

State of New York
County of Fulton
Town of Caroga

Minutes of the regular monthly Caroga Town Board meeting held Wednesday October 9, 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 – Here
Council Member Barbara DeLuca – Absent
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, Mr. Miller– Golf Course employee, Mike Kunath – BTI, Marcus Harazin – Invasive Species Prevention, Walter Jim Hogan – Weed Harvesting Coordinator, Roy Stock – Deputy Highway Superintendent, a highway employee, Planning Board Member & Comprehensive Plan Member - Anita Long, and six members of the public. The meeting was not broadcast using Zoom this evening.

Supervisor Palcovic made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the September meeting. The motion was seconded by Council Member Sturgess. All board members were in favor of the motion; Palcovic, Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper.

Department Reports:

Wheelerville Bike Trail – Mr. Manning reported a Go Fund Me Page has been set up by Tim O’Shea. He is not a town employee. He runs the skills and coaching clinics up here a lot. Normally AFTA-Adirondack Foothills Trails Association does this. They are a 501 C3 but they are moving away from supporting our trails and focusing on the trails in Old Forge right now. The donations will be sent to the town. There is no conflict of interest in any way with Mr. Manning’s position or anyone on the Town Board or an employee of the town. Mr. Manning is appreciative that he is doing this.

Mr. Manning received a note from Jonathan DeSantis the head forester for this Department of Environmental Conservation for this region. Mr. Manning has been working with him on the trail system since 2019 as it pertains to the expansion of the trails system on the adjacent state land. Mr. Manning contacts him annually asking what’s going on with the Unit Management Plan (UMP) revision. His recent correspondence is a summary stating they were in support of the trails system. They support expansion of the trails eventually into the adjacent wild forest. There isn’t a time table on this and thought it would take decades. There are other UMP’s priorities. They have been working on the Ferris Lake UMP for 25 years.

Mr. Manning reported a new trail was finished yesterday. It opened today. It is a beautiful, easy, gentle trail. It is a good biking or walking path down by the stream. Now they are working, with the assistance from Fulton County, on a resurfacing effort to keep the trails at a designated level.

Blue trails blue, green trails green. Supervisor Palcovic noted the recognition our trails get wherever he goes.

Mr. Manning noted that Ron Peters reached out to him today. He is pushing for the Economic Development Council to once again recognize the trails as a priority project for the region. Information was shared on what the plans were for the next few years.

84 Lumber donated a shed to the Wheelerville Bike Trail for tools. One of the guys who ran the race this weekend is affiliated with them.

BTI- Mr. Kunath reported that he held the year end meeting two weeks ago at the fire department. He collected everyone's paperwork. He will work on it and it will be turned into DEC. An order for 50 gallons of BTI solution was placed. It will be delivered next week. The Town of Benson reached out to him a couple of weeks ago about starting their own BTI Program. Currently they have a company that does it. They are not pleased. This is the second town that has reached out to him with questions on how the program works. Council Member Palcovic asked if he would be an independent contractor to them with his staff. Mr. Kunath replied no, he would not have the time. Mr. Kunath would be happy to consult on this. They could attend our classes. If he were to consult, he would come to the board as the town pays for his license, and they could split the cost.

Sole Assessor – Supervisor Palcovic read the report submitted by the Assessor Leigh Anne Loucks. Several small claim review hearings have been determined, with some reductions. One was dismissed. She is working with codes and had a discussion on the ability for owners to build without a permit if replacing with “in kind” structures. She will be purchasing a color printer for the office. Canada Lake Computer has been contacted about a laptop for next year. She currently has a refurbished desktop from the county which has no WIFI access. Data collecting is ongoing. She is routinely checking with the attorney on some legal issues. The Short-Term Rental files are being updated. She also goes to the Fulton County Real Property Office to retrieve sales and information biweekly.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector/Registrar/ RMO – The clerk, Linda Gilbert, stated she is busy working diligently in her office. She has been typing a lot of minutes recently.

Code Enforcement & Sanitation – Supervisor Palcovic read a report from the Code Officer, it stated 31 permits had been issued, the valuation for the construction total is \$856,360.00. That resulted in \$4,100.00 in fees being collected. The code officer conducted 38 inspections on open permits. Four letters of violation were sent out. He continues to work on blight. He reported working with the assessor. The code officer has also been discussing, for clarification, with the Adirondack Park Agency some zoning issues which the Supervisor noted come up almost every day.

Dog Control – No Report

Golf Course - Mr. Stedman reported within the next 24 hours all of the aerification of the entire course will be complete – tee's, fairways, and greens. He still has to top dress the back 9 greens. He is planning to use the town chipper in another week or week and a half. They will be trained on it. They will be working on hole 5 and 6 tee areas.

Outings are done for the year. Falling Leaves was on October 6th. Now tree work and stump grinding will be done. The entire irrigation system has to be blown out still. Lime needs to be put down on fairways and final sprays have to be applied to prevent snow mold before winter.

Highway – Deputy Highway Superintendent Roy Stock reported they are working on the roads. The clerk noted Mr. Voght gave her a copy of an insurance policy from the Caroga Arts Collective for when they close off the road. So, they are insured. Supervisor Palcovic stated there were some inadequate postings of the road during special events which could have potentially caused accidents. In his discussions with Mr. Ruby and company it was stated that there should be some sort of formalized agreement and Mr. Voght was involved with keeping us all out of trouble.

Lakes Management Program – Mr. Hogan reported tomorrow the harvester will be delivered to Council Member Cooper at Beech Ridge Garage for him to look at. Apparently, it is fine. (the harvester fell off the trailer while at the Caroga Marina) Mr. Hogan asked Ezra Schwartzberg for some type of preliminary report. They are very happy so far about the milfoil. Other native plants are filling in. Supervisor Palcovic declared the addition of ProcellaCOR to the lake a huge success. Supervisor Palcovic has not heard any negatives. Council Member Glenn noted this was a pilot project and stated we will see what happens next year if it comes back. Mr. Hogan thought Bennett’s Bay will be done next year. Council Member Glenn asked if Ezra and Glenn Sullivan will be available for the lakes management meeting next Tuesday October 15th at 5:30 pm at town hall. It is a semi-annual meeting. Mr. Hogan noted it would be Brian Green, and Mr. Sullivan stated they would be available via Zoom. Marcus Harazin, Jim Hogan, and John Olm will give their reports. They will review the year and move forward toward next spring.

Mr. Hogan stated he was not at the budget meeting on Monday but he is still working on numbers. Supervisor Palcovic noted “things won’t change much we are pretty much into it”. The board already received information from Mr. Hogan to work with.

Marcus Harazin thanked those who worked on the budget while he was away. He noted the upcoming meeting. He noted John Olm gave a brief report noting that AWI (Adirondack Watershed Institute) will have the final numbers hopefully shortly. The boat wash station will close Columbus Day. They will make sure all of the equipment is winterized. Canada Lake Conservation Association is looking at some sort of communication equipment for the West Lake site – that area does not have cell service. There have been situations where there will be volatile weather or volatile people and it would be good to have communications there.

A quarterly report was submitted by Mr. Harazin to DEC for the grant. He will work with Joanne to get copies of the vouchers in November or early December.

Jed Potocar of West Caroga Lake reported that they have done a lot of testing for different things. They did a number of samples for Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP), and Adirondack Lake Assessment Program (ALAP). They will have those results later. Bacterial testing was done this year. They did about 30 samples over the course of four months. He is pleased to report that so far, the E. coli is under control on West Caroga Lake. They only had one sample that was a little high and that was probably explainable by geese taking a dump nearby. They will try to continue that testing next year. There is E. coli everywhere in the lake but it is just not at levels high enough to be forced to close down swimming. Next year they want to do more fecal samples to

help determine if it is geese or human dung in the lake. He believes it is coming from water fowl. He will keep the town posted on that.

The zoom link will be sent out again for the meeting.

Town Hall Building - Supervisor Palcovic noted there was a heating problem today. It was found that the emergency shut off switch was OFF. The last ones to touch the boilers was the service tech a few weeks ago. They probably tested it and left it in the off position. There will need to be some minor repairs.

CTC/Caroga Tourism Committee – Supervisor Palcovic reported that Council Member DeLuca asked him to put in a request for approval to spend funds on pumpkins for the Trunk or Treat event. We have done this in the past. This expense is in the budget for tourism.

Comprehensive Plan Committee - Chris Foss – Chairman of the committee submitted a report. In his report he stated they would be submitting a budget request for the upcoming year. The Supervisor stated the town board has agreed to fund the program to keep it going. At the last meeting they focused on three areas, the budget and the need to get community input via mail, and online surveys. The second area was revised census data provided by the Fulton County Planning Department, and the third focus was a sample questionnaire. Anita Long has some shared information from other communities.

The next meeting of the Comprehensive Plan (update) Review will be October 24th at 6 pm. They are trying to keep a regular meeting schedule of the fourth Thursday of the month.

Supervisor's Report:

- 1) Estimate for emergent roof repair Supervisor Palcovic received three quotes for the emergent roof repairs. After talking to all of them a technical specification was drawn up. He recommended hiring Galway Roofing. The supervisor noted there are a lot of miscellaneous repairs that are needed throughout the roofing system of this complex. The high bidder was Quinlan Construction at \$36,000.00, next was Galway Roofing for \$19,775.00, and the lowest bid was from Mohawk Valley Roofing at \$11,250.00.

Council Member Cooper asked for a resolution. Council Member Sturgess asked why we are not going with the low bidder. Supervisor Palcovic stated the approach to the work that would be done. Supervisor Palcovic felt very comfortable with Galway Roofings' ability. They have a history of work in the three-county area. The work is more comprehensive for the dollars.

RESOLUTION #2024-098 to award the contract to Galway Roofing for the emergent roof repairs on the town hall building was offered by Supervisor Palcovic at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on Wednesday October 9, 2024.

WHEREAS, it has been apparent that various areas of the town hall roof have been compromised, and

WHEREAS, Supervisor Palcovic did seek three quotes to do emergent repairs from the following three vendors:

Mohawk Valley Roofing 475 Saltsman Rd. Little Falls Ny 13365 (518)727-3247 - \$11,250.00
Quinlan Construction 200 Seneca Ridge Dr. Broadalbin NY 12025 (518)528-3982 \$36,690.00
Galway Roofing PO Box 600 Galway NY 12074 (518)842-5445 \$19,775.00 now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to award the contract to Galway Roofing in the amount of \$19,775.00 for the roof repairs to town hall.

Seconded by Council Member Glenn

Adopted by a vote of 4 Ayes: Palcovic, Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper

Supervisor's Report cont.

- 2) Upstate Ice Plex is the ice area tentatively scheduled for the Town of Johnstown on Route 10 A. This is a not for profit. It has been on the radar of the county for several years. Fundraising events will go toward building a building.
- 3) Supervisor Palcovic received a report from the county board of supervisors on Fulton County Tourism. Between the Caroga Arts Collective and the Wheelerville Bike Trail System we are getting a lot of recognition. It was a banner year for tourism in the county.
- 4) Supervisor Palcovic gave an engineering update for the golf course club house building. He stated we have been meeting with engineers from different firms. Locally he would consider doing business with C T Male to get the planning and site engineering done for the future building. Supervisor Palcovic stated he has been keeping everyone in the loop. He also received another proposal from the MRB Group that just came in today. CT Male also provided a report on getting a new town hall building years ago. Eventually, our intent is to get the new town offices in the lower level of the club house building. The lower level being a grade level entrance to the municipal building. The priority being getting the club house up. CT Male has a comprehensive proposal. The Supervisor would like to start the project with CT Male to try to get something in the ground.

Council Member Glenn asked if they were going to come and do a presentation. Supervisor Palcovic stated, "Yes, they will eventually." They haven't yet because we haven't hired them yet. He has walked around the site and Council Member Sturgess stated there have been a handful of meetings. One evaluation that has to be done is the sanitary sewer system from the old club house has to be evaluated to see if it is viable. It hasn't been maintained as a raised bed sewer system and has trees growing out of it. The grade and layout have to be determined. The town board members all received an email with information. Tonight, the supervisor is asking that the preliminary engineering services he wants to go to contract dated September 11, 2024 with CT Male would not exceed without prior approval services an initial amount of \$25,000.00. To review Supervisor Palcovic stated they would review available work completed by previous consultants, update concept level floor plans, (they have the original design documents) develop a concept level floor plan for the club house, determine design and waste water flows, determine any testing that should occur to existing

well, prepare schematics site plan, and develop a final scope to work for full design. Then we would have to go into the next phase of engineering which would come back to this table.

RESOLUTION #2024-099 to contract with C T Male to get the planning and site engineering done for the future Golf Course Building was offered by Supervisor Palcovic at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on Wednesday October 9, 2024.

WHEREAS, the Town Supervisor, and Council Members Sturgess and the Supervisor and Council Member Cooper have met on various occasions with engineering firms to discuss moving forward with building the Club House building, and

WHEREAS, CT Male of 50 Century Drive Latham NY have come up with a comprehensive plan to begin engineering site work on the site of the proposed Club House Building, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Caroga Town board does hereby move to contract with CT Male at a price not to exceed \$25,000.00 to review work completed by previous consultants, update concept level floor plans, develop a concept level floor plan for the club house, determine design and waste water flows, determine any testing that should occur to existing well, prepare schematics site plan, and develop a final scope to work for full design.

Seconded by Council Member Cooper

Discussion: Council Member Sturgess noted that the funding for this will come out of the insurance money. Supervisor Palcovic confirmed that this \$25,000.00 would be coming out of the insurance fund.

Adopted by a vote of 4 Ayes: Palcovic, Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper

- 5) Supervisor Palcovic discussed with the board a request from Mr. Zeitler from whom we lease space in the old firehouse has asked to raise the rental fee he charges the town for the storage and work area space for the golf course equipment. He has also requested his building be rezoned appropriately. Supervisor Palcovic stated we have to go forward to support the mission for rezoning of the building which has not been correctly zoned even when it was a fire house. There will be a slight raise with the contract with Mr. Zeitler to \$1,250.00 monthly. Supervisor Palcovic stated this is just an FYI the increase is effective January 1st. The clerk stated the town currently pays him \$1,150.00 monthly.

Public Comments: Anita Long stated she serves on the Planning Board as an alternate member. She encouraged the board to through the formal process of updating the zoning. Supervisor Palcovic noted changes were marked up on a document. Ms. Long stated she was speaking specifically about the Zeitler property. The Supervisor stated it is zoned conservation zone, even the highway garage. The supervisor stated the whole document itself needs revision. The clerk stated there are other revision needed other than what was presented to the board.

Mrs. Menghini stated she had a question about the assessor's report. Is there any way that there is access as to what is being assessed and whose property is being assessed that we all can make a comparison to. Supervisor Palcovic stated that information/data is on the tax property website. If it is in process that wouldn't show up yet but the supervisor suggested calling the assessor and make an appointment. Mrs. Menghini stated she meant in with regard to the town, if there were any properties being egregious with the regard to their estimated valuation and there may be some lawsuits that might be on the books with regards to people suing the town for reviewing their tax assessment on their property. Is there any way to...

Council Member Sturgess was not sure what her question was.

In general, Mrs. Menghini stated if she wanted to compare her tax assessed value with say Anita but say Anita has a problem with the town but Mrs. Menghini was not really aware of it is there any way that a person would know specifically within the whole town if there were certain properties that are really challenging the assessor's office on their valuation for lowering their taxes.

The board members responded it would be on a case-by-case basis, and noted this would take place during grievance day for the most part. Initially, Supervisor Palcovic stated lawsuits are not public records initially, until they get to court.

Her point is, Mrs. Menghini, stated that the assessor mentioned this in her report but there is nothing specific yet. Supervisor Palcovic stated that she could talk to the assessor on the disposition of any given case. He noted when something is settled it becomes public record. He noted the information is FOIL able and stated the assessor would probably discuss it with her.

Jed Potocar – West Caroga Lake asked what the settlement was from NYMIR on this golf building. He asked if we had an amount. Supervisor Palcovic stated there is a dollar value in the bank of about \$1.5 million. Council Member Sturgess stated \$1.6 million and then there is a \$500,000.00 code compliance with the first building and another \$141,000.00 code compliance with the second building. We don't have the five hundred and the one forty-one yet until we start the structure. Then we can submit paperwork to get that for what we have to bring up to code vs what wasn't in code. Council Member Sturgess also thought there was a depreciation as well, we have to talk about that in a meeting with our insurance company.

Mr. Potocar asked if it was the intention to have the new building totally covered by insurance? "Yes," was the answer by multiple council members. Supervisor Palcovic stated the money has been put aside specific for getting something in the ground. We are moving forward.

Shirley Holliday asked how much space do we actually rent down to the old fire house? Supervisor Palcovic stated an entire bay and then some of the old fire house. It is two trucks deep. In hindsight the town had the opportunity to purchase the property when the firehouse was for sale.

Mrs. Holliday asked how many estimates have we had on the new town hall. The Supervisor stated we don't have an estimate right now. Council Member Sturgess stated we have had a conceptual building and a cost per square foot to build. She asked how many times has an engineer looked into it. Supervisor Palcovic responded that we were looking forward.

Old Business: re: The light on West Lake Road we are still trying to get a contractor to do this. The Point Breeze spot light will also be looked at. As well as one more. Mr. Harazin applauded. The original lighting contractor is not getting back to the town despite several attempts.

Policy to establish a non-DOT testing pool is still yet to be determined.

New Business:

The town received a donation of two fans to the summer youth program. Precision Auto of Johnstown and Beech Ridge Garage of Caroga Lake donated to fans this summer. Thank you cards were sent out. The Supervisor thanked them for their support.

Discussion on a resolution to list East Shore Road for no thru trucks. Supervisor Palcovic stated there is a lot of non- local traffic that goes there and we are going to try to legally control some of it. Supervisor Palcovic explained that he has been receiving emails about the truck traffic and speeding cars on East Shore Road. Signs used to be posted for no thru trucks. The clerk noted there is nothing on the books to support the signs that used to be posted on East Shore Road. Supervisor Palcovic asked if a 5-ton weight limit should be added. Council Member Sturgess thought we were missing something on this. It wasn't just a simple resolution. The matter was tabled. The clerk will contact the Association of Towns about posting road signs. Local deliveries are OK.

Council Member Cooper noted a lot of building is going on so you will have heavier trucks.

A member of the public stated she lives on County Highway 111 (London Bridge Road). The speed limit on that road is 45 mph yet the speed limit through town is 40 mph. People fly on London Bridge Road to come to a road that is 25 mph. She wondered if there was a way to get the speed limit lowered. It is a county road. Supervisor Palcovic will contact the Fulton County Highway Superintendent. New York State has to get involved as it is a speed change. It is a slow process.

Correspondence:

Columbus Day Transfer Station hours Closed Monday, open Tuesday 10/15 8 am – noon. Supervisor Palcovic noted the winter hours are now in effect.

Skyler Cruz Wolsey 6 – page letter on traffic. Supervisor Palcovic noted some unusual communications from an individual regarding traffic.

Fulton County Public Health has a campaign going for lead poisoning prevention.

A letter from Jim & Marcia Johnson complained about a Short-Term Rental.

The Fish and Game Club thanked the town for supporting the restocking of fish. The Supervisor stated 500 rainbow trout were stocked in East & West Caroga Lakes. The clerk read it was 400 12"-15" rainbow from the receipt submitted. It will be the club's 75th Anniversary next year. Mr. Hogan stated West Caroga also stocks fish from their funds. Mr. Potocar stated they put in 150 trout and will put in 150 large mouth in a couple of weeks. Council Member Glenn noted East Caroga Lake Protective Association also stock East Caroga.

Executive Session: (requested by Town Clerk at 7:23 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. Council member Sturgess seconded the motion. All board members were in favor of the motion: Palcovic, Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper. The clerk also entered the executive session.

At 7:38 pm the clerk exited from the executive session.

At 7:52 pm Council Member Sturgess made a motion to exit from the executive session. Council Member Cooper seconded the motion. All board members were in favor of the motion: Palcovic, Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper. The clerk also entered the executive session.

Resolutions:

RESOLUTION # 2024-100 to make the following transfers as necessary to maintain a balanced budget was offered by Supervisor Palcovic at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on October 9, 2024

WHEREAS the bookkeeper Joanne Young has identified a need to make various transfers to maintain a balanced budget, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to make the following transfers.

To A 19030.4 Judgements & Claims	\$ 90.00	
From A1990.4 Contingency		\$ 90.00
To A6410.41 Golf Course Publicity C/E	\$ 500.00	
From: A1670.41 GC Print & Mail		\$ 500.00
To DA5130.4 Machinery C/E	\$ 40,000.00	
From DA9050.8 Unemployment		\$ 7,000.00
DA5110.1 General Repairs P/S		\$ 33,000.00
To A7180.21 Golf Carts	\$ 500.00	
From A7180.41 Port a John		\$ 500.00

Seconded by Council Member Sturgess

Adopted by a vote of 4 Ayes: Palcovic, Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper

The clerk asked if as a result of the executive was she directed to review the policy with the employee? Council Member Sturgess replied, "Sure." Council Member Cooper stated we should have a pre-employment checklist. No resolution was forthcoming.

RESOLUTION #2024-101 to approve an expenditure by the Recreation Commission (Tourism Committee) of pumpkins was offered by Supervisor Palcovic at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on October 9, 2024.

WHEREAS, the Caroga Tourism Committee has met throughout the year, and

WHEREAS, a Trunk or Treat event is planned for Saturday October 26th at Sherman’s Amusement Park, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to allow the expenditure of \$500.00 for pumpkins to support Trunk or Treat.

Adopted by a vote of 4 Ayes: Palcovic, Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper

Council Member Glenn made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 11th Town Board meeting. Seconded by Council Member Sturgess. The clerk asked if the board wanted to approve the September 18th and October 7th Budget meeting minutes. Two board members had not had time to review the October minutes as they were just sent over today.

Seconded by Council Member Sturgess

Hearing no further discussion; All board members were in favor of the motion: Palcovic, Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper.

Supervisor Palcovic made a motion to approve the bills as presented for audit. Council Member Glenn seconded the motion. Hearing no further discussion: All board members were in favor of the motion: Palcovic, Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper.

At 7:57 pm Council Member Glenn made a motion to adjourn. Supervisor Palcovic seconded the motion. Hearing no further discussion; all board members were in favor of the motion: Palcovic, Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper.

The clerk reminded those in attendance that the public hearing on the 2025 Budget will be Wednesday November 6th at 6:30.

Submitted by Caroga Town Clerk

Linda Gilbert RMC, CMC

General #'s 341 – 366 \$20,496.55

Prepaid #'s 251 – 277 \$41,540.51

Highway #'s 145 – 168 \$79,519.31

General Park #'s 87 -101 \$7,475.61