

State of New York  
County of Fulton  
Town of Caroga

Minutes of a Caroga Town Board work session held Friday September 5, 2025 at the municipal building located at 1840 State Highway #10 at 3:00 pm with the following persons in attendance by roll call.

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

Also in attendance were Jeremy Manning – Wheelerville Bike Trail Manager, Ron Peters from the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth, and Scott Henze Fulton County Planning Director. There were 41 members of the public in attendance.

Supervisor Palcovic stated the first course of business to clarify this and promote business is to entertain the request for a waiver for the Royal View Pub, Pavilion and Campground for a new pub/tavern. This is for the ABC licensing. They are requesting the town board's forgiveness on the thirty-day waiting period during the application process. It is from Greta Frasier and Anthony Fancher – Royal View Pub and Pavilion and Campground located at 2533 State Highway 10 Johnstown NY 12095.

**The motion was made** by Supervisor Palcovic at a Caroga Town Board work session held on Friday September 5, 2025 to go ahead with the 30-day waiver for the ABC rules and regulations so they can proceed to get their beer and wine license. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Glenn.

**Discussion:** Councilmember Glenn stated this is a temporary license to allow them to go ahead with the application process. This is not the final...Councilmember Sturgess stated this is to waive the process. This is something that the liquor board requires, everyone that has a liquor license to do. It has to sit on the municipality's desk for 30 days to make sure someone doesn't contest it. Basically, we are voting on if we want Royal View Pub to have a liquor license or not. It is essentially what it does. Councilmember Glenn again says it gives them a temporary privilege to.... Councilmember Sturgess noted it is not temporary. Supervisor Palcovic stated he did use the word temporary with me. Councilmember Sturgess stated that is how the process works you get your temporary permit prior to your other permit.

**The motion was passed by a vote of 5 Ayes:** Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper

The bicycle trail system in conjunction with the golf course was discussed next.

Mr. Manning gave a brief overview of the project – where the funding comes from what the issues are and some possible proposals/resolutions. Then there are three speakers who what to give their

perspective and reason for support. Mr. Manning stated we are talking about a trail that would go from the existing trail here (points to map) all the way down to the downtown business area. This trail was funded by a 2023 Recreational Trails Program Grant which Mr. Manning wrote two years ago for \$88,600.00. It would give a recreational path that gives trail users - bikers, hikers, snow-shoers, walkers, runners the ability to traverse from the existing trail to downtown and vice versa. It is three miles total in length. Two miles would be on the town property. The point is to get the people from the current trail system walking, biking, to the business downtown – the bars and restaurants. This is for the economic development of the downtown areas.

Mr. Manning noted the support he has received from everyone in state government: Schumer's office, Gillibrand's office, the local Regional Economic Development staff, and county tourism. This is a federal grant for \$88,600.00 plus \$10,000.00 from the County and \$10,000.00 from a local match. There is additional funding connected to this project. He would hate to lose this grant because this hasn't been acted upon yet. Mr. Manning is asking today for support for the Smart Growth Funding which is also tied to this as well. He wants to succeed in completing this grant. This is just on private land, (he noted the state land on the map) on the wooded area on the back of the golf course. The area he wanted to talk about today is the area along hole #3. Mr. Manning indicated the area he has planned for the trail. He noted it is back in the woods and goes over to the cell tower and onto private land that would continue to the downtown area.

Mr. Manning stated he has been working closely with Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) on an amendment to the Shaker Mountain Wild Forest Management Plan to cross a section here (indicates on map) the area of concern is along hole #3. As it is now the town boundary goes right along this edge (indicates on map) next to the forest preserve edge that we can't go beyond. He working with DEC for a possible go around to get along this golf course area. Mr. Manning talked to Assemblyman Smullen today who talked to Joe Zalaski they are prioritizing the project to move the amendment along but there is no timeframe. It could take six months, a year, or two years. Mr. Manning's grant however, has a timeframe and will expire before the amendment. He hopes today to get some resolution on getting past this section on the golf course and still preserve the grant funding.

Mr. Manning stated he has looked at other golf courses on how they do this. He named the Craig Wood Golf Course Lake Placid and Valley View. There are a lot of courses have trails not just along one hole but the entirety of the course. There are ways to do this safely and respectfully in a way that everyone benefits as well. Signage is important trail users always yield to golfers. What Mr. Manning is proposing to the board are two possible solutions. One is a cart path that goes from the three T box all the way around to the three green. It could be used for golfers and trail users. His funding would pay for it and construct it. This would improve the drainage along there where the rocks are built up from 100 years ago when the course was built. The other proposal he is still working with DEC on is a temporary trail along the back of hole #3 and then where it has to pop out along the edge of the rock briefly having a three feet wide trail temporarily until permission can be obtained be from DEC to put these twenty feet back from their forest preserve boundary. Mr. Manning would like to find a way to move forward and not lose the funding but still get from here to there and make the project happen.

Mr. Manning stated the trail could close during tournaments.

Supervisor Palcovic introduced Scott Henze the Fulton County Planner. He helps keep the entire tourism industry of the county going. Mr. Henze showed a copy of the Comprehensive Plan. It is being updated right now. This is the bible for the town he stated. In the Comprehensive Plan there are various components in it that point to why we need to continue to grow the Wheelerville Trails. In the economy section it says the town has a tourism-based economy. There are no major industries in town. The largest employers are the Wheelerville School District and the Town of Caroga. The town's population is declining and its tax base is stagnant. As the cost to run the town increases the tax base must grow in order to keep the local taxes stable. The population in 1980 the median age was 32.3 years of age as of today it is 54.6. The population is aging. That affects school enrollment. In 1990 there were 219 students in Wheelerville today there are 118. Mr. Henze reads from the chapter on ***Recreational Natural Resources***: from the plan, **Background**: The availability on diverse year-round recreational resources will become an integral component to a vibrant community. Diverse recreational resources are often viewed as a major asset and attraction. Under recommendations in that chapter in the Comprehensive Plan one of the recommendations is to develop recreational trails on town owned properties surrounding the Nick Stoner Golf Course as well as work with DEC on designating bike trails. Everything being proposed, Mr. Henze stated is in keeping with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Henze then talked about the Fulton County Visitors Bureau. A few years ago, the board of Supervisors made a change to invest more in tourism. The County was under contract with the Chamber to provide tourism for the county. A tourism coordinator position was created. The entire tourism program is funded through the county's occupancy tax – hotel stays, overnight stays, and Air B&B's. In 2023 & 2024 the county invested \$15,000.00 in the Wheelerville Bike Festival. In 2025 the county invested \$12,000.00 in the Wheelerville Bike Festival. The visitor's bureau also invested in the Caroga Arts Collective – they sponsored the last two concerts at \$10,000.00. This past winter the county used \$7,200.00 for the Caroga Winter Carnival – a total of \$57,300.00 since 2023. He is impressed with the number of people in attendance at the meeting.

Mr. Henze handed out a copy of the monthly tourism report given to the Board of Supervisors to the board members. He stated the county does a lot of advertising. Of the 31,214 views of a July ad there was a bike it doesn't say anything about our trails but received 634 clicks. On the second E-Blast Wheelerville Bike Trails ranked third with 283 clicks - 26.25%. The county fully supports the trails and thinks the connector trail will be an asset into the Town Center.

Ron Peters President of the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth spoke next. "You've got a gem up here." Wheelerville Trails are attracting folks from all over the east coast and is starting to attract folks from the Midwest. In 3 – 5 years we could be on a national level. His main thrust is economic development. This is a gem spot for future development for tourism. He noted the success of the Saratoga golf course with the bike trails right alongside and their success. You can work together on the traffic, bikes and golf carts. Mr. Peters is supportive of Mr. Manning. He noted his success in getting grant money for the trails. He wants him to keep on building.

Shawn Croucher is a board member in the Town of Bleeker. His background is as a civil environmental engineer. He worked for BP for a number of years as well as being a financial advisor. His family, son in law, daughter and two kids are deep bikers. They thought it would good if they could ride to get snacks. Mr. Croucher noted the environmental impact is minimal and it makes good sense economically. His son is an internationally ranked Xterra Champion – swim, bike, run and is third in the US and 45<sup>th</sup> in the world. He comes to Wheelerville to train. It is so technically good and provides good athletic training. He noted there would be various levels if the connector trail was made. Not only high-level skills but entry level skills. Kids, grandparents, whole families on bikes or walking. Not only would the connector have economic impact but also a utility impact. For that reason, Mr. Croucher he and his family are in full support.

Honorable Judge Mike Smrtic stated he is involved with a group of bikers that run a trail system down the hill on Peck Hill. He supports the trails up here. The issue he's come to find out is the trail along the golf course. It seems like there are a lot of people that have a lot of interest- golfers, businessmen, homeowners. "There's got to be a way to make that work." He was a lawyer, and is now a judge. He tries to get things done. He thinks this board should be able to get this done. The impact to the golfers – he doesn't see the detriment. He has gone all over the country with his mountain biking. There are bike trails and golf courses all over the place. He noted the one in Saratoga. It creates a nice atmosphere. The atmosphere with the music festival, the golf course, and the bike trails is something you can build on. It seems a shame to take a situation where you have a chance to expand it and not expand it. You have to build on what you have to keep this going. If you stand still you are going to have a place people will stop coming to. If you have a place with 20 – 30 miles of trails you have a destination. We don't have that yet but it can be something that can grow. When businesses grow it builds the tax base. Mr. Smrtic thought it was important to look at this not from an individual points of view but as a board member you are supposed to be looking out for the greater good of the community. You have an opportunity to grow something special and it has started. People like coming here. He noted the trails are also accessible in the winter too. It would be shortsighted to not put something that is so minimally invasive to another recreational asset and that would enhance an ancillary asset. He noted the proposals Mr. Manning is suggesting and thought we should try something to see how it goes. See what kind of impact it has on the golfers. If you look at it more open mindedly and globally it's something you really can't say no to because it is going to enhance everybody's use. It is a good thing for the community.

Mr. Fielding stated the proof is in the pudding. When he exits his business (Canada Lake Store) he sees the cars with bikes in the parking lot. This is working. They never saw that many bikes before. When the festival was taking place ½ of his lot had cars with bikes. This is supporting our community. He noted that everyone buys something and sales tax comes back to the town. The more people we bring in the more sales taxes we will pull in. He fully supports the trails. He has four kids and seven grandchildren and every single one enjoys the bike trails from 54 to 8 weeks old. Mr. Fielding walks the trails in the wintertime and really enjoys them. He encouraged the board support the trails.

Supervisor Palcovic noted the town received a very comprehensive letter written by Steve Smith he is a third generation Canada Lake resident, a loyal customer to Campers Corner, Caroga Lake View, Canada Lake Marine and a big support of the town in every respect. He supports the bike trails, and everything that has come along the way. He is closely tied to LL Bean. His page and a half letter are available for anyone to review.

The Supervisor opened the meeting to comments from the board. Councilmember Glenn appreciated everyone's input and thoughts about this. His thoughts were on the big picture. The long- and short-term plans. He hasn't heard that. He is hearing an idea to rush to get more grant funding. What is the 5 – 10-year plan? Councilmember Glenn is here representing the people of Caroga Lake. There are alternative ways to doing this as opposed to interfering in any way shape or form with the golf course.

Councilmember DeLuca stated she was lucky enough to take a walk two days ago for the very first time on the bike trail. It is was very beautiful and noted there were no bikers there at the time. She understands why everyone comes here. We have this land that was given to the town for a recreational park. This is exactly what we need to do here. Councilmember DeLuca is in full support of this project. Councilmember DeLuca wants to try Mr. Manning's idea and thinks the board can work together on this. Councilmember DeLuca plays golf and rides bikes.

Councilmember Sturgess didn't think that anyone that sits up at the table is against the bike trail system by any means. If you look at the history of votes on anything that has happened on those trails "it's been Yes, 95% of the time." It's a no for the 5% for this issue of coming through the golf course.

Councilmembers Sturgess and Cooper took a ride today to try to find a potential other route. They came to another problem he would like clarification on. What is the plan to cross Irving's Pond Creek and has that process been started yet? Mr. Manning stated they've built with the last Smart Growth Grant part of that grant was to get to the crossing point. That point is the narrowest point on Irving's Pond stream. Mr. Manning stated he does have a plan for that. He can't use any of the funding he has for that because it is a Federal DOT fund. He won't build a bridge if there isn't a trail on the other side yet. Councilmember Glenn stated permission was given three years ago to build that bridge. Money was set aside for it – (\$40-50,000.00) Mr. Manning stated he has never received any funding for the bridge. Councilmember Sturgess asked if we can't get across the water – the paperwork hasn't been filed or approval needed, or the funding to get across the water how do we even start the connector trail? Mr. Manning stated there isn't a need for it yet. He isn't going to put in a bridge without having the trail there yet. The RTP grant is for the trail it is not for a bridge. Mr. Manning stated no one brought the bridge up three years ago when approval was given for the grant. Mr. Manning shows a map of the trails which shows the entire 5-year plan – the entirety of the whole system which Councilmember Glenn voted for. Everyone has seen this plan Scott Henze prepared it. This was the basis of the RTP Grant. It shows the bridge connect it also shows all of the expansions. This is the 5-year plan. To build the bridge it involves three telephone poles and some decking and cribbing. Councilmember Sturgess is not worried about the work but the approval to do it. Mr. Manning stated he has talked to DEC about this – "it is just paperwork." It can happen at the same time.

Councilmember Sturgess asked if there was a problem with starting the approval process to make sure we are allowed to do the bridge before the connector. Mr. Manning responded he can start it; there is no reason not to.

Supervisor Palcovic stated this board is going to direct Mr. Manning to start the process to do the bridge paperwork, “start it.” Right now, to continue the trail along the golf course which the Supervisor is in favor of, you don’t have a bridge so you can’t get there from here.

Councilmember Sturgess asked on the other end of it can work on the proposed parking lot, back behind the future town barn, and work the way back start until the approval comes through. Mr. Manning stated the important thing now is not losing this grant. The RTP Grant is to go from point A to B. That grant doesn’t show going across the stream. It shows using Irving Pond Road and going downtown. The environmental process has been gone through for this grant. Now it comes down to building the trail. If Mr. Manning can’t tell them that date we risk losing the funding. This would be tied to other grants. If we don’t service the grant and show the capacity is complete other grants are at risk. The upcoming Smart Growth Grant Mr. Manning is asking the board’s approval to submit are contingent on the success of the previous grants. It is urgent to get this trail started. The bridge can be done concurrently.

Councilmember Cooper stated the grant application was approved by the board in good faith knowing that the trail map where it was going to go was not approved. The board did not hold up the grant process. The board could have held this up by asking for an approved trail solution. The board said submit the grant we will figure it out. Councilmember Cooper is a planner. When you plan something you have a primary, a contingency and an alternate of where you are going to go. The primary, contingency and alternate cannot be a variation of the same. It has to be separate and distinct. So far we have one plan, it’s that or nothing. Mr. Manning listed three other plans he and Councilmember Cooper discussed. There is only one route short of going on DEC property. Councilmember Cooper noted you can have a temporary trail in the interim as it is a phased plan. Until you have approval to use the state land you have a variation. Councilmember Cooper didn’t know why the trail couldn’t come out onto route 10 and go down in by the cell tower for that short piece. It is a small concession for a short period of time until the process goes through. Mr. Manning was against putting kids out on the highway. DOT he stated doesn’t want that either. It would be ½ million to extend the shoulder.

Councilmember Glenn asked about the alternative plan to go from the other side of Irving Pond to Shutts Road. That would also need an amendment to the Shaker Mountain Wild Forrest Plan. Councilmember Glenn stated at one time the map showed the trail going all the way around the lake. DEC asked Mr. Manning to change that. It will be removed from the plan. It is not in the UMP plan. That trail would be in a creek bed full of rocks.

Supervisor Palcovic stated he has sat at a round table with the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation, the Executive Director of the APA and the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State gives money for projects and they love our project. The supervisor stated he is close with Joe Zaleski the Region 5 Director. He has had many communications with him and he supports and loves our bike paths, as does the APA. It is what they want to see for the future of the North

Country. Mr. Manning is doing a great job but we have this conflict. The process has been started with Mr. Zaleski to give us access to the UMP. This is a guidance document and it is law. It is 400 pages thick. It specifically addresses bicycle trails, but lacks specific locations for the trails. It will happen eventually. This path around/parallel to the golf course in the rough and down to the stone wall of the state land is a variable that will get us to the point that we can move the trail off the golf course and go across the state land. We are not there yet. The Supervisor's concern is failure to utilize the grant and losing the remainder/balance. The future – if you fail on one grant you are not going to get the next one. Right now, for the most part the cost of the trails to the taxpayers of Caroga has been nothing because of the grant revenue and the sales tax and other donations. Should we fail to get the next generation grant it will cost the taxpayers even though we are generating tourism revenue. Grant history plays a part in this. If we default on the grant any other grant that goes through the Secretary of State you probably aren't going to get. It has a domino effect. The Supervisor did not want to fail on the grant.

Councilmember DeLuca noted the town is applying for a grant for the Comprehensive Plan and Councilmember Glenn is looking for grant money for a sewer system.

Councilmember Cooper asked if there was an alternate option.

Supervisor Palcovic stated the option is to run it parallel to the golf course for a period of time until the UMP comes. Councilmember Cooper did not support that.

A member of the public stated they haven't heard one objection by the golf community. Mr. Marler asked if the Supervisor is in touch will all these politicians why can't they say "OK, cut the trail" if they are in favor of it – "rush it along." Supervisor Palcovic stated there is a legal process. There have been lawsuits by the environmentalist. They have sued ENCON numerous times and attempted to close trails. New York State is cautious. There is a procedure and if you fail to follow it they won't sign off. The town has to wait until the UMP is amended. That could take 2 up to 10 years. Mr. Manning stated it is moving through the process. It could be 6 months or 2 – 3 years. We've tried to apply pressure politically too. Supervisor Palcovic has been told repeatedly by the regional director that there are other golf courses and bike trails that harmonize throughout the Adirondacks.

A member of the public stated we are lacking trust. The project has been successful. He has made it this far the board needs to trust him.

Another member of the public stated anytime something is temporary it turns out to be permanent. Another thing you talk about the hundreds of dollars of sales tax from the bike trail, what about the sales tax off the golf course? There is a lot more off the golf course. A comparison of cars at the trails and at the golf course was brought up. Mr. Manning noted there is a difference in user times with a minimal overlap time. It is not the main trail it is a spur.

Mr. Stedman if you are not a golfer you are not out there. In the past 5 years he has taken out about 150 trees. He will continue to open up the course where there is encroachment. On certain areas they will be cutting into the bike trail. Mr. Stedman stated he never reviewed hole #4 with

Mr. Manning and stated in their talks the only concern was hole #3. Now Mr. Stedman is saying the whole thing is a concern. Mr. Stedman said he said no, and asked for an alternate.

Councilmember Sturgess asked how long will it take to get to the proposed trail built along #3. Mr. Manning replied about a month and a half.

Judge Smrtic asked for a compromise here. If it is a temporary trail and people may not trust it will be temporary – he thought the bike trail people also want it off the golf course. The trail would be in the rough about 2 ft. wide. Will that really effect the golfer? Perhaps screening could be put up or some shrubbery. You should be able to come to a resolution. We are talking about 150 yards for a bike path that is going to benefit the whole town. The judge is a golfer and a biker and noted no one is a pro golfer here playing Pebble Beach. All people want to do is have fun – the golfers and the bikers. The bike path is not going to impact anyone's game what so ever. It might even help if you get a free drop. The judge noted the golfers go off in the morning, the bikers are on a different schedule. If there is a tournament you close the trail during that time. There are ways to work around all of the problems you have. You have the course next to a road.

Mr. Stedman was concerned about spending \$300,000.00 to put the trail on the course and then move it when you get approval. It is a waste of money. The Supervisor noted that is not the cost. Mr. Stedman noted as he takes more trees out he will be up to the state line. Mr. Manning noted there are wetlands he shouldn't be going into. Councilmember Sturgess thought Mr. Stedman was saying this would make it difficult for future expansion. Mr. Manning noted the bikers don't want to be on the course they want to be back in the woods.

Mr. Groom stated #3 aside if you look at the map the trail does go along other holes – 8,7,6. When he worked at the golf course there were plans to expand into those areas. Expanding the Tee boxes on 6 and 8. He noted the increase in revenues on the course. The conditions have been incredible. This he feels will impede on future expansion plans. He thinks the plans for the expansion could happen in 5 – 7 years.

It was stated that the state land on hole 4 is three feet behind the pine tree. Councilmember Cooper thought it was further back on hole 8 than what was anticipated.

At this time Supervisor Palcovic presented the following resolution. He thanked everyone for their input.

**RESOLUTION #2025-088 to Support the Construction of the Wheelerville/Caroga Connector Trail** was offered by Supervisor Palcovic at a work session held on September 5, 2025.

**WHEREAS;** the Wheelerville Trails is a very Successful Tourist attraction bringing thousands of visitors annually, and

**WHEREAS;** the Wheelerville Trails currently operates at no cost to the Taxpayers through Grant funding and donations, and

**WHEREAS;** the Town of Caroga was awarded a 2023 Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant in the amount of \$88,600 for the construction of the Wheelerville-Caroga Connector Trail, and

**WHEREAS;** Fulton County has committed over \$10,000 of local match for the Connector Trail Project, and

**WHEREAS;** Resolution #2024-029 was approved to control the growth of the Wheelerville Bicycle Trail System, and

**WHEREAS;** recent growth aspects of the trail system have stalled because of golf course access disagreements, and

**WHEREAS;** the original deed documents clearly state both golf and recreation on subject property, and

**WHEREAS;** the regional forester from New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has toured the area and made suggestions as to where the future path along the golf course may run, and

**WHEREAS;** the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Regional Director Joe Zaleski supports expansion of the Trail System onto state lands pending a UMP amendment, and

**WHEREAS;** the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Regional Director, Joe Zaleski has made reference to several Bike Trail Systems that happily coexist around golf courses, and

**WHEREAS;** the Town has submitted a formal request to DEC seeking an amendment to the Shaker Mountain Wild Forest Management Plan in order to place a ~300-yard-long trail on the Forest Preserve along hole 3 of the Nick Stoner Golf Course, along with additional trails on the Forest Preserve, and

**WHEREAS;** various New York State funding sources have provided the Town of Caroga with hundreds of thousands of dollars supporting continued growth and maintenance of the existing trail system which are contingent on the construction of the Connector Trail, and

**WHEREAS;** the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council has named the Connector Trail project a “Priority Project” for tourism growth in the Mohawk Valley, **NOW BE IT THEREFORE**

**RESOLVED;** that the Town of Caroga Town Board supports the construction of Caroga Wheelerville Connector trail. In addition, it supports the construction of a narrow (~3ft wide) temporary path that could be used while an amendment to the Shaker Mountain Wild Forest Unit Management Plan proceeds. This trail would allow for recreational trail users to make their way along the course. When an amendment to the UMP is completed, the Town would then have the option to relocate the trail to the Forest Preserve if it was still preferred.

The motion was seconded by Councilmember DeLuca.

**Discussion:** Councilmember Sturgess noted that in the third WHEREAS from the bottom, where it stated that recent grant funding was rejected there is no factual proof of that. There is no documentation stating that we have lost the previous grant because this one is not started. He

would like that statement removed. The Supervisor asked for any proof, Mr. Manning stated he has heard from multiple people via verbal comments only.

Councilmember Glenn stated we are not closing the bicycle trails. “We are all in favor of the bicycle trails.” We need to find an alternative route away from the golf course.

Councilmember DeLuca stated she disagreed with the statement made by Councilmember Glenn. She believes two entities can work together.

A roll call vote was taken on the resolution to support the construction of the Wheelerville/Caroga Connector Trail:

Supervisor Palcovic - Yes  
Councilmember Glenn – No  
Councilmember DeLuca – Yes  
Councilmember Sturgess – No  
Councilmember Cooper – No

A member of the public called out “it is fifty to two enjoy your time on the board. We’re going to get you the hell out.”

Councilmember Sturgess stated the meeting is not over. He wanted to discuss with the board starting the connector trail from Mr. Manning’s point of entry and temporarily stopping at the intersection of three in hopes that we can get this through the state in the meantime. If Mr. Manning said it would take approximately two months by then winter happens and we can’t build trails anyway. So now we have 6 months. If this doesn’t go through by winter we will see what happens and maybe pick it up. You won’t get there this year. Mr. Manning stated he will do it, but the issue is we may not get paid back if the work is not completed. Councilmember Sturgess stated we would revisit it when we get there after winter. We have an approximate 6 – 8-month timeframe. Mr. Manning asked if there would be a resolution to begin construction to go where?

Councilmember Sturgess wanted approval to get across the creek as this is where this process starts. Mr. Manning stated a resolution to go across the creek around and Councilmember Sturgess interjects follows everything and stops before we go onto hole #3. Back 50 yards from there. Mr. Manning then indicates (on the map) picking up the rest of the trail. Supervisor Palcovic stated the board did not need to approve the building of the bridge. It is already in the scope of the work.

Judge Smrtic noted Mr. Manning said if you don’t finish the project you don’t get the grant money. Councilmember Sturgess stated that a risk right now. The Supervisor noted if we don’t get approval to go around the periphery then it is a bridge to nowhere. Councilmember Sturgess thought the speakers this afternoon should know somebody to call to speed this up for us. If at the end of winter this is at the top of the pile on the desk.... Mr. Manning stated if we show an effort to compromise... Judge Smrtic wanted a straw poll taken. He thought this was a great compromise to start. Councilmember Cooper supports building both ends of the trail. The connector is the hang up. Councilmember Glenn agreed with Councilmember Cooper. The Supervisor’s concern was losing the grant money for the project. Councilmember Sturgess stated this has been a

problem and it was stated when the grant was asked to be filed. It was talked about. This has been an issue for years. Supervisor Palcovic wanted to repeat himself, if you default on this grant any other grant that you apply for your odds are pretty close to the trash can. Councilmember Cooper stated initiating movement on the trail is a step forward from defaulting on the grant.

Judge Smrtic had to deal with the UMP on the Peck Hill Trail Project and with a little massaging you will get the people on board,

Councilmember Sturgess again noted this will give us six months. Mr. Manning noted this has to go through an environmental review, and an endangered species review. This trail is in the eastern long eared bat habitat. To cut any tree it has to be done in a non-bat nesting period. Tree cutting would be in the winter and trail building would begin in the spring giving us more time which might be helpful.

Supervisor Palcovic asked Mr. Manning to formalize a draft resolution for the meeting on Wednesday as a go forward move. Mr. Manning noted there is a risk you are inherently accepting. Councilmember Sturgess noted there is a risk in a lot of this.

Mr. Manning noted October 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline for the round 8 Adirondack and Catskill Smart Growth Grant. Since we didn't get the 234 Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant, Mr. Manning thought the board should go after this grant. He has started the process. The grant would be for two years' service to widening of the connector trail into the parking areas, improvement to the pump track, three new trails, and to support adaptive trails. It would be for maintenance, management and new trail building behind the cell tower. It is for \$137,500.00 with \$12,500.00 of it being matching. It is not for the golf course or not for the connective trail.

Supervisor Palcovic made a motion to approve the request made by Mr. Manning to apply for a grant totaling \$137,500.00.

**RESOLUTION #2025-089 to approve Mr. Manning applying for a grant** was offered by Supervisor Palcovic at a work session meeting held on Friday September 5, 2025.

**WHEREAS;** Mr. Manning noted that the deadline for the round 8 Adirondack and Catskill Smart Growth Grant is October 1<sup>st</sup>, and

**WHEREAS;** Mr. Manning desires to apply for said grant in the amount of \$125,00.00 with the town providing a 10% matching portion to be \$12,500.00, now therefore be it

**RESOLVED;** that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to approve Mr. Manning applying for the Round 8 of the Smart Growth Grant.

Seconded by Councilmember Glenn

***Discussion:*** hearing none

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

Mr. Henze made one comment on the previous subject. He noted Supervisor Palcovic is on the Board of Supervisors and he was not 100% sure the board would continue the \$10,000.00 donation

to the town next year. You will have to go back and look at the request. So noted by Supervisor Palcovic.

At 4:16 Councilmember DeLuca made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Cooper. All board members were in favor of the motion; Palcovic, Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, Cooper.

Submitted by Town Clerk

Linda Gilbert RMC, CMC