

Caroga News Flash

Town Board Meeting Highlights

September 10, 2025

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This monthly meeting at Town Hall began at 6:30 PM and lasted 63 minutes. In addition to the Town Board and Town Clerk, 40 people attended this meeting.

Trail Manager Jeremy Manning reported on the Wheelerville Trails Festival and Wheelerville Trail Grants.

- The 2025 Bike Festival had the biggest turnout yet, with more than 1,000 people.
- This year's Fourth Annual Festival also was the most profitable, with more than \$6,000.00 generated.
- Red Bull aims to be a promotional partner for the 2027 Annual Bike Festival and a Golf Tournament.
- Mr. Manning thanked the dozens of people who attended meetings, wrote support letters, and invited discussions to advance the Wheelerville-Caroga Connector Trail project funded by the RTP grant.
- On 9/10, Mr. Manning and Council Member Sturgess discussed how to move forward with the RTP work plan and trail building on Town land while protecting the golf experience. Mr. Sturgess reported, *"The biggest point in question is hole number 3 on the golf course, on the golfers' side of this. On the biker's side, the biggest question is getting going and not losing grant funding. . . No one in their right mind wants to see grant money get thrown down the drain. At the same time, nobody in their right mind wants to see the golf course be in danger, whatever the case may be."*
- In other words, preventing trail grant default, minimizing golf course impacts, and avoiding pitting one against the other are all crucial to averting negative outcomes. The community at large can benefit from resolving these issues and addressing practical questions to get things done.

Resolutions:

1. Wheelerville-Caroga Connector Trail (5-0 vote)

Resolution to Support the Construction of the Wheelerville-Caroga Connector Trail

WHEREAS, Wheelerville Trails are a very successful tourist attraction, bringing thousands of visitors annually.

WHEREAS, Wheelerville Trails currently operates at no cost to the taxpayers with grant funding and donations.

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.

WHEREAS, Fulton County has committed over \$10,000 in local match for the Connector Trail project.

WHEREAS, resolution 2024-029 was approved to control the growth of the Wheelerville Bicycle Trail System.

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

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Regional Director Joe Zalewski supports expansion of the trail system onto State lands with an UMP amendment.

WHEREAS, the Town has submitted a formal request to DEC supporting the amendment to the Shaker Mountain Wild Forest UMP in order to place a ±300-yard trail into the State Forest Preserve along hole 3 of the Nick Stoner Municipal Golf Course, along with additional trails in the Forest Preserve.

WHEREAS, the inbound area of hole 3 is considered to be any playing surface north of the rock wall.

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.

WHEREAS, the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council has named the connector trail a priority project for tourism growth in the Mohawk Valley.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Town of Caroga Town Board supports construction of the Caroga-Wheelerville Connector Trail Project. At this point, construction of all trail surfaces shall remain in the wooded boundary of Nick Stoner Golf Course and shall avoid infringement on any inbound areas of the Course.

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Wheelerville-Caroga Connector Trail

What?

The Wheelerville-Caroga Connector Trail is a 3-mile community recreation path connecting Wheelerville to Caroga's business district. This beginner-level trail serves as a corridor for future trail expansions. Supported at all levels of New York State government, this is a Priority Project for the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council (MVREDC). In 2023, the NYS Recreational Trail Program (RTP) and the Town contracted to build the trail with \$88,600 in state funding, \$10,000 from the county, and \$10,000 in local match. Further funding depends on completing the project.

Where?

The planned trail runs through Town and private lands (see adopted map). The RTP grant covers only the Town section.

PHASE 1

- **The September 10 Town Board Resolution authorizes conditional construction of the Connector Trail, such that “all trail surfaces shall remain in the wooded boundary of the Nick Stoner Golf Course.”**

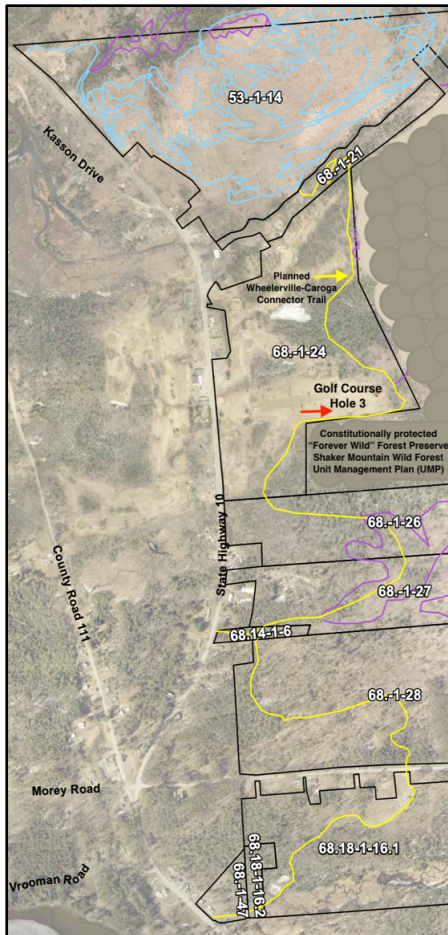
PHASE 2

- In addition, the Town Board Resolution notes the Town's “formal request to DEC supporting the amendment to the Shaker Mountain Wild Forest UMP in order to place a +300-yard trail into the State Forest Preserve along hole 3 of the Nick Stoner Municipal Golf Course, along with additional trails in the Forest Preserve.”

Phase 2 Shaker Mountain Wild Forest Trail

The Nick Stoner Golf Course shares a property line with the NYS Shaker Mountain Wild Forest.

- That State Forest Preserve land is protected by the *New York State Constitution* as “forever wild”, and its public use is defined by the *Shaker Mountain Unit Management Plan* (UMP, see https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/smwfump.pdf).
- UMP amendments must follow the process involving the DEC, APA, and public comments, as specified by the *New York State Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan* (SLMP, see <https://apa.ny.gov/meeting/2025/09/files/state-lands/APSLMPProposedFinalRedline202425.pdf>).
- Once formally started, the most recent *Shaker Mountain UMP* process lasted **four years**, with scoping and public input in 2002, draft UMP release in 2005, and adoption in 2006. Caroga is now in line with other communities before starting a formal amendment process.
- The DEC Region 5 Director, Joe Zalewski, has voiced support for the bike path in the long run. At the same time, he has also informed the Caroga Town Board that the timeline for UMP amendment and approval will not happen in time to complete the RTP grant contract.
- **Trail construction must happen on the Town's parcel 68.-1-24 to avoid grant default.**



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Resolutions (continued)

2. **Highway Department** — (5-0 vote)
 - Approved Bell Engineering contract for \$15,000.00 (plus \$3,000.00 contingency) from the Highway Materials Budget for engineering review of the Cape Horn Bridge mandated reconstruction project.
3. **Planning & Zoning** —
 - Approved appointing Christian Manns to the Planning Board, term ending 12/31/2027 (5-0 vote)
 - Voted down a motion to appoint Scott Horton to the Zoning Board of Appeals ZBA (1-4 vote)
 - Scheduled a Public Hearing to change the zoning district for the Old Fire House (1785 State Highway 10; Parcel 68.5-4-6) — and later cancelled this hearing because their paperwork was not in order.
4. **Budget Transfers** — (5-0 votes)
 - Approved the following transfers:

From: A1990.4 Contingency	\$300.00	To: A1110.4 Justices C/E	\$300.00
From: A1990.4 Contingency	\$2,000.00	To: A1910.4 Unallocated Insurance	\$2,000.00
From: A1990.4 Contingency	\$1,200.00	To: A1930.4 Judgements & Claims	\$1,250.00
From: A7145.1 Trails P/S	\$850.00	To: A7145.41 Trails Merch	\$850.00
 - Approved removing funds from Garbage Truck Reserve Fund to pay for Garbage Truck repairs.

From: A201.4 Garbage Truck Reserve	\$30,000.00	To: A8060.4 Garbage C/E	\$30,000.00
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5. **Other Business** — (5-0 votes)
 - Approved Linda Gilbert's \$749.00 laptop purchase from *Planning & Zoning Contractual* Budget line.
 - Approved minutes of 8/13/2025 and 9/4/2025 Town Board Meetings.
 - Approved bills as presented for audit.

Announcements:

- ❖ The Town Board will hold a budget work session on Wednesday, September 24, 2025 at 6:00 PM.
- ❖ A budget work session will also be held Tuesday, October 7 starting at noon.
- ❖ The next monthly Town Board meeting is Wednesday, October 8, 2025 at 6:30 PM.
- ❖ The Lakes Management Committee will meet October 21, 2025 at 5:30 PM.
- ❖ Sherman's Haunted Carousel returns for rides & roaming October 24 (4—7PM), 25 & 26 (12—2PM).
- ❖ Trunk or Treat at Sherman's Park will be Saturday October 25, 2025 12—2PM (Sunday rain date).
- ❖ The Holiday Tree Lighting with Santa at Sherman's Park will be Saturday November 29, 2025.
- ❖ **Election Day is Tuesday November 4, 2025 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM at Caroga Town Hall, 1840 Hwy 10.**
Early voting will be at Gloversville Housing Authority (181 West Street in Gloversville) from October 25 through November 2 (Mon & Wed Noon—8PM; Tues Thur & Fri 9AM—5PM; Sat & Sun 9AM—5PM).
Caroga's 2025 ballot includes the Town voter referendum question:
"Shall the elected position of Town of Caroga Superintendent of Highways be changed to an appointed position, to be appointed by the Town Board at the conclusion of the present Highway Superintendent's current elected term and thereafter?"