

Caroga News Flash

Town Board Meeting Highlights

September 18, 2024

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This Tentative 2025 Budget work session began at 5:30PM and lasted 90 minutes. Council Member DeLuca was not present for this meeting. Supervisor Palcovic aimed to review 9/17/2024 Tentative Budget line items (see <https://townofcaroga.com/finances/budget.htm>). The summary was as follows:

Tax Rate (Per Thousand)	2024	2025 (Tentative)	1-Year Increase
General Townwide	\$1.25	\$1.53	22.4%
Highway Townwide	\$5.19	\$5.42	4.4%
Fire Contract	\$0.95	\$0.98	3.1%
Fire Truck Purchase	\$0.52	(\$0.00)	(-100%)
Total	\$7.91	\$7.93	0.2%

This proposed budget showed a 2025 Property Tax Rate of \$7.93 per thousand assessed value. The \$0.02 rate increase fell below the NYS 2% tax cap. The Rate could add \$0.17 more (i.e., \$28,000.00 in expenses) and still remain below the cap. Essentially, the overall 2025 rate is in keeping with 2024, but with no Fire Truck (one-year \$0.52), the Board added new General Townwide and Highway Expenses.

- The largest proposed changes included adding \$100,000.00 for Engineers, Contractual Expenses (A1440.4) and cutting \$50,000.00 for Bond Anticipation Notes (A9730.7).
Council Member Sturgess stated that his proposed redesign of the Golf Clubhouse + Town Hall comes with additional engineering costs of \$100,000.00 to \$130,000.00 to be paid from fire insurance money, not documented in public budgets. Supervisor Palcovic added, “We’re not going to elaborate too much, but I got a phone call...from the civil engineering group...requiring some money...There are going to be additional surveys and topographic maps required for that project.”
- Grant Writer Contractual Expenses (A1010.41) was also increased from \$4,000.00 to \$10,000.00. Supervisor Palcovic noted a plan for an engineering firm to write grants for the new Highway Garage project.
- Contractual Expenses (A1620.4) to maintain current Town Hall remained at \$65,000.00, and Highway Garage C/E (A5132.4) for electric increased from \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00.
- Total Golf Course expenses increased to \$403,100.00 [GC Building C/E (A1620.42) \$40,000.00, Insurance (A1910.41) \$3,000.00, Printing (A1670.41) \$1,000.00, Publicity (A6410.41) \$4,000.00, Special Recreational Facilities (A7180) \$300,600.00, GC WC+Unemployment (A9050.81) \$21,500.00, GC Health Ins (A9060.81) \$13,000.00, GC Reserves (A9950.93-4) \$20,000.00]. Revenues (A2025) were \$290,000.00. Discussion noted \$4,000.00 cut to GC Club Manager. Based on the above, the expected 2025 golf operating loss is -\$109,100.00 to -\$113,100.00.
- Environmental Control (A8090) expenses for aquatic invasive species and lake management were reduced from \$181,600.00 to \$138,370.00, and had a steward grant revenue offset of \$33,000.00. Council Member Sturgess falsely speculated that Canada Lake is “too deep” to ever have any aquatic invasive species. Council Member Glenn said, “In 3 to 5 years, we’ll probably need to reapply [ProcellaCOR in East&West Caroga Lake].” Council Member Glenn also expressed support to adopt a future Local Law for Clean-Drain-Dry boat requirements.
- Recreational Trails (A7145) \$163,680.00 was offset by \$145,000.00 grant/donation revenues, with a ~\$18,000.00 difference. Requested Manager increase from \$11.00 to \$16.00 per hour was not listed.
- Caroga Tourism’s Celebrations (A7550.4) budget was maintained at \$5,000.00 for the year.
- Comprehensive Plan (A8020.41) had \$1,000.00 for 10 hours of consultation with county planners.
- Minimum wage will go up for Bti personnel, boat wash personnel, youth counselors, and the janitor.
- In addition, money was allocated for most Town employees (except officials) to receive 3% raises.
- The only elected official with a 3% raise was the Town Clerk (after 2024 increase of 22%). Clerk Gilbert requested another large increase of her salary of 14.5% from \$48,000.00 to \$55,000.00 for 2025.

The Board set the next 2025 Budget meeting for Monday, October 7, 2024 beginning at 6:00PM.

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

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