed as was discussed when the bike trails began. There are the Saratoga Shredders and a foothills group. Has a board been put together. Mr. Manning noted the groups supporting our project want out because they want to focus on their own projects. "We are getting the boot from AFTA."

Council Member Cooper asked about the salary line item for the workers – it has doubled. Mr. Manning stated it was for more man hours, same number of workers.

Council Member Sturgess talked to another Council Member earlier and they thought \$20,000.00 was a good salary. If the board were to set the salary at \$24,000.00 would Mr. Manning write at least one grant a year for the town that is now associated with the bike trail. Maybe \$100,000.00 grant for the highway barn. Mr. Manning stated it depended on how massive the grant is. Council Member DeLuca noted the 2025 budget has a line item for a grant writer for \$10,000.00 on it. Council Member Sturgess noted the bike trail isn't open in the winter. Mr. Manning offered to do grant writing for a fee but no one responded to him. If something becomes viable Mr. Manning has a lot of information that can be plugged into another grant. It is a lot of work. Mr. Manning will think about it, it depends on the scope. He stated Labarge charges \$6,000 - \$7,000 for a grant easily.

Council Member Sturgess wanted to make it clear that we are budgeting this money but nothing has been decided on the trail going along the edge of the golf course

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Line A7145.12 was increased to \$24,000.00 all board members were in favor of the change.

Line A7145.1 increased to \$89,000.00

Line A7145.4 \$36,000.00

Page 15 Revenue – Donations A2705.2 decreased to \$5,000.00.

The town clerk gave the budget director the final totals from the Real Property Director.

The summary General Town Wide changed from \$1,975,770.00 to \$1,989,650.00.

Less revenues General Town Wide changed from \$1,580,569.00 to \$1,605,569.00.

Less fund balance Town Wide changed from \$146,193.00 to \$134,834.00.

Less fund balance Highway Town Wide changed \$139,493.00 \$138,644.00 to

Less fund balance fire contract changed from \$1,029.00 to \$1,059.00

Amount to be raised by taxes General changed from \$249,008.00 to \$249,247.00

Amount to be raised by taxes Highway changed from \$882,107.00 to \$882,956.00

Amount to be raised by taxes fire changed from 162,185.00 to \$162,155.00

Taxable value for general and highway changed from \$162,750,453.00 to \$162,907,019.00

Taxable value for fire changed from \$165,495.635.00 to \$165,464.960.00

The budget director stated to the clerk it didn't change the rate just changed the fund balances. There will be a new cover sheet with the next version of the budget.

The following changes were made during this meeting

Page 7 Superintendent of Highways P/S A5010.1 was set at \$51,500.00. The budget director stated the Deputy Hwy Superintendent should not be a union member.

The board discussed the Hwy diagnostic computer expense: A5132.4. the increase in line A5132.4 due to OSHA complaints and building deficiencies. Heat comes out of this line.

Line A1440.4 Engineering was left at \$100,000.00.

Line A8020.41 Comprehensive Plan was increased to \$15,000.00. Council Member DeLuca explained the committee wants to do surveys, and perhaps do a mailing. The last survey was responded to by only 7% of the population. The cost for the help of Fulton County Planning was \$3,000.00, plus \$5,000.00 for printing. The clerk noted that the town has not used the 10 hours of free planning services from the County Planning Dept. this year.

Council Member DeLuca asked if the unemployment on the golf course is under control. Council Member Sturgess noted it is not illegal but no one has done it in the past. It was a management problem with scheduling. This discussion will continue in a different session.

Page 9 Line A7180.2 Golf Equipment was reviewed. Nothing has been purchased YTD. One item was purchased for under \$1,000.00 this month. Mr. Stedman was supposed to price three items he needed. Council Member Sturgess suggested the purchases be made this year.

It was stated the date the budget needed to be finalized by is the Thursday after Election Day

The budget director stated Mr. Cummings finally gave her all of his budget requests.

Line A7180.11 golf course club manage was changed to \$26,000.00.

Line A7180.21 golf carts was increased to \$31,000.00.

On the Revenue side:

Page 14 A2025 increased to \$225,000.00 and A2025.1 Golf carts increased to \$80,000.00.

Mr. Cummings was thinking about raising golf rates.

A discussion on golf revenues ensued. Council Member Sturgess asked if the course was going to lose money this year or make money. The budget officer replied make money about \$40,000.00. Mr. Cummings tried to have the expenses balance the revenue side. Council Member Sturgess was concerned if next year it rains and you can't play golf. If it rains the workers won't work as much so it should offset.

Next the board discussed reserves: Page 13

Golf Course Equip. Reserve Line A9950.93 was changed from \$10,000.00 to \$25,000.00 and Golf Course Improvement Reserve Line A9950.94 was changed from \$10,000.00 to \$20,000.00.

Anita Long was reviewing her golf budget numbers and still came up with a negative number. An updated spread sheet was given to Ms. Long by the budget director.

Supervisor Palcovic suggested a new line item for the budget to provide a salary for the manager of the drug testing program for the highway department. The program may be expanded to departments other than the highway. The Supervisor noted highway secretary should not be in charge of overseeing the highway testing program. The clerk has been running it and should be compensated. Administrating the program involves quarterly testing and new hires. Currently it is CDL's but as discussed in previous months this program may be expanded to other equipment operators for our own liability protection, and safety of employees.

Line A1410.12 Substance Compliance Officer \$1,000.00.

Highway: Council Member Sturgess reviewed this portion of the budget and thought it was very conservative this year. The department went up 4%. The board discussed the highway reserves. There is \$42,000.00 in the reserve right now. The budget director didn't think we could fund the reserve this year due to repairs this year.

Council Member Cooper stated our trucks are junk. They are way beyond their useful life. Supervisor Palcovic stated there could be a bond issue. Council Member Cooper noted we have to budget for a bond. Council Member DeLuca thought there was a plan in place to replace vehicles. We have a list of the truck and the Deputy Highway Superintendent is compiling what is spent per vehicle for the last year on repairs. To purchase a new big truck, it takes about three years from order to delivery. A nearby town bought a big truck off the floor.

The budget director stated the only thing we have for next year's budget (bottom of page 16) is \$90,000.00 in the equipment reserve and the machinery and equipment lines in the budget is another \$90,000.00. It was noted that CHIPS funds will come in December. There are still expenses for repairs for this year. The board agreed a plan needs to be put in place so we know when a truck is going in service and when it will come out. A lease option was noted.

RESOLUTION#2024-096 to move the Tentative Budget to the Preliminary Budget
was offered by Council Member DeLuca at the budget meeting held on October 7, 2024.

WHEREAS, the Budget Officer Joanne Young and Supervisor Palcovic have spent numerous hours putting together the 2025 Tentative Budget, and

WHEREAS, the budget was presented to the Town Board members and the public at a meeting held on September 18, 2024, and

WHEREAS, a second budget meeting was held this evening with changes being made to various line items, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to make the Tentative Budget the Preliminary Budget.

Seconded by Council Member Sturgess

All board members were in favor of the motion with a vote of 5 Ayes:
Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper

The board discussed setting the date for the public hearing on the 2025 budget.

RESOLUTION #2024-097 to set the public hearing on the 2025 Preliminary Budget was offered by Council Member Sturgess at the budget meeting held on October 7, 2024.

WHEREAS, the Town Board has worked to review and revise the 2025 budget over the course of two meetings, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that a public hearing on the 2025 Preliminary Budget is hereby scheduled for Wednesday November 6, 2024 at 6:30 pm at town hall.

Seconded by Supervisor Palcovic

Discussion: A member of the public asked if it would be broadcast over zoom. Council Member Sturgess was sick of this broadcasting over zoom. Supervisor Palcovic noted it was not mandatory to use zoom. If it is possible the technical person will run zoom for the public hearing. It is understood a lot of our residents are not here.

All board members were in favor of the motion with a vote of 5 Ayes:
Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper

Mr. Farber wanted to be notified by the previous Monday if the meeting would be broadcast by zoom so he could notify the members of the Canada Lake Conservation Association.

At 7:27 Council Member Glenn made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Council Member DeLuca. All board members were in favor of the motion. Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper.

Submitted by Caroga Town Clerk

Linda Gilbert, RMC, CMC