

State of New York
County of Fulton
Town of Caroga

Minutes of the Caroga Town Board regular monthly meeting held on January 14, 2026, at 6:30 pm at Town hall with the following board members in attendance by roll call. The salute to the flag followed.

Supervisor John Glenn - Here
Council Member Richard Sturgess - Here
Council Member Matthew Cooper - Here
Council Member Kimberly Walker - Here
Council Member Greta Frasier - Here

Also in attendance were Leigh Anne Loucks - Assessor, Steve Stedman - Greens Keeper, Mike Kunath - BTI, Jeremy Manning – Wheelerville Bike Trail Manager, Roy Stock – Highway Superintendent, John Livingston – Board of Assessment Review Member, John Byrnes – Zoning Board of Appeals Member. Mike Voght – custodian, Anita Long – Comprehensive Planning Committee Member, and three members of the public.

Sara Bouillon of the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District Inc. gave a forty-minute presentation outlining how they could craft the Town of Caroga New York State Department of State Compliant Comprehensive Plan. She outlined their approach:

- 1) Press releases, social media and public outreach to kick off the project.
- 2) Assist in identifying key individuals, conducting stakeholder interviews and managing press releases.
- 3) They develop, distribute collect and analyze survey data.
- 4) They analyze current conditions, create detailed maps and evaluate local factors to provide data-driven insights.
- 5) MVEDD would conduct workshops with the planning committee.
- 6) A sustainable Communities expert would analyze key project areas to provide current and relevant data.
- 7) MVEDD engages with the town and committee weekly providing draft updates to ensure that the town, voice and feel of the plan accurately represents the town.
- 8) They assist with website updates, coordination of public hearings, and marketing efforts.

MVEDD would help the town achieve their goals through visioning workshops, robust public and stakeholder engagement, clean energy and climate programs through regional coordination making sure the plan aligns with the regional vision. They manage and support grant programs and administration which aligns with the strategy of the comprehensive plan. They are excited and prepared to submit a proposal for our upcoming request for proposals (RFP). Ms. Bouillon stated MVEDD would take the majority of the burden off the town. They do all the data analysis, collect the surveys, run the meetings, and catalog all the paperwork. At the end they do the majority of the writing. This way the town can decide how it wants to advertise itself. As rural charm, lake and nature conservation, recreational opportunities, or is the town trying to support small businesses more. They can do this in a much shorter time frame than other contractors.

Anita Long attended a meeting with MVEDD, and it was terrific. Ms. Long stated that the town was waiting for the Department of State to approve the RFP. She noted the Comprehensive Plan Committee has been meeting for almost two years now.

Supervisor Glenn thanked Ms. Bouillion, it was a lot of information.

Council Member Sturgess made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes. Supervisor Glenn seconded the motion. All board members were in favor of the motion. Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Walker, Frasier.

Department Reports

Wheelerville Bike Trail – Mr. Manning reported the trails are currently open for winter use. He thanked Bret Fielding for volunteering to do the grooming for fat bike riding and snowshoeing. Mr. McGlaughlin was thanked for the use of the sled dog groomer. Mr. Stock and his crew were thanked for keeping the parking lot open. Conditions can be checked on their Facebook page.

There will be a fat bike demo during the Winter Carnival on January 31 from 11 – 3 pm through Syracuse Bikes.

Darrin Romine is working on the plans for a bridge which is part of the connector trail project. The plans should be delivered next week. DEC Smart Growth will cover these engineering costs. If approved the connector trail project work could begin in the spring.

Mr. Manning is waiting to hear back on round 8 of DEC Smart Growth funding. This would fund accessibility improvements for adaptive trail users.

Mr. Manning spoke to Mr. Desantis recently, there is no update on the time frame on the DMP amendment. It is anticipated that this will take a long time.

The fifth annual bike trail festival will be held on August 22 – 23, 2026.

Council Member Frasier asked for a flyer from Mr. Manning to include with the winter carnival information. He didn't have one, they just advertise on Instagram and Facebook. He was asked to reach out to Carla at 44 lakes.com with the information on the fat bike demonstration

BTI – Mr. Kunath reported that the reports were submitted to the state on the usage of BTI went in last month. They were accepted by the state. He has organized the program for the season. He submitted four license renewals to the board. This year he doesn't need anyone new. Everyone is coming back and he has a great team. When he gave classes, it counted toward his recertification. He will have to seek classes elsewhere. His certification is up in three years. He will find classes to attend. Mr. Kunath will be working on the riparian report letter to new property owners. He will hold a safety meeting sometime in February. He will send a letter to the state noting the intent to treat. March 1st the program starts.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector/Registrar/RMO – Linda Gilbert submitted the monthly report to the town supervisor. The Town Clerk's 2025 books were presented for audit.

Per the budget a resolution is needed to increase the 2026 -2027 Transfer Station permit fees. Cars will go up from \$15 to \$20 and pickup trucks and trailers will go from \$35 to \$40.

The clerk reported that the blue books requested by board members are not printed yet. The town will receive two free books and after that we have to purchase additional ones. As of yet they have not set the price.

The clerk noted the phone system has been out of service for several weeks with AT & T users particularly. Numerous calls have been made to AT&T, Frontier and to Northeast IS they put in our phone system. Next week Northeast IS was going to come and change the auto attendant answering system. Council Member Sturgess suggested contacting Frontier as they are our provider, or we can change services. The clerk thought there was a phone number in the Supervisors office to call directly to Frontier. The problem is with the DTMF digital signal. Derrek Pombrio was called in to trouble shoot the problem and will be billing the town. Mr. Stock stated he had a phone number in his office. The clerk noted her cell number is being used to redirect calls for callers who can't get through on the automated system. Council Member Frasier suggested posting the problem and telling people to email the town.

The matter of the Highway Superintendents salary from 2025 still has to be refunded and resolved.

The clerk stated that she would still like to be the Substance Compliance Officer. "I have the experience and would like the consideration of the board."

Tax Report: To date 566 parcels have been paid in the amount of \$774,872.15. The unpaid balance on the warrant is \$3,594,799.65.

Code Enforcement & Sanitation – Mr. Fancher submitted a written report to the supervisor. He requested approval by the board to attend training in the amount of \$485.00, for conference expense and \$576.00 in hotel expenses. Three permits have been issued collecting \$325.00 and a valuation of \$70,000.00. Ten inspections were done. Mr. Fancher handed out specification sheets to replace the gym door. He reported that the old salt shed rehab and carport addition are completed. He gave a recap of the 2025 permits; 196 permits were issued noting a valuation of \$6,007,885.00. Fee collected were \$31,029.00.

RESOLUTION #2026-010 to approve the code officer attending training was offered by Supervisor Glenn at the monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 14, 2026,

WHEREAS, the Code Officer Anthony Fancher informed the board of his desire to attend an annual upcoming training in Lake Placid, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the code officer is hereby authorized to attend the training in Lake Placid with expenses in the amount of \$485.00 for the conference expense and \$576.00 in hotel expenses.

Seconded by Council Member Sturgess

Adopted by a vote of five Ayes: Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Walker, Frasier

Dog Control – Mr. Dutcher did not submit a report.

Sole Assessor – Leigh Anne Loucks submitted a written report. The state sent out letters for people to verify their eligibility for the STAR exemptions. They are requesting people to go

online. The Assessor has worksheets and can fax them if residents prefer. If people have any questions they can call Leigh Anne. If senior exemptions need to be picked up the assessor will go to their house to do that. Just call to schedule the time.

Golf Course – Mr. Stedman reported they are moved into the golf maintenance shop. Everything is being put away. He is doing equipment maintenance.

Mr. Stedman did set up a cross-country skiing course before Thanksgiving. The snowmobile groomer tries to hit it once or twice a year.

Grassland is still working on our reels. He will be making some purchases for the upcoming season. Mr. Stedman will submit his pesticide report next week. Before the holidays six memberships were purchased as gift cards. Mr. Stedman will be stopping over to see Mr. Groom once he gets home from vacation to see about any purchase he wants to make.

Mr. Stedman has been keeping the golf cart tops clear of snow. Five were outside of the pavilion across the street. Council Member Cooper asked him to move the carts that are outside. That is the reason the lean too was built.

Four tournaments have been set up so far. Each board member was handed out information on the golf rates. Items in yellow are a proposed change.

Weekday Monday – Friday 9 holes walking \$20.00 (was \$17)

Mr. Stedman does not support weekend (Saturday, Sunday) rates anymore. Maybe when there is a new clubhouse. Then we can do as other golf courses do. They have weekend and weekday rates. Mr. Stedman also suggested Fall rates beginning October 1st. They will be reviewed by the board.

Council Member Sturgess thanked everyone who helped move everything out of the old firehouse. A finish on the floor may be done in the future.

Highway – Roy Stock Highway Superintendent is keeping up on ice and snow control. The bridges are being cleared.

Lakes Management Program – Supervisor Glenn noted the board will be looking at a different format as far as the weed harvesting. Ten years ago, we couldn't keep up with the weeds and now with the use of ProcellaCOR it worked wonderfully. The program will be more of an identification and eradication as opposed to having dive teams on a regular basis. Supervisor Glenn noted the town will be advertising for a lead diver and others on the website. If interested, contact the town. The supervisor hopes this saves money. The clerk asked if there was something written up advertising for the lead diver. Leigh Anne Loucks secretary to the supervisor has something written up. The Supervisor thought it was posted. He asked that the information be given to the clerk/webmaster so it could be posted on the town website.

Town Hall Building – Council Member Cooper reported that three people will bring in quotes on the heat issue. The Town put out a request for quotes to replace the gym door. The town received two quotes: Two Brothers Home Improvement for \$5,000.00 and another from Adirondack Landscaping for \$4,880.00.

RESOLUTION #2026-011 to hire Adirondack Landscaping to replace the gym doors was offered by Council Member Sturgess at the monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 14, 2026.

WHEREAS, the doors in the gym are rusted at the bottom allowing the elements and critters to enter the town hall building, and

WHEREAS, Supervisor Palcovic and Supervisor Elect Glenn created a request for quotes with a response date of January 14, 2026, and

WHEREAS, the town received two quotes to remove the existing door and framing, install a 36” exterior rated steel door and frame with approved exit panic door hardware, to frame in void space making the project weather tight and to finish the exterior with an exterior finish. The quote from Two Brothers Home Improvements 2121 State Hwy 10 Caroga Lake NY 518-526-8904 was \$5,000.00, and a second quote from Adirondack Landscaping 1008 Pleasantview Ave. Scotia NY 12302 518-393-0099 was for \$4,880.00, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to accept the quote from Adirondack Landscaping in the amount of \$4,880.00.

Seconded by Supervisor Glenn

Adopted by a vote of five ayes: Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Walker, Frasier

Tourism Committee – Council Member Frasier stated things were in full gear for the Winter Carnival. She met with Carla from the county today and also Sue Collins. An ad was placed in the Adirondack Explorer. The event is also on 44 lakes.com and has received 9000 hits. The tourism committee has not had a meeting since July. Council Member Frasier wanted to use the money in that account to see if the town can find a digital marketing specialist to help do the tourism information on Tweet, Twitter, Instagram – whatever these kids are doing these days. It would be for whatever business, organization or group is planning an event. It would be like a home base to get the information to Carla Kolbe at the county. Council Member Frasier noted the huge push for the America 250 Celebration. There is funding to help with events. She is working on a theme possibly a lumberjack weekend, or Nashville weekend. Townwide events get more help from the county as opposed to individual businesses. Everyone carries their own liability insurance. The Winter Carnival is also on Bug Country radio. Council Member Frasier thinks this is a huge market for Caroga to hit on. Council Member Frasier heard that the tourism committee felt their hands were tied, they weren’t allowed to plan events. There was a question on liability. Events wouldn’t be a town event but a town wide event. It was noted that there is \$5,000.00 in the line item. Scott Henze and Carla Kolbe have offered to help find an intern to do the marketing. Council Member Walker suggested contacting Fulton, Montgomery Community College. Council Member Frasier noted putting together the carnival takes 20 hr. a week of time. Advertising for the carnival is also in the Times Union. Many are talking about the outhouse races. Flyers, registration forms, and rules for the races were available for anyone who wanted them. Fulton County Tourism is paying for the fireworks, two porta - potties and an MC for the outhouse races. Supervisor Glenn had the application form for the fireworks which needs

to be signed. Council Member Frasier noted there will be a snow mobile parade on Saturday night on West Caroga Lake. There will be someone with a drone recording that event.

RESOLUTION #2026-012 to approve a fireworks display for the Winter Carnival was offered by Council Member Frasier at the monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 14, 2026.

WHEREAS, Council Member Frasier has been instrumental in planning a Winter Carnival in the Town of Caroga, and

WHEREAS, the Town received an application to have a fireworks display by American Fireworks Display LLC PO Box 980 Oxford NY 13830 on Saturday January 31, 2026, at 6:00 pm for approximately 10 minutes, and

WHEREAS, the town received the insurance liability information along with the map showing the location of the display and the list of certified pyrotechnicians, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Caroga Town Board does hereby approve the permit for fireworks on January 31, 2026, along the shore of West Caroga Lake, lake access off of Bath Avenue.

Seconded by Supervisor Glenn

Adopted by a vote of five ayes: Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Walker, Frasier

The clerk asked if anyone had discussed putting together a business organization again in Caroga? Council Member Frasier stated that it has been mentioned at different times. She noted she is new to being the liaison for the tourism committee. It has been tried many times. One of the stumbling blocks is we are such a small town, and it is the same handful of people that are trying to help every organization out there. Council Member Frasier was interested in having a meeting with the business owners for their perspective.

Supervisor's Report: Supervisor Glenn reviewed the file left for him by the previous administration. One item was a letter received from the New York State Department of Transportation. The town had asked to have the speed limit reduced on route 10 along the golf course. The state conducted an engineering study and determined that lowering the posted speed below 40 mph is not appropriate at this time. The letter was dated December 22, 2025.

Another correspondence was from Judge Subik stating that his books would be available on Monday January 19th at 4 pm for review. The Supervisor thought that was a holiday. Council Member Sturgess will talk to the judge about this tomorrow.

The floor was opened for ***Public Comment***. There were none.

Old Business: Just for the record Anita Long congratulated the comprehensive plan committee on being awarded a NY State Department of State Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning grant. It was a group effort with input from the town board and 40 letters of support. She looks forward

to robust public participation during the coming year. ‘Logistically we have been in touch with the Department of State (DOS).’ They want the town to hold off on sending our requests for proposals to hire a consultant. It was proposed that the town would hire a planning consulting firm and also contact an engineer. EDP has done a sewer study previously and other work to be able to do specific pieces in the Comprehensive Plan. We are waiting to hear from the DOS before moving forward. She and Chris Foss – Chairman will be in touch via email.

Supervisor Glenn asked Ms. Long what she thought of the presentation tonight. ‘‘It was kind of surprising.’’ In some ways it was helpful and in other ways she was not aligned with the community center process. ‘‘We really want this to be a grass roots kind of process. It will not go as fast as what she described. We’ve talked with other consultants, so I don’t see us hiring MVEDD as the primary consultant to be paid with the grant money.’’ Ms. Long stated she would follow up with her via email. The next step is hiring a consultant Ms. Long noted. The state has to assign a project manager.

Council Member Frasier asked for information from Ms. Long for her and Council Member Walker as they are new and need to see where we are at in this project. Council Member Sturgess stated that nobody has seen anything. Email information was exchanged.

Leigh Anne Loucks – assessor asked who actually determines or who actually hires the consultant? It is the board’s decision Council Member Sturgess noted as it has to go out to bid. Ms. Long stated we currently have a request for proposals to specify what these applications would look like and then we will have a review process where ultimately the town board will approve the contract of the competitive bid. Ms. Loucks stated she had a problem with the statement by Ms. Long that ‘‘I don’t think we would take these people.’’ Everybody hasn’t actually seen or heard what the other companies could provide the service. Ms. Loucks did not feel there should have been a statement made about the presenter this evening that the town would not hire her. Ms. Long was sorry how that came across, decisions haven’t been made for anybody at this point.

Supervisor Glenn noted the resignation letter from Diane Ackerneckt who was on the tourism committee. He noted the procurement policy was also attached. The clerk noted that was part of the packet of information for this evening’s meeting. The clerk noted that annually the board is supposed to review the procurement policy. The clerk noted in the Association of Towns publication for January/February there was an article on inflation and that perhaps this would impact the procurement policy.

Supervisor Glenn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Several board members and the clerk say no there is more business.

RESOLUTION #2026-013 to approve the James A. Brennan Humane Society Contract was offered by Council Member Sturgess at the monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 14, 2026.

WHEREAS, the town desires to contract for services from the James A Brennan Humane Society for the year 2026, and

WHEREAS, the contract is on file in the Clerk's office, and

WHEREAS, the municipality shall pay \$825.00 for basic services with the signed agreement, and after the first three animals received from the municipality the municipality shall pay the humane society within thirty days of receipt of invoice three hundred fifty dollars per animal thereafter, and

WHEREAS, the terms of the contract did change, there being a \$75.00 increase, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Caroga Town Board does hereby move to contract with the James A. Brennan Humane Society for the year 2026 per the contract.

Seconded by Council Member Walker

Adopted by a vote of five ayes: Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Walker, Frasier

RESOLUTION #2026-014 to increase the cost of Transfer Station Permits was offered by Council Member Sturgess at the monthly meeting of the Caroga Town Board held on January 14, 2026.

WHEREAS, last year the clerk reviewed the cost of transfer station permits throughout the county and suggested raising the cost in 2026, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the cost of transfer station permits in the Town of Caroga shall increase to \$20.00 for a car and \$40.00 for a pickup truck or trailer.

Seconded by Supervisor Glenn

Adopted by a vote of five ayes: Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Walker, Frasier

Council Member Sturgess made a motion to pay the bills as presented for audit. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Glenn. All board members were in favor of the motion: Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Walker, Frasier.

It was noted that the town board recognized and accepted the resignation of Diane Ackerknecht from the tourism committee with regret.

Council Member Sturgess announced that he and Council Member Cooper have a meeting with CT Male about the Golf Course project building on Friday. The clerk asked that at some point could CT Male come up and look at our current space in this building. Though it won't be happening anytime soon the clerk thought a conceptual vision of the current space we are using should be looked at. Accommodations for the janitor should be reviewed as well as storage. Council Member Sturgess noted we are so far away from that. Council Member Cooper stated they are amiable to come up here.

Council Member Sturgess made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 10, and December 30 and January 8, 2026, meetings. The motion was seconded by Council Member Frasier. All board members were in favor of the motion: Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Walker, Frasier.

At 8:02 pm Supervisor Glenn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cooper. All board members were in favor of the motion: Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Walker, Frasier.

Submitted by Town Clerk

Linda Gilbert, RMC, CMC

General – voucher #'s 1 to 25 - \$22,137.98
Highway – voucher #'s 1 –to 9 - \$7,308.37
Prepaid - voucher #'s 1 to 23 - \$43,938.58
General Park voucher #'s 1 to 3 - \$546.04