

Caroga News Flash

Town Board Meeting Highlights

December 13, 2023 Monthly Meeting

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This monthly meeting began at 6:00 PM and lasted 140 minutes. Executive session addressed a highway matter for 40 minutes with Supervisor Horton and Council Members Glenn, DeLuca, Sturgess, and Travis. Ten citizens attended at Town Hall, and 20 households participated via zoom.

Department reports showed growing momentum in the Town of Caroga around recreational trails.

- Caroga was selected for a **\$88,600.00 grant award** to expand the Wheelerville Trails Mountain Bike Park by building the proposed Wheelerville-Caroga Trail that will connect the Park to Town Center.
- Thank you to Jeremy Manning for writing this winning grant application to be part of the federal **Recreational Trails Program** through the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) in partnership with New York Parks (Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, OPRHP).
- Mohawk Valley Economic Development Council selected Wheelerville Trails as a **Priority Project**.
- Fulton County Planning Department is beginning to develop a **regional plan for recreational trails**.

Resolutions / Local Laws:

1. **Wheelerville Bike Trails** — Authorized applying for an Adirondack Community Smart Growth Grant in the amount of \$152,000.00 with \$99,700.00 in grant funds and \$52,300.00 Town match (5-0 vote)

2. **Lakes Management** — Approved moving forward with \$12,000.00 permitting for 2024 ProcellaCOR Pilot Programs in East and West Caroga Lakes, with notices going out to 400 residents (5-0 vote)

3. **2024 Budget Errors** — Approved 2024 Budget Amendments to correct errors (5-0 vote)

First, on page 16 Revenue for A3910 Conservation-Weed Program, omitted grant revenue will be added:

- the Adopted 2024 Budget column should be \$46,450.00 (as in Preliminary 2024 Budget column).

Second, on page 1 Summary of 2024 Budget Tax Rate Schedule, Fire lines will change by \$205.00:

- for the Fire Contract line, the Fund Balance & Appropriated Reserves will change from \$402.00 to \$197.00
- for the Fire Truck Purchase (2024) line, Amount Raised by Tax will change from \$84,700.00 to \$84,095.00.

Third, on page 1 Summary of 2024 Budget Tax Rate Schedule, assessed value and tax rates will change:

- for the General Townwide and Highway Townwide lines, the Taxable Assessed Value will be reduced from \$160,872,701.00 to \$160,363,572.00 (attributed to a conservation easement new to tax rolls for 2024),
- for the General Townwide line, the Tax Rate per Thousand will be increased from \$1.10 to \$1.26, and
- for the Highway Townwide line, the Tax Rate per Thousand will be increased from \$5.19 to \$5.21.

Tax Rate (Per Thousand)	2020	2023	2024	1-Year Increase	4-Year Increase
General Townwide	\$1.00	\$1.10	\$1.26	14.5%	26.0%
Highway Townwide	\$4.07	\$5.19	\$5.21	0.004%	28.0%
Fire Contract	\$0.89	\$0.91	\$0.95	4.4%	6.7%
Fire Truck Purchase			\$0.52		
Total	\$5.96	\$7.20	\$7.94	9.9%	33.2%

4. **2023 Budget Transfers** — (5-0 vote)

To: A1670.4 Printing/Mail	\$ 450.00	From: A1620.4. Building C/E	\$ 450.00
To: A8090.41 Weed C/E (ProcellaCOR Permits)	\$12,000.00	From: A8090.13 Divers/Tenders	\$11,000.00 and
		From: A8090.2 Weed Equipment	\$ 1,000.00
To: A7145.40 Trails C/E	\$ 750.00	From: A7145.1 Trails P/S	\$ 750.00
To: A7180.12 GC P/S	\$ 400.00	From: A7180.13 Club House P/S	\$ 400.00
To: A9010.8 Retirement	\$ 1,500.00	From: A9050.8 Unemployment	\$ 1,500.00
To: DA5142.4 Snow Removal	\$12,000.00	From: DA5142.1 Snow Removal P/S	\$12,000.00

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Issue #16– 2023

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5. Reserve Accounts — Funded 2023 Highway Equipment and Golf Course Reserves (5-0 votes)

To: DA9901.9 Hwy. Equipment Reserve \$70,000.00 From: DA5130.2 Machinery & Equip. \$70,000.00

To: A9950.93 Golf Course Equip. Reserve \$15,000.00 From: A2025 Golf Course Fees \$15,000.00

To: A9950.94 Golf Improvement Reserve \$15,000.00 From: A2025 Golf Course Fees \$15,000.00

6. Highway Department — Approved up to \$12,000.00 repair of Freightliner plow truck (5-0 vote)

7. Other Business —

- Scheduled brief year-end meeting to pay bills on Thursday 12/28/2023 at 10:00 AM (5-0 vote)
- Approved notice of 12/22/2023 deadline for 2023 Audit of Claims (5-0 vote)
- Approved bills as presented for audit (5-0 vote)
- Approved minutes of 11/08/2023 Budget Meeting and 11/08/2023 Town Board Meeting (5-0 vote)
- Deferred to 2024 Town Board for ZBA appointments requested by John Byrnes and Doug Purcell.

Upcoming Meetings and Events: <https://TownOfCaroga.com/calendar>

PUBLIC COMMENTS ABOUT ZONING

Multiple citizens spoke about needs for officials to follow code required by the *Zoning Ordinance*.

Regarding written requests dated July 11, September 1, and September 8, and September 19, 2023 Allen Farber stated, "Thank you. I want to express my disappointment with the Decision Notice issued by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) in response to our application regarding the excavation on Kasson Drive. This previously undeveloped and significantly undersized lot was newly added to the tax rolls in 2019. Considering these objective facts, Site Plan Review by the Planning Board should have been required before any work including excavation was undertaken. Having Site Plan Review in advance of a project being undertaken protects the neighbors and the Town as well as the developer.

I have been asking the Town since July for a ruling, getting no response from the Code Enforcement Officer or the Town Board. Cheryl Kenney and I applied to the ZBA for an interpretation of three questions. Their decision notice avoids interpreting the code as requested and expected and instead refers the questions to the Town Board and the Planning Board as part of plans to revise the code. These revisions are aspirational and likely to take more than a year to be implemented. I cannot imagine the APA approving any revised code that would not consider any previously undeveloped lot newly on the tax rolls and significantly undersized as complying and not requiring Site Plan Review.

I would ask the Town Board to request that the Zoning Board of Appeals return to this application and make the requested interpretations and finally answers the written complaint I made back in July. The Code Enforcement Officer, developer, and the public need a response. I thank the Board for its time and consideration."

Mr. Horton stated, "The public should know that the Town's aware of this...Going forward, the Site Plan Review will be conducted...And all Planning Board activities are public with people's input. Keep your eyes open for notification of the meeting, and please attend the meeting."

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