

State of New York
County of Fulton
Town of Caroga

Minutes of the Caroga Town Board work session meeting held on June 9, 2026, commencing at 11:00 am at Town hall with the following board members in attendance by roll call.

Supervisor John Glenn - Here
Council Member Richard Sturgess - Here
Council Member Matthew Cooper - Here
Council Member Kimberly Walker Dailey- Here (aka Walker)
Council Member Greta Frasier – Here

Also in attendance were James Sullivan of NBT Bank, Roy Stock – Highway Superintendent, Anita Long – Secretary to the Comprehensive Planning Committee, Bookkeeper Joanne Young, and Randy Vascon. There were six (6) members of the public in attendance.

There were three things Supervisor Glenn wanted to discuss this morning. Bonding, the attorney compromise on the Falvo Property, and Bridge replacement.

RESOLUTION #2026-064 for the Caroga Town Board to approve the settlement of the tax certiorari proceedings under the caption of Northern Pine Cove LLC v. Assessor for the Town of Caroga. et.al. and to authorize the Town’s Council of record to execute said consent order and judgement on behalf of the Town was offered by Supervisor Glenn at the special Town Board meeting held on June 9, 2026 at 11 am.

WHEREAS; the town received notification of an electronic filing on July 29, 2025 at 11:10 am from Bond, Schoeneck & King PLLC in regards to litigation of the 2024 and 2025 Final Assessments of Northern Pine Cove LLC, and identified as SBL # 68.5-2-2 located in the Town of Caroga, now therefore be it

RESOLVED; that the Town Board hereby approves settlement of the tax certiorari proceedings currently pending in the Supreme Court, Fulton County, under the caption of Northern Pine Cove LLC v. Assessor for the Town of Caroga, et.al. (Index Nos. EF2024-11618 and EF2025-12568) based on the terms set forth in the Consent Order and Judgment, and hereby authorizes the Town’s counsel of record to execute said Consent Order and Judgment on behalf of the Town which shall revise the assessment to \$62,500.00 for the years 2024 and 2025, and which will remain in effect for the upcoming 2026, 2027, and 2028 assessment years.

Seconded by Council Member Sturgess

Adopted by a vote of five (5) Ayes: Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Frasier, Walker-Dailey

Mr. Sullivan gave the board his background information. He is on the council in Brunswick in Rensselaer County. He has farmed 200 acres had 30 beef cows. When his town constructed its new highway barn they met every two weeks.

Mr. Sullivan explained the way that municipalities borrow money. They can bond or there are BANs bond anticipation notes which can be issued for up to five years. Usually, it is done for one or two years until you get the total cost of what you are building. He did not recommend taking out all the funds at one time – why pay the interest on that. You may borrow half or two thirds the first year. Then you go out and get a long term (29 year) bond. He talked about the life of a building that determines how long you can borrow for. Stick built/renovations – 20 years, steel – 30, brick/stone about 30 or longer.

Council Member Sturgess asked how do you let the taxpayer know the cost? Council Member Sturgess estimated borrowing 4 million dollars. They are currently lending at 3.5%. Council Member Walker asked if there was a payoff number, Mr. Sullivan stated if paid off early would be at a ¼ % higher cost. The cost per would be \$140,000.00 per year - \$70,000 in interest and \$135,000.00 on the loan. It was stated that the interest rate is locked in on the bond. BANs reset each year.

The town currently has \$1.7m in the bank for the golf course project and another \$644,000 in code compliance funds from insurance. The town was already approved to bond \$1m for the highway garage by the voters.

The Town has to hire a bonding attorney and a financial advisor. Council Member Sturgess stated the advisor can't be hired unless the public approves this. In Mr. Sullivan's town the public had input during the public hearing, but the board made the decision. They did not put it out on a referendum.

The bookkeeper would not give the board a number off the top of her head. She noted the fund balance could not be used, it would not be sustainable. A fund balance won't last 30 years. It was noted the assessed value has been going up with all the new/renovations going up in town.

The three funds were noted, General which includes golf course, and Highway. The highway garage would be under the general fund as an expense the bookkeeper noted.

Mr. Sullivan asked if the town could come up with the \$300,000.00 per year for the payments. Mr. Sullivan gave out his business cards and welcomed calls with questions.

Anita Long asked Mr. Sullivan for his input on grant applications. Would NBT be involved and to what extent are separate projects/loans set up for the various components. Mr. Sullivan noted they can be separated, but he was not familiar with what grants would be available. NBT does lending on revenue anticipation notes. Anita Long noted the recent announcement of open grants as the budget was just passed. Mr. Sullivan noted state money used to be given upfront now you have to submit for reimbursement for the Consolidated Highway and Improvement Program (CHIPS) funding. They do revenue anticipation notes quite often.

Highway Superintendent Stock asked about bonding for a bridge project. Mr. Sullivan noted bridges are 95% reimbursable between federal and state. Sometimes the state will give you start up money. The bank would do some sort of revenue anticipation note. Mr. Sullivan replaced a bridge in their town and received reimbursement; he was not sure if that changed. Their bridge was flagged as ours is. There is a bridge ny website.

The board wanted to know what the cost would be for the taxpayers, so the bookkeeper went into her office to review the budget with the assessed value.

Randy Vascon of R & B Construction (518) 248-0493 works on bridges and was asked to attend this meeting by Mr. Stock. The bridges are not in great shape. The town has to start putting money away. They have been band aided forever. He started in the business in 1975 and with his own business in 2001. He mostly does repairs. He stated it takes forever to get state money for bridges. He sees a lot of waste with the state. An engineer should cost \$20,000.00 and with the state it would be \$250,000.00 and take five years. He put in a culvert in Amsterdam on Guy Park Ave. for \$300,000.00. A smaller culvert on Florida Ave. The construction was \$750,000.00. that did not include engineering. He has proof.

Mr. Vascon has not come before a board before and asked what the board wanted to know from him. Mr. Stock asked what the basic cost to repair the Cape Horn Bridge would be. The engineering was done by Andy Bell. The town has not gotten any prices for steel decking. it was stated that the railing is good and can be reused -a savings of \$20,000.00. First Mr. Vason stated the town has to get quotes for the steel, stringers and decking. He will work with the town/county. This will cut costs. We have equipment and manpower. He figured around \$200,000.00. He thought the bond should be around \$250,000.00 as you never know till you open it up. It has to be pressure washed and checked. He will give the town names of people to get quotes from. Get as many as you can. Check around for prices. Steel prices change a lot.

Council Member Sturgess asked Mr. Stock why Randy was here. So, we would know about capitol projects to bond. He is a contractor who would potentially bid on this project. Mr. Vascon had the Fulton County bridge contract for years. He lost it this year. So, he has helped communities figure this out. He noted that bonding for a job costs him 20% of the bid. If we call and say we have the materials on such a date the town can hire him to do the job. He has the contract in adjacent counties. He has two four men crews working.

Considering we have the plans, Council Member Sturgess stated should we get quotes and materials ordered then go out to bid on a contractor to do the work? He could have done the work last year. He did the railings a few years ago. The stringers are getting thin. The weight rating has been dropped so the bridge has a long expectancy. It is a 30-foot bridge.

Mr. Stock noted that \$89,000.00 was budgeted for the bridge last year for this year. We can buy the steel now and store it. Prices just keep going up like 4% every year. Council Member Sturgess noted we have 1/3 of the cost budgeted for this year and saw no point in going out for a bond. It was suggested to budget for the same amount for the next two years and just do it. That is the proper way to budget. It was noted the school is managing. It is an inconvenience. No one would hold Mr. Vascon to what he has said about our bridge.

Once the bridge is done the lifespan will be fifty years. Council Member Sturgess asked about preventative maintenance on the town's end. Mr. Vascon did the maintenance on the county bridges which hadn't been done. Every two or three years the bridges should be cleaned. Caroga doesn't use a lot of salt, but the sand is wet.

Council Member Sturgess suggested buying some of the materials budget for the next two years and then put it in.

Mr. Stock stated the bridge was red flagged. Council Member Cooper stated it was red flagged for the weight limit it had but when we dropped the weight limit.

The state inspects yearly and approved the rails last year but not the next year. Mr. Stock was told to go out and get quotes for the steel. It was noted that Steve Miller has the county bid this year.

Anita Long handed out a four-page document about exploring financing options for our capitol building projects. She noted that the town has amazing momentum. The state just announced the release of the consolidated funding grant. She recently attended a workshop in Utica. They were excited about what is going on in Caroga. Caroga is already pro housing certified. We have a Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant. There is momentum with the CAC 5M grant. Anita Long reiterated the \$1.7 m of funds from the fire which can be used for leverage for a grant. The pro shop is a recreational facility and community anchor. All these things make Caroga eligible and competitive for maybe multiple grants.

The grant application is due July 31st. Multiple grants can be applied for with one submission. There are 38 pages of questions. If you add on there will be more questions. This could be over a 100-page application.

Anita Long stated she was happy to volunteer for part of it. She does not think she has the ability to do all of it. A lot of questions require specificity. The plan has to be carved out. The club house should be separated from the town hall component. Some of the information can be pulled from the grant application done last year. She breaks down the grant like this:

Experience – quality of life

Economically - viable, jobs

Environment- golf course is environmentally friendly -100 years ago it was a tannery brownfield

Energy- show efficiency

Ms. Long noted any kind of state grant has a lot of rules and regulations. You can build into the budget a construction overseer, a grant contact, grant contract facilitator. These are reimbursable grants. The town pays for it and submits for reimbursement. Awards are around Christmas time. We could not start until next year. Anything spent before the grant contract is in place is not reimbursable.

One of the questions asks if the board has the capacity to do all these projects. Council Member Cooper asked about prioritizing the pro shop and town hall and maybe wait on the highway barn.

Questions need to be submitted to the state to see if we qualify for a community block grant. Ms. Long stated she would be happy to submit questions. She noted USDA, CFA, NY Parks, Empire State development and others have funding. This is an opportunity and a way to do this project right. It will be a challenge for the board.

Council Member Sturgess noted she can't do it all if the board says yes, what can the board do. Ms. Long suggested enlisting the help of CT Male. They do have a very good grant team.

Anita Long is willing to draft answers to the questions on the grant and will send them to the board for their input. A list will be made of items she needs help with. Mr. Manning will be contacted as he has written several successful grants for the Wheelerville Bike Trail.

It was noted that the Town of Caroga is on the poverty level list along with the adjacent cities of Gloversville and Johnstown which are all incorporated into our town's zip code areas.

The clerk thought Ms. Long was looking for this board to say they support this and will work with her on this process. Anita Long replied, "Yes." Council Member Cooper thought we needed to see if the grant writers at CT Male were available. Ms. Long wanted to know if they would contribute toward the document or if they were going to be the lead contact person as required if they are the ones to submit the application. You have to have all of these titles in place.

The clerk noted there are several people in the community who are retired and have experience with grants who may be able to contribute to this project. The clerk thought it was important to reach out to our community. Council Member Frasier noted the town is not unique in this process, all that are applying have the same deadline. It was stated that, no offense, but CT Male won't have the drive that Ms. Long does. She cannot be the one to make decisions on this. She would only be willing to be administrative. There has to be drawings and plans ready to drop into an application. Do we have that. Council Member Sturgess stated yes, we had them out last week.

The clerk noted they are not the final plans. "I have been saying all along what you have on paper right now still has to be tweaked, and you've told me it's going to be tweaked." There is a bathroom over the records room. "Absolutely not." Council Member Sturgess stated in the clerk's opinion. Council Member Sturgess we don't have the color of the walls we have the footprint. The clerk noted the engineers didn't put bathroom over bathroom, it saves money. That's engineering 101.

Anita Long supported the clerk on those types of things. Water should not be going over the records storage. Council Member Sturgess stated we do have something to present. Ms. Long noted we have to make the case this is shovel ready project. Between now and the end of the year it is upon the board to do all of the revisions, bid packets, and bonding ready for the beginning of January if they say yes, we are ready to go.

CT Male wanted to know what direction the board is going in as far as the three options discussed at the May 27th meeting. Council Member Sturgess said we were very close.

Council Member Frasier stated we have to ask for the full bond and then awarded money reduce what you bond.

Ms. Long, in talking to people, feels that people want to have the option to vote on this. Mr. Sullivan stated that can be good or bad.

Council Member Frasier noted this has to be broken down to what it is going to cost per household. The bookkeeper stated right now the general fund taxes per thousand are \$1.47. That is on a levy of \$241,000.00. It would be an additional \$1.53 per thousand on the assessed value. Council Member Sturgess noted that would be on a property assessed at \$100,000.00 it would be \$153.00 approx. a year. The total town tax rate was \$8.11 that would be \$9.64 per thousand for highway and general. That doesn't include any other changes to the budget. You would be doubling the general fund rate of this year.

The clerk asked Supervisor Glenn if he had any inkling of what the county budget was going to look like. Last year the county taxes went up by \$200.00 per town tax bill. Negotiations start at the beginning of August. The bookkeeper noted most of the county budget is state mandates. The clerk noted that one of the mandates went down.

Council Member Walker has been concerned about the effect on the taxpayers. Council Member Sturgess stated the increase would be \$153.00 for each hundred thousand dollars you are appraised at for thirty years. The budget director noted that there are fluctuations in other areas of the budget each year so you can't say you are keeping that tax rate. She noted assessed values can change hopefully up. That drops what you are paying per thousand if your assessed value is rising. If there is another million-dollar house added to the rolls the portion of taxes they pay decreases the amount of money need to do business.

The clerk asked if the budget officer had heard from the fire department. If they go to a fire district then they get dropped off our budget. Council Member Sturgess noted but that is not off the taxpayers back. The clerk noted that the public has the right to vote on that fire district budget, and they can say no.

Ms. Long is willing to work with CT Male but needs to have the board determine who is the lead contact for submitting the application. It will take a lot of time, and it should be a collaborative process. Council Member Frasier asked if there were people Ms. Long knew would help, perhaps form a committee. Ms. Long suggested Paul Frederick, Ralph Palcovic, Jeremy Manning.

Council Member Sturgess will contact CT Male today. Ms. Long is willing to draft out paperwork for the grant so the board can make a fully informed decision. She will have papers ready by next Friday and communicate by email as she will be out of town. Anita was thanks for her help. She noted the need for public meetings.

Another work session will be scheduled.

Supervisor Glenn noted he found papers to build a new highway garage back in 1960. He wants to move forward. If you go for a grant you have to be thorough and comply with what the state law is. If we continue with this momentum, it can get done.

Council Member Walker stated listening to this and learning how things are done has helped her with the options.

It was noted if the board goes forward, this has to get this on the ballot. The deadline is August 3, 2026. The wording needs to be worked out with the attorney, Ms. Long noted.

It was noted there is \$10,000.00 in the budget for grant writing.

A downside is that the pro shop won't be done this year. Council Member Sturgess did a recap of events for Mr. Kidder. Council Member Sturgess had hoped to be shovel ready by spring.

At 12:42 pm Council Member Sturgess made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Glenn. All board members were in favor of the motion Glenn, Sturgess, Cooper, Frasier, Walker.

Submitted by Caroga Town Clerk

Linda Gilbert, RMC, CMC