

State of New York  
County of Fulton  
Town of Caroga

Minutes of a Caroga Town Board budget meeting held Wednesday January 11, 2023 at the municipal building located at 1840 State Highway #10 at 6:00 pm with the following persons in attendance by roll call. The flag salute followed.

Supervisor Scott Horton - Here  
Council Member John Glenn – Here  
Council Member Richard Sturgess – Here  
Council Member Donald Travis – Here  
Council Member Barbara Deluca – Absent

There were eight members of the Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Company in attendance, Tor Shekerjian – Confidential Secretary to the Supervisor facilitated the hybrid meeting using Zoom, Lynne Delesky – Planning Board Member, Code Officer Anthony Fancher, Board of Assessment Review Member John Livingston, and Jeremy Manning Wheelerville Bike Trail Manager in total there were 16 members of the public in attendance and 11 were on using Zoom.

Council Member Travis made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes. Council Member Sturgess seconded the motion. The clerk noted two corrections of December minutes: the # of Building Permits for November was 19 not 23 as stated by the Supervisor. Code Officer Fancher confirmed the number for the clerk. The second change was in Res. 2022-166 \$500.00 TO: Contingency FROM: Street Lighting was stated in the minutes. The resolution was corrected to Read FROM: Contingency \$500.00, TO: Street Lighting \$500.00.

### **Department Reports:**

**Wheelerville Bike Trail** – Jeremy Manning not a lot of biking going on right now. He is hoping to have a fat bike festival in two weeks. Growler Bike is coming out to do a demo day. There will also be a bike race, but it all dependent on the weather. He would like to have a little snow. He is doing maintenance on the trails of any tree that have come down. He is also doing mapping done with the county. He is planning a festival the second weekend in August this year. Supervisor Horton asked Mr. Manning to send notice of his events over to the clerk so they can be put on the website. Mr. Manning mentioned a five-race circuit that would run from May to September.

**BTI** – Mr. Delesky stated he was doing paperwork with Mike. The clerk was contacted by Mr. Kunath about submitting vouchers for the applicators who needed to recertify their licenses. The clerk electronically sent a voucher to the new director.

**Sole Assessor** – In Leigh Anne Loucks written report to the board she stated the Volunteer Firefighters exemption needed to be reviewed and determine if the town wants to go through the procedure to update their current exemption.

Governor Hochal has mandated all municipalities send in a notice informing property owners of an improved property about the Senior exemption. This is something that is new and is on the

back of the insert that goes into the (county) tax bills. But the governor wants to make sure that everyone knows about it. The Assessor noted it would cost \$788.90 to do the mailing for 1610 postcards.

She is still doing data collection and reviewing permits from 2016 – 2022. The Assessor is still on track to get all of the permits reviewed and on the 2023 tax roll. It has been a daunting task, but once done the only permits needed to be reviewed annually will be the holdovers from 2021, 2022 and new for 2023. It will be a lot easier going forward.

**Town Clerk/Registrar/RMO** – The Town Clerk written report was submitted to the board. The only question for the board was since the Code officer is here at 7 am should the door be open for customers to come in for his hours from 7 am – 10 am? Mr. Fancher stated he was good with that. Supervisor Horton thought it would be better for the public to use the main entrance to town hall to meet with the code officer.

**Tax Collector Report** – an updated report was given to the board on tax collection. As of today, the Clerk/Collector has deposited \$268,703.81.

The clerk announced that stickers to save your pet during an emergency were available in for \$2.00 from her office. It is a fundraiser for the Fire Auxiliary.

**Code Enforcement & Sanitation** –Supervisor Horton read the written report submitted by Mr. Fancher. Mr. Fancher made a request to attend the annual Northern Adirondack Educational conference Feb. 26 – April 2, 2023 for continuing educational training. Eight permits were issued for a total fee amount of \$1,400.00 this last month. Permits from 2016 – 2021 are 90 percent completed and filed in their proper SBL folders. It was stated that all closed out permits have been given to the assessor. Mr. Fancher stated at present there are 8 permits for the start of the new year with \$1,700.0 collected in fees. There were no questions for Mr. Fancher.

**Dog Control** –The clerk noted the following delinquent reports: 6 from - 2020, 2 from 2021, and 9 in 2022. Mr. Dutcher stated there has been some question about the pine tree falling [on the building] at the Brennan Humane Society. It only housed cats they are still in business and serving

**Golf Course** – Councilman Sturgess stated obviously the course was closed down. He had a couple of people express concern to him about the snowmobile race being on the golf course. If the race happens there, the areas that are going to be potentially damaged by this race are going to be in the rough areas and it is relatively easy to repair. Mr. Stedman was not concerned whatsoever. Supervisor Horton stated Mr. Stedman is working on the equipment also.

**Highway** –Supervisor Horton did not have a report. But on Monday there was a major failure on the 1996 front end loader. It has 14,000 hours on it. It is believed to be a transmission problem. It doesn't run. There is a quote from United Construction & Forestry to get an accurate quote to repair it would cost \$6,328.75. They would transport it to Clifton Park and take it apart to see what is wrong with it – not put it back together. The quote noted complete transmissions are no longer available for this piece of equipment. Disassembly is needed to determine the exact failure. The quote is for transportation, disassembly and inspection only. Repairs of this type can exceed

\$45,000.00. Transmission repair will exceed the value of the entire unit. Supervisor Horton thought the town should see the loader at auction.

Supervisor Horton was not sure the town has ever done this but noted the board should be meeting with the Highway Superintendent and reviewing what roads he wants to repair. This is per Section 284 of the highway law.

Supervisor Horton noted CHIPS money can be used to purchase highway equipment. There is about \$180,000.00 in CHIPS this year. Part of that can go towards a piece of equipment. We have two loaders so we don't have to move quickly on this. Mr. Voght has been looking at getting a larger tractor with a floor mower. It could still be used to load the sand trucks. Supervisor Horton thanked the board of the last few years of putting money away in a reserve for equipment. It was zero dollars when he came into office, now we have \$41,058.00. Also budgeted was an additional \$90,000.00 for equipment this year but that is for other things too. The Supervisor stated there were some quotes for used equipment, which new is over six figures.

Council Member Travis noted one of the small green trucks had a fire today on the wiring hitch plug.

**Lakes Management Program** – Council Member Glenn spoke with Jim Hogan he is going forward with using a herbicide to get rid of Eurasian Milfoil. The APA is recommending two years of data. The divers are happy and want to come back.

Marcus Harazin noted with the budget was discussed for the invasive species prevention program he said he would be following up with the Adirondack Watershed Institute (AWI) and Department of Environmental Conservation to see what their plans were for allocation of stewards. He spoke to Cathy McGlinn and they intend to place an additional steward to the AWI contract and the town of Caroga boat wash was added on. There is already one at the DEC campsite and the other is at the West Lake Boat launch on Canada Lake. He noted there are emails on social media looking for stewards. There was a shortage last year. That being said this will take a bit of the financial load off the town. He also asked about the Invasive Species Grant program. The town received two – three-year grants. The grants will be available again competitively and details were not available at this time. Mr. Harazin noted the grant can be used for public education and possibly weed removal. The time frame to apply will be short usually 30 days.

In the past the committee has talked about the New York State Salt Taskforce and the report was supposed to come out a few months ago. It is still not available. Mr. Harazin thought it still continued to be an issue in our area. He will keep an eye out for the report and noted there are things that can be done to mitigate the use of salt on the town and state roads. He would like to see the best practices applied here. He thought there would be pilot programs which is supposed to be outlined in the report.

Mr. Harazin noted some towns in the Adirondacks that have ordinances making it mandatory to get your boat washed. He thought the town of Erin, the Town of Oregon, and also up in Lake George had mandatory boat washes. There are supposed to be regulations coming from the state on the State law that was passed in June of last year. He thought the town should consider doing

some action locally. He will continue to get examples from other towns to use as a model in the Town of Caroga if we wish. He appreciates the town's participation on this important issue.

Supervisor Horton asked if the grant was in the 2022- 2023 state budget. Their budget is April 1<sup>st</sup> he noted. Mr. Harazin stated it has been in the budget but he did not know how much money was allocated for regional steward programs. The competitive grants we have been funded under before were for the aquatic invasive species grant programs. The funding was in the budget and he was not sure it was used for that particular stream. This happened before they were late coming out. That is why he wants to get everything together because the timeframe to apply is short.

The clerk brought up working with the town recreation program as an opportunity to educate the children about invasive species and perhaps to encourage a future diver who may work for the town years from now. It would be a benefit in a couple of different ways. Mr. Harazin has asked at meetings if there was a curriculum. He came across one this summer when he was at Paul Smiths. It is a day and a half program. At the end the kids get a certificate and it engages them with their family with some hands-on stuff. Some planning would be needed with the youth program and to gather resources.

Council Member Glenn talked at a previous meeting about having some signage at the entrances to the Town about helping to keep our waters clean. He asked for permission from the board to talk to John Lakata about the signs. The Supervisor counted five entrances to the town. Council Member Sturgess note it is now the law and thought the wording should be stronger. Council Member Glenn will bring information back to the board on this.

**Town Hall Building** – Council Member Travis did not have anything to report.

**CTC (former PLRT)** – Ralph Palcovic spoke as a committee member. The Tourism Commission met with the race director, with Mr. Stedman, another committee member along with the fire chief. They discussed potentially the first ever race on the golf course. They were concerned about the chewing up of the course. Mr. Palcovic stated quite a bit of snow is needed to conduct the race. The issue of parking was discussed. Depending on the number of participants the highway Superintendent would be consulted to use every available space around the highway garage and Irving Pond Road. These professionals have full size trucks and 30-foot trailers – they require a lot of space. Porta-Potties would be needed. EMS are needed along with an ambulance staged at the site. This is a prerequisite of the racing group. The Fire Company would be involved in getting any injured persons off the course back to the staging area. Additionally, an alternate location of West Caroga Lake was discussed for the race. It gives more of a spectator vantage point, and parking is more plentiful in that area. He noted the snowmobile club would also be participating in this too. The president and vice president were in attendance at the meeting. Mr. Palcovic noted the unique aspect of having the race on a golf course but noted the spectator aspect may detract.

Supervisor Horton noted it was unfortunate the highway superintendent was not at the meeting but the Supervisor spoke to him about clearing out the cell tower area for additional parking. Mr. Palcovic noted roads could be shut down by the Highway Superintendent to make adequate parking. There is a date when this event is either a go or no go but Mr. Palcovic did not have it.

**Supervisor's Report:**

Supervisor Horton announced that there are vacant seats on the Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals. They are volunteer positions. There are also vacant alternate seats. These boards are important for how the town grows.

The Salt shed is finished. Supervisor Horton did not have all of the costs. Year to date we are \$82,353.00. There is one bill out for some preliminary engineering. Supervisor Horton did some of the engineering, and the highway crew did a lot of preliminary work. He estimated the engineering bill to be less than \$5,000.00. The Supervisor thought the project would be under budget and is glad the project is behind us.

Supervisor Horton reported nothing new in the lawsuit. The judge has not gotten back to the town yet.

Supervisor Horton stated the highway department petitioned to have the teamsters represent them. Supervisor Horton had a conference call today on this. An administrative law judge, today, has granted a standing with the union. The town will be in negotiations starting sometime in February.

**\*\*Public Comments and Questions**

Ralph Palcovic noted to the board that Governor Hochul signed into law the 10% tax credit for volunteer fireman. He is here representing the Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Company this evening. He gave the board information on the legislation. The intent of the legislation is to support the buildup of the Volunteer Fire Service and the EMS Service. Mr. Palcovic noted when he joined the Fire Company in 1976 there were 65 members and a waiting list to get in. Today it is a different world in volunteerism across the board it has dropped off. The current roster of the Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Company is 25. Mr. Palcovic stated they need all the help they can get. He noted 10% is not a lot of the town taxes. He figured the impact to the town would be minimal. But it is an incentive. Mr. Palcovic noted back in 1976 there were 40 – 60 calls. In 2022 there were 252 calls. The public need – all aspects first aid, car accidents, the aging population are being tended to as needed. The Fire Company responds round the clock sometimes during storms. Mr. Palcovic stated the Fire Company would look forward to the 10% break. He hopes this brings 50 new members, and right now every little bit helps. Mr. Palcovic noted other towns will be doing this and the County legislature will also be looking into this.

Supervisor Horton stated this is being discussed actively between town supervisors and the county. They want to make it comprehensive. Supervisor Horton had some questions about lifetime exemptions, and who qualifies. If you served for 20 years but are not able to serve now, would they be granted the incentive? Mr. Palcovic stated that was addressed in the legislation. The legislation, Chapter 670, was given to the Supervisor by Mr. Palcovic. Supervisor Horton stated it would not affect our budget at all. It is a redistribution, it is minor. Supervisor Horton stated there was a lot of support on this countywide issue. Council Member Sturgess stated he thought this was great. Mr. Palcovic stated there is a nationwide shortage of volunteerism. He stated there is a paid driver concept growing in the capitol district right now.

In closing Mr. Palcovic stated in regard to the needed highway equipment – Federal Surplus Property Program. “You pay pennies on the dollar.” The town had subscribed to the program

before. The program is through the Office of General Services. He thought the town may be able to find another loader there. He obtained a back hoe for the town through the federal surplus program years ago [when he was on the board.]

Supervisor Horton thanked all of the Fire Company people who showed up at the meeting today.

Howard Dutcher – Fire Chief pointed out that the member here are not new – they are old. He hopes the 10% will attract some new members. There are eight younger guys four of whom are professional fire fighters and not always available.

Supervisor Horton noted they are looking at EMS carefully at the county level. It has been a big problem. The county lost two ambulance companies. But last year the county decided to supplement the revenues to the ambulance companies. Public safety will be examined a lot at the county level.

John Delesky gave the board an article from Spectrum News on the tax credit. He stated that he has been a volunteer fire fighter and EMT for 14 years. To be a volunteer fire fighter you have to put in 140 hours of mandatory training it used to be 39 hours. To be an EMT there is 150 hours of mandatory training and 45 hours of refresher courses every three years. That used to be 130 hours. These are all time commitments and time away from your family. Of the 252 calls last year 160 were for EMS. Those calls range from a lift assist, epi calls, diabetic comas, or cardiac arrests. The Caroga EMS were there to save the day until the patient was turned over to the ambulance service. There are occasions that a Caroga EMT will ride in the ambulance to continue CPR. The 10% credit would save his family \$146.00. The credit might encourage younger families to volunteer, it would give them a little bit of a thank you the town needs you and will take 10% off your taxes. It would be an incentive and a pat on the back recognizing what they do. Mr. McIntosh & Mr. Delesky figured this discount for the 25 volunteers would cost the town \$7,000.00 to \$8,000.00. That would equal to about \$3.00 per parcel. Mr. Macintosh based his figures on 30 firefighters – he hopes to get some new ones.

Supervisor Horton stated it would be a .045% impact the budget. It is well worth the service.

No one virtually raised their hands. The public comment portion of the meeting was closed at 7:49 pm.

### **Old Business:**

Supervisor Horton stated the information on the Franchise agreement with Spectrum Northeast LLC, which expired in 2020, was turned over to the town attorney. He stated this has not cost the town anything by not having it because the clause automatically renews. He is a little concerned because the taxable value of public utilities keeps going down every year. Their lobbyists are better than ours.

This can be done under resolutions to fill a vacancy on the Board of Assessment Review. Paul Dunlevy has expressed an interest in serving on the Board of Assessment Review

**New Business:**

**Correspondence:**

Conference Packet from Assoc. of Towns Feb 19-22, 2023 Supervisor Horton stated anyone interested in going should contact the town clerk.

Fulton County Resolution # 486 amending Board of Supervisors Weighted Voting Plan Supervisor Horton noted this was interesting. The Board of Supervisors for the county use a weighted voting system. It is not on person one vote. Caroga has historically had 12 votes. The 2020 census recalculated and there was a shift of the population in the county. The population of Fulton County has decreased so the total number of votes has gone down. The supervisor noted that Caroga gained one vote. We are still the third smallest in the county. All of the others went down or stayed the same. He doesn't fully know how we gained, but noted the number of conversions to year-round residences.

Fulton County Workers Compensation 4th Quarter Assessment

Transfer station is closed Jan. 16 in observance of MLK Day. Station Open Tues 1/17 8 – noon.

Supervisor Horton noted unfortunately there is a resignation of Kenneth Coirin from the Zoning Board of Appeals. He was a great member of the board. He had wanted to resign earlier but we had a new chairman and stayed on to help him get acclimated to the position. The Supervisor accepts the resignation with regret, and which him well. He would love to have him come back anytime he would like to.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**RESOLUTION #2023-011 to make the necessary End of the Year 2022 Budget**

**Modifications** was offered by Supervisor Horton at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 11, 2023.

**WHEREAS**, the Budget officer, Joanne Young has indicated a need to make certain transfers to maintain a balanced budget for 2022, now therefore be it

**RESOLVED** that the following transfers be made to the 2022 budget.

From: DA5142.1 Snow Removal P/S	\$4,120.00	
To: DA5130.4 Machinery C/E		\$4,120.00
From: DA5142.1 Snow Removal P/S	\$ 27.00	
To: DA5110.4 General Repairs C/E		\$ 27.00
From DA5142.1 Snow Removal P/S	\$ 7,950.00	
To: DA5142.4 Snow Removal C/E		\$ 7,950.00

From: A 5132.4 Garage C/E \$ 120.00  
To: A5010.4 Highway Supt C/E \$ 120.00

From: A1620.4 Building C/E \$ 400.00  
To: A8160.4 Garbage C/E \$ 400.00

Seconded by Council Member Sturgess

Adopted by a vote of four Ayes; Horton, Glenn, Sturgess, Travis

**RESOLUTION #2023-012 to accept the resignation of Kenneth Coirin from the Zoning Board of Appeals** was offered by Supervisor Horton at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 11, 2023.

**WHEREAS**, the town clerk received a written correspondence via email on January 6, 2023 from Mr. Coirin stated that he would be resigning his position as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to accept the resignation of Kenneth Coirin with regrets and that the boards thanks for his 8 years of service.

Seconded by Council Member Sturgess

Adopted by a vote of four Ayes; Horton, Glenn, Sturgess, Travis

Supervisor Horton state this next resolution was discussed last month.

**RESOLUTION #2023-013 to authorize Supervisor Horton to submit a contract to James Zeitler for the lease of 1785 State Highway 10 Caroga Lake** was offered by Supervisor Horton at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 11, 2023.

**WHEREAS**, the town has leased 1785 State Highway 10 for the past two years, and

**WHEREAS**, a copy of the lease was given to the board members last month, now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that Supervisor Horton is authorized to submit a contract to James Zeitler for the lease of 1785 State Highway 10 Caroga Lake.

Seconded by Council Member Travis

Adopted by a vote of four Ayes; Horton, Glenn, Sturgess, Travis

**RESOLUTION #2023-014 to appoint a member to the Board of Assessment Review** was offered by Supervisor Horton at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 11, 2023.



**WHEREAS**, there was an open seat on the Board of Assessment Review as former member Daniel MacIvor did not wish to be reappointed, and

**WHEREAS**, the Supervisor stated that he and the Chairman of the Board of Assessment Review John Livingston, have reviewed the application of Paul Dunleavy, who had indicated that he was interested in serving on the Board of Assessment Review, and he is in concurrence, now therefore be it

**RESOLVED** that Paul Dunleavy of 306 South Shore Road East Caroga Lake is hereby appointed to serve a five-year term on the Board of Assessment Review and whose term shall end on September 30, 2027.

Seconded by Council Member Glenn

Adopted by a vote of four Ayes; Horton, Glenn, Sturgess, Travis

**RESOLUTION #2023-015 to Re-appoint Lynne Delesky to the Planning Board** was offered by Supervisor Horton at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 11, 2023.

**WHEREAS**, the term of Lynne Delesky who serves on the Planning Board expired on December 31, 2022, and

**WHEREAS**, Lynne Delesky would like to continue to serve on the Planning Board now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to reappoint Lynne Delesky of South Shore Road East Caroga Lake to serve a seven-year term on the Planning Board and whose term shall expire on December 31, 2029. She was thanked for her service.

Seconded by Council Member Sturgess

Adopted by a vote of four Ayes; Horton, Glenn, Sturgess, Travis

Supervisor Horton discussed the loader and thought it should go to auction. It has a value to someone who has one with lower hours. The bucket, and hydraulics are good on it. Council Member Travis stated it has new tires (\$8,000.00 worth last year) on it. The clerk asked if there was a minimum the board would accept. Supervisor Horton stated the board has the right with Auctions International items, to reject any and all bids. So, if it was \$500 the highway superintendent can reject the bid. The clerk questioned the highway Superintendent rejecting the bid but Supervisor Horton reiterated he could.

Council Member Sturgess asked if the board was ready to go to that point. He noted there is a local person in town that works on heavy equipment. He wanted a second opinion. It only happened two days ago.

Supervisor Horton stated we would not know what is wrong with it unless it is torn apart. Once it is apart you won't put it back together so the auction value would be a lot more with it all together. He understood wanting a second opinion on it.

The matter was tabled.

The members of the fire company leave the meeting at this time. They were thanked by Council Member Travis for all they do for the town. Other board members also thanked them. Supervisor Horton stated they had to get together on the contract sometime.

Council Member Sturgess made a motion to approve the year end 2022 bills as presented for audit. The motion was seconded by Council Member Glenn. All four board members present were in favor of the motion, Horton, Glenn, Sturgess, and Travis.

Council Member Sturgess made a motion to approve the 2023 January bills as presented for audit. The motion was seconded by Council Member Travis. All four board members present were in favor of the motion, Horton, Glenn, Sturgess, and Travis.

Council Member Sturgess made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14th minutes as corrected and the January 2nd minutes. The motion was seconded by Council Member Travis. All four board members present were in favor of the motion, Horton, Glenn, Sturgess, and Travis.

Council Member Glenn wanted to make a motion for the Code Officer to attend training.

**RESOLUTION #2023-016 to grant approval for the Code Officer to attend training** was offered by Council Member Glenn at the regular monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 11, 2023.

**WHEREAS**, annual training is necessary for the Code Officer, now therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to grant approval for the Code Officer Anthony Fancher to attend the annual Northern Adirondack Educational Conference on February 26 thru March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the reservation cost, registration fee, and four nights' accommodations be approved along with mileage.

Seconded by Council Member Sturgess

Adopted by a vote of four Ayes; Horton, Glenn, Sturgess, Travis

At 7:11 pm Council Member Travis made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Council Member Glenn. All four board members present were in favor of the motion, Horton, Glenn, Sturgess, and Travis.

Submitted by the Town Clerk

Linda M. Gilbert, RMC, CMC  
Caroga Town Clerk