

Caroga News Flash

Town Board Meeting Highlights

June 8, 2022

TownOfCaroga.com contains all issues of the *Caroga News Flash*.

This monthly meeting at Town Hall and via zoom started at 6:00 PM and lasted 195 minutes.

Thirty minutes were spent in executive session discussing (1) legal issues (i.e., a letter from Wood, Seward, & McGuire LLP challenging Building Code Compliance) and (2) personnel issues (i.e., starting civil service proceedings with the full-time Code Officers and supporting Supervisor Horton's mid-year changes to the Bookkeeper, Budget Director, and Confidential Secretary).

The meeting included presentations about [Street Lighting](#) and [Capital Projects](#) (see transcripts). **Supervisor Horton said, "This project...is about redeveloping a community here...Hopefully, we could attract better people."** Regarding finances, he emphasized, "The plan is...to generate more revenue [with] 2 golf simulators." He insisted that his proposed banquet room must not be called a "banquet room." He also claimed, "There are no constraints with the insurance money" and later contrasted money "if we build or don't build." **Discussion bemoaned public confusion.** No one acknowledged *NYS General Municipal Law* for Capital Programs that require Towns to specify plans with: (1) a 6-year timeline, (2) ordered building priorities, (3) estimated budgetary costs, and (4) proposed financing methods (see www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/GMU/99-G).

Resolutions / Local Laws:

1. Capital Projects — To prepare site plans for 2022 construction of a Salt Storage Shed and Highway Garage on the 8-acre cell tower lot, the Board approved hiring Environmental Design Partnership (EDP) for a **cost not to exceed \$31,000.00** (5-0 vote). Discussion debated the dollar amount of the EDP work after Supervisor Horton provided an itemized list:

• lot survey with topo map	\$ 7,500.00
• wetland delineation	\$ 1,000.00
• site plan building sketch	\$10,000.00
• site plan for well and septic construction	\$15,000.00
• document preparation	<u>\$ 5,000.00</u>
	Total = <u>\$38,500.00</u>

Council Member Glenn added the numbers to: \$37,500.00

Council Member Sturgess added the numbers to: \$31,000.00 (The Board agreed with him.)

2. Town Hall — The Board approved additional spending for Town Hall emergency repairs. They voted to get quotes (estimated at \$5,800.00) to replace 1 of 3 heating boilers (5-0 vote). Initially, the Supervisor proposed getting bids (estimated at \$20,000.00) for heating / cooling in the meeting and court rooms. Discussion debated the "gamble" of putting money into Town Hall before a new building voter referendum vs. the risks of avoiding repairs and using illegal propane space heaters when the rooms had no other heat for the past six months.

3. Caroga Tourism —

- Accepted resignations of two CTC members with regrets and our thanks (5-0 vote)
- Made CTC a 5-member group rather than a 7-member group (5-0 vote)
- Appointed Diana Ackerknecht to fill the vacant CTC position ending 12/31/2025 (5-0 vote)

4. Golf Course — Tabled setting special promotional golf rate on Mondays and Wednesdays. Discussion debated the authority of the Board vs. the Golf Manager to set rates and prices.

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5. Budget Transfers — (5-0 vote)

\$ 50.00 To: A1920.4 Munic Assoc Dues Contractual Expenses From: A1620.4 Contractual Expenses
\$5,000.00 To: A5132.4 Garage Contractual Expenses From: A1990.4 Contingency
\$4,000.00 To: DA5142.4 Snow Removal Contractual From: DA9050.8 HWY Unemployment

6. Miscellaneous —

- Approved donating 4 rounds of golf with 2 carts to the Caroga Museum fundraiser (5-0 vote)
- Paid bills as presented for audit (5-0 vote)
- Approved minutes from the 5/11/2022 and 5/20/2022 meetings (5-0 vote)

Announcements:

- ❖ Primary Election for State-Local Races: June 28, 2022 from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM
- ❖ Fire Co. Auxiliary BBQ at Campers' Corner (\$15 tickets): July 16 from 12:00 noon to 3:00 PM
- ❖ The Town Yard Sales and Sherman's Car Show: July 30 (See Clerk to register for Yard Sale)
- ❖ Wheelerville Bike Trail Event with riding, competitions, vendors, and music: August 20 and 21
- ❖ Caroga Bridge Club: July and August Thursdays 12:30 PM
- ❖ Wash Your Boat: It's the Law. Effective June 8, NYS Environmental Conservation Law for Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention requires all motorized watercraft to have clean-drain-dry certification before each launch. Caroga's Free Boat Wash Station is across from Town Hall.

Next Public Meetings:

Work Session: Friday, June 24, 2022 10:00 AM at Town Hall (no zoom)

Monthly Board Meeting: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 6:00 PM at Town Hall

June 2022 Street Lighting Project Presentation (Verbatim Transcript)

Scott Horton, Caroga Supervisor

In March or April of 2020, we looked at this as an opportunity to save the taxpayers a significant amount of money but also a way in which to improve our environment here in Town. So, we contracted with Real Term Energy. They are an engineering firm based in Toronto who does a lot of work in the Northeast. A friend of mine is an architect up in Maine, and they did several projects for them and all over New York State. They worked with us, and we said to them, "You know, why don't we take this money. We've got the funding for it, and the budget was \$120,000.00. Seven years was the payback of the project."

Originally, we had 165 lights. We said, "This is ridiculous! The taxpayers are paying too much to light the state highways!" Interestingly enough, I went to the airport a few days ago, and I looked at major intersections that had no street lights. I said, "This is really something. I think we're on the right path." So, we asked the design firm about eliminating lights. And with the Town Center area, thinking that's going to be revitalized into a vibrant area, see if we can maybe put 6 decorative lights in the Town Center that would be more attractive than the regular cobra-head lights. We talked to them about the kind of light and the color of the light as a yellowish white or a bright white light. They've designed this project, and we have maps outside of the Town Clerk's office, if anybody would like to see it. On these maps, we have the lights we want to eliminate [orange dots] and the ones to convert to LED [letter "C"].

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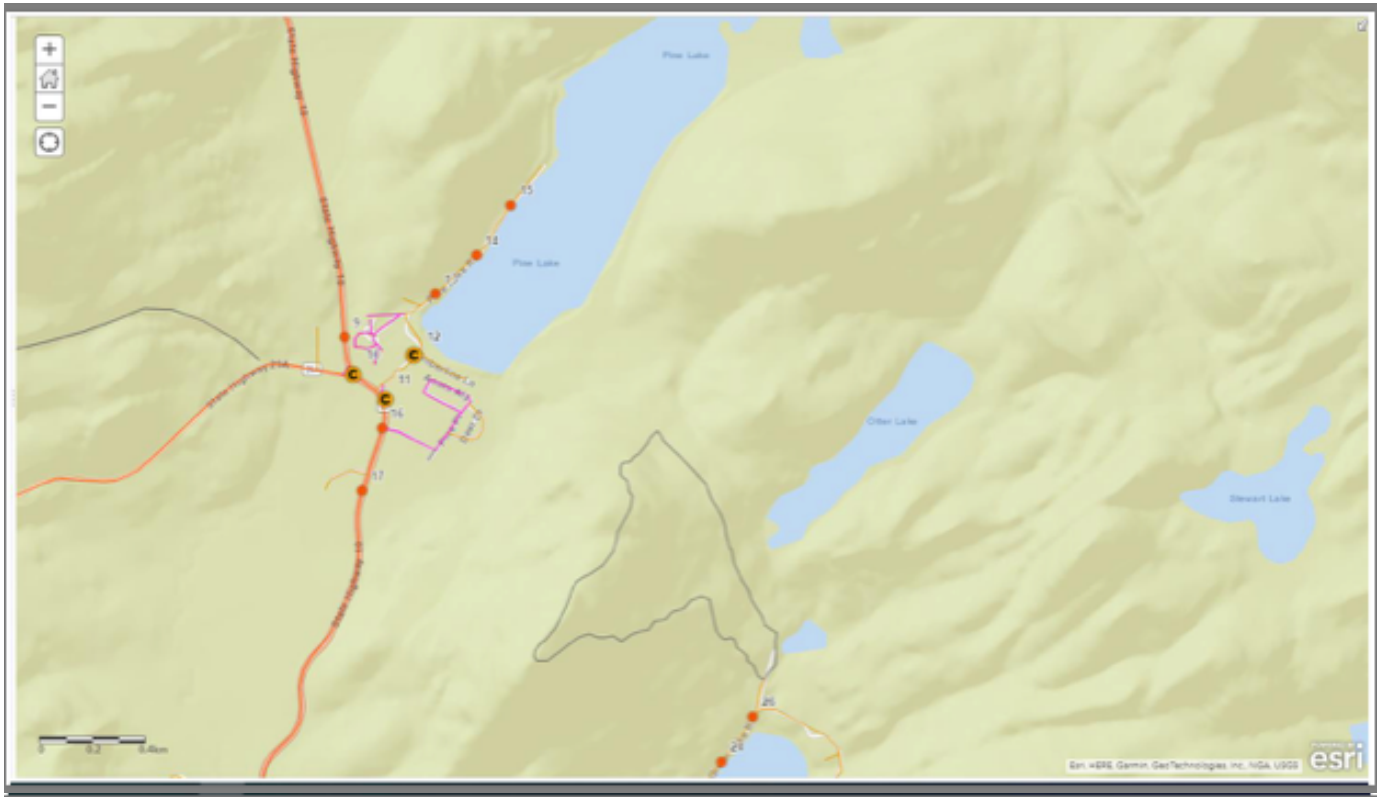
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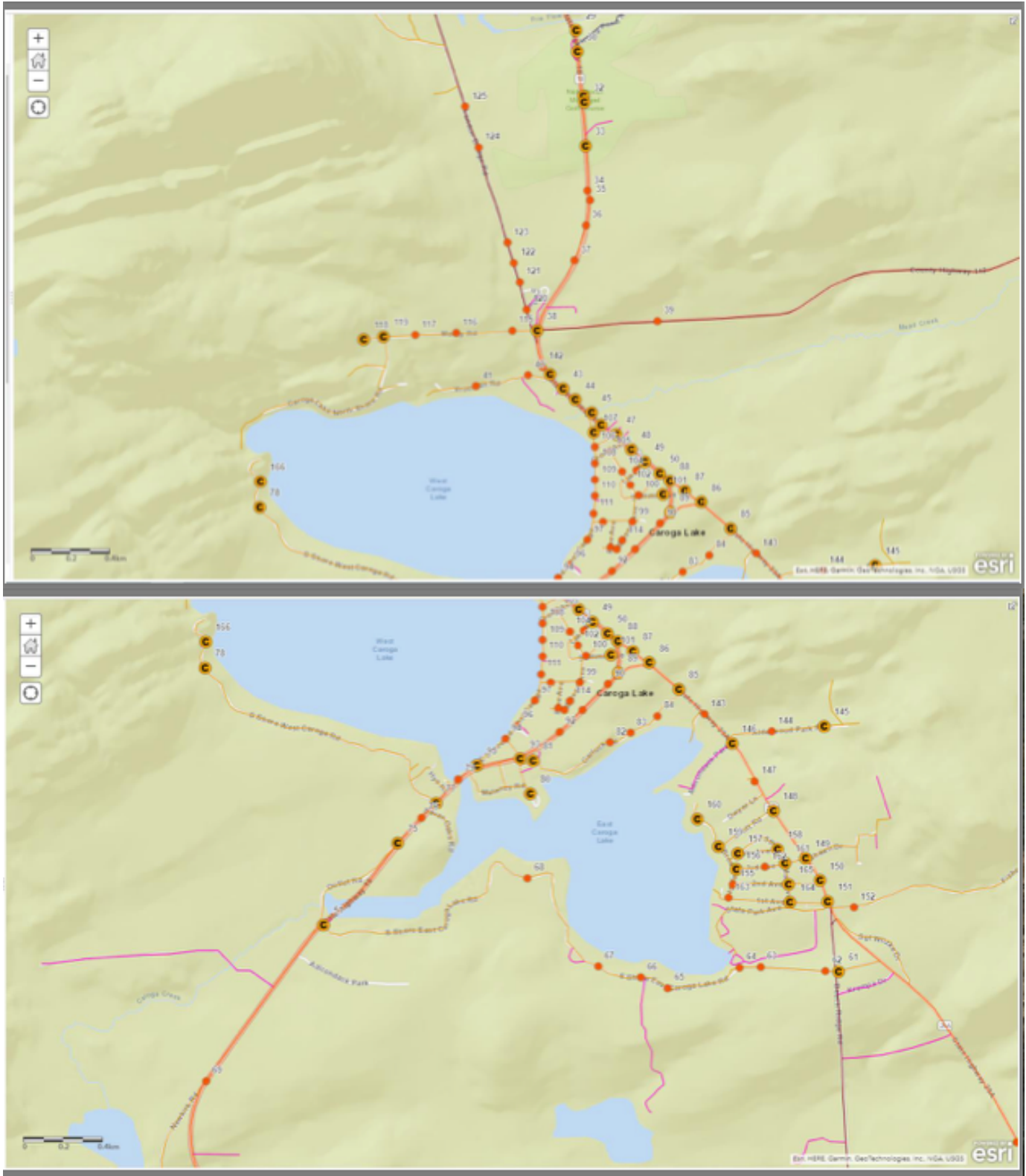
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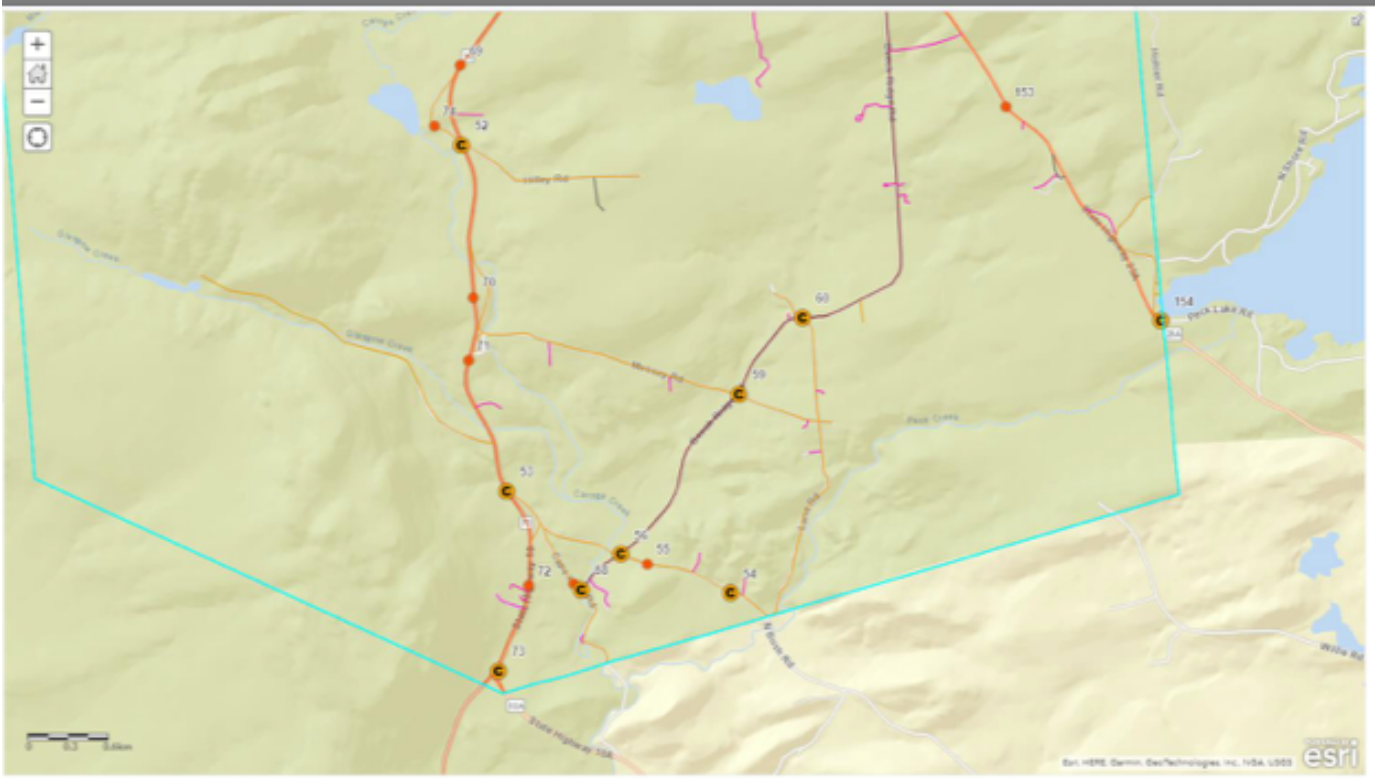
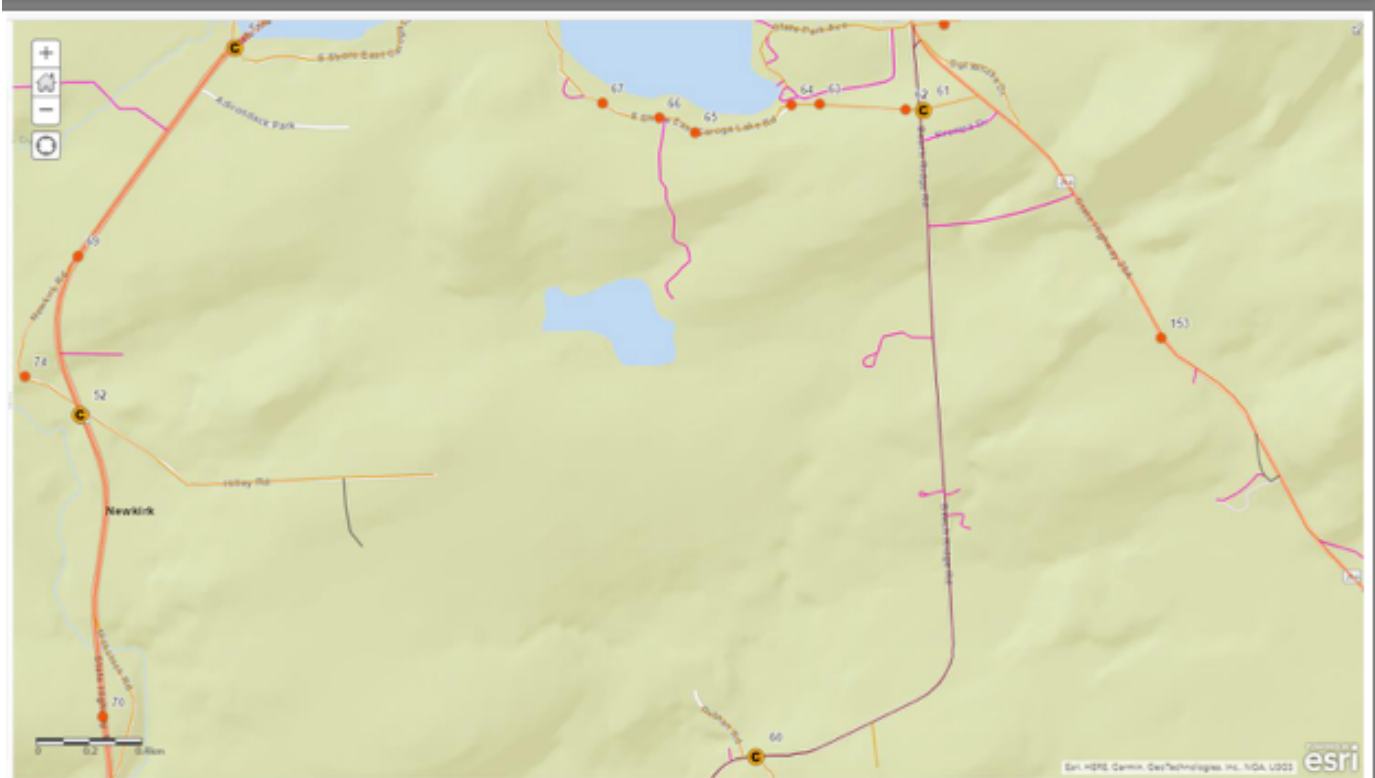
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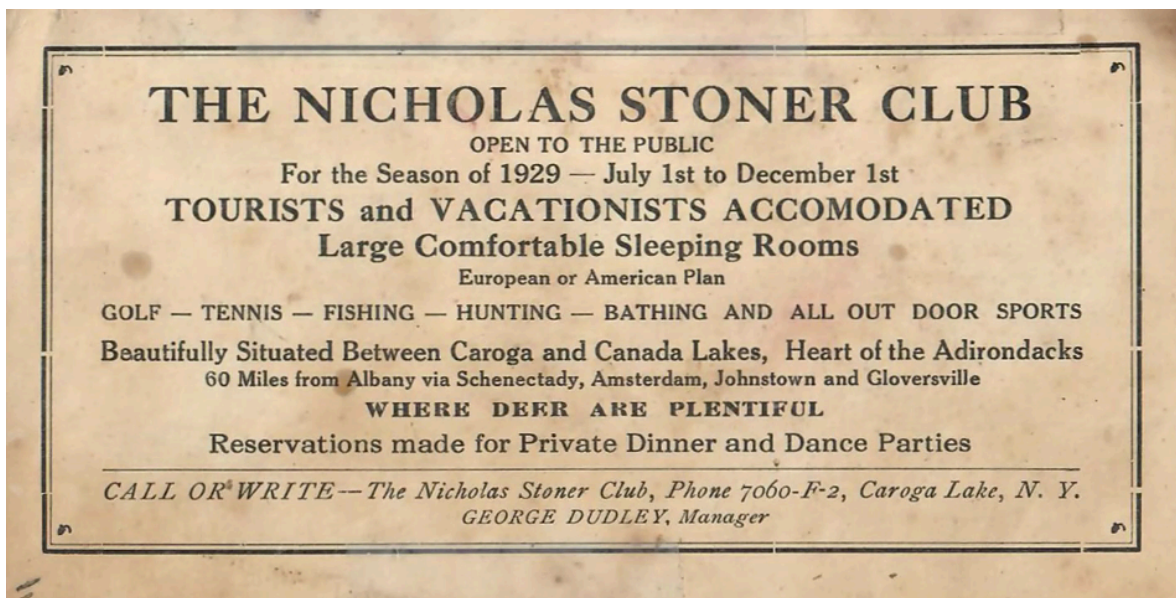
June 2022 Club House Presentation #3 (Verbatim Transcript)

Scott Horton, Caroga Supervisor

There's been a lot of interest in this project that we're looking at. We had a devastating fire of this old Club House. It used to be offices for the Wheelerville Tannery. What I want to do is say that the Town has spent a lot of time and effort, and I want to go over the project. We've heard a lot of things that are not really accurate. A little later on I'll talk about the insurance settlement. Today, we finally came to a point where we know what the settlement's going to be.



Nick Stoner Municipal Golf Course Ca. 1930s



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There's the fire back on November 15, 2020. It was the first year of my first term on a freezing cold day.



Nick Stoner Municipal Golf Course Clubhouse Fire—November 15, 2020

This is the rendition from the Phinney Group that we're looking at proposing.



Caroga Lake Municipal Center Town Hall and Golf Course Clubhouse Second Story

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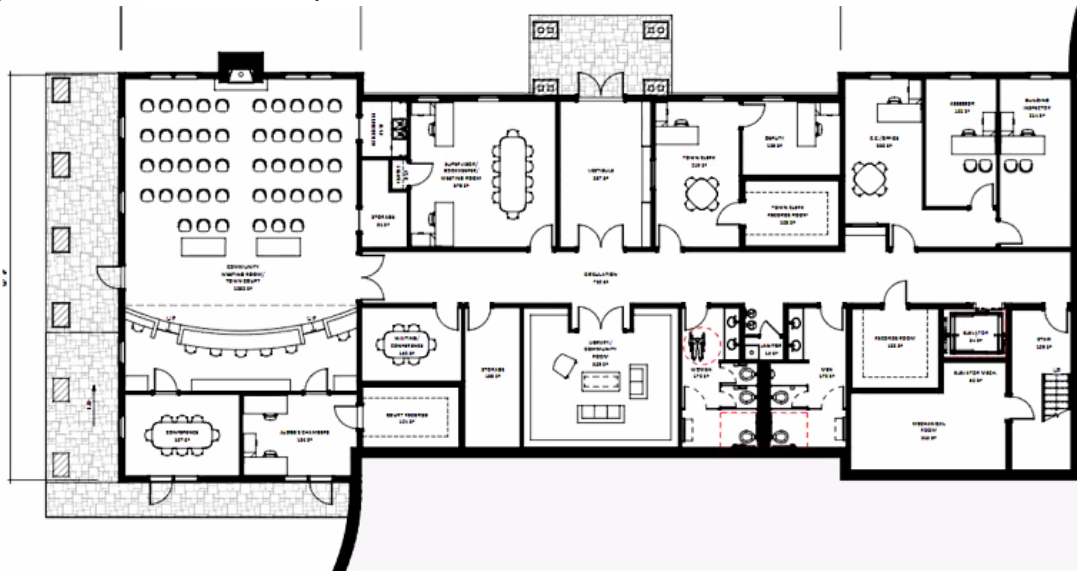
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I want the public to know that this project is rather comprehensive, but it's a vision. It is a vision that could bring an awful lot of pride to the Town. It would get rid of the Highway Garage there on the site. Wheelerville is just a beautiful little area of Town. This would be the northside elevation. If you were coming from Canada Lake and coming down the hill coming into Wheelerville, this is what you'd see. The new Town Hall is here in the bottom of this two-story building, and then the Club House on the top. Next, this would be the layout of the Town Hall building. We're basically looking at 6700 square feet versus over 10,000 square feet in the building that we currently occupy. We combined the meeting room and the Judge's courtroom into one facility that can serve both purposes. State Law requires that a Judge's chambers have a separate entrance, that there be a meeting room for any accused individual to talk with a lawyer, and those facilities are in the bottom left there. Just to the right of the main entrance into the Courtroom / Meeting Room, there's a little meeting room that could also be used for the public. Across the hall, the main entrance is on the top. The functionality is much, much better. You will have the Town Clerk's office on the one side, and the Supervisor's office on the other side. All of the office space has been reduced in size, other than the Town Clerk. If anybody's been to the Town Clerk's office, you know why we couldn't reduce the size of that. It had to be expanded a little bit. Like my office is about 900 square feet, and here we're down to about 200. We designed because of the public. There's an awful lot of people that enjoy the library here in Town, so the architect put in a little library. The library would obviously have bookshelves in it, and there would also be a table. People could come there. Maybe even a computer could be available for somebody to use. When we talked to the architect about this, I said that we want as much public space and use of this building as possible. So, we put that in there. Then we also put in the far right another meeting room. Across the hall is Codes and the Sole Assessor with private areas so that people can talk about things that are private. We wanted to have that space. We also have better record storage, and the record storage of course would be fire proof and water tight. So, that's the floor plan. Like I said, 6700 square feet versus the over 10,000 that we have now.



PHINNEY

CAROGA MUNICIPAL CENTER

LEVEL 1 - TOWN HALL

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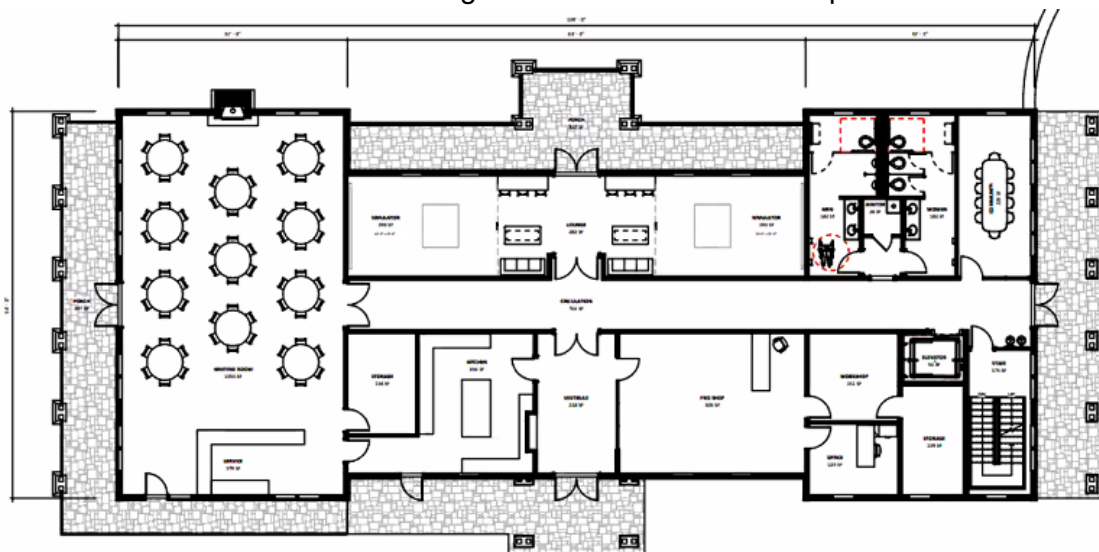
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Now, if you were driving North coming out of the Caroga Lake area and coming up and going past the Golf Course, this would be the elevation that you would see. Again, it's all on the same level, so there's no handicapped issues. It's a much lower profile from this direction. This is the Club House area.



Nick Stoner Municipal Golf Course Clubhouse Entrance South Elevation From the 9th Hole

We had some long talks about the Club House and what it could be versus what we've had before. The main entrance is obvious. There would be a circular drive. Right now you see grass in the rendition, but we would have a circular drive that would come around there. People could drive there to drop off their bags and go in and get their playing ticket and then park in the parking lot, which would be both to the north side and to the east side of the building. And then here is the floor plan.



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LEVEL 2 - GOLF CLUBHOUSE

A3

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The plan is designed to do several things. One of them is to generate more revenue.

We know that the small course for years and years has just managed to get by. It didn't even get by well enough where it could support purchasing new equipment in a timely fashion. That's just not sustainable. You would have to go to the taxpayers, as the Town has done, to get this money. I think that the Golf Course should not only be self-sustaining but it also should be a source of extra revenue. **The only plausible way that I thought we can do this is to put in two golf simulators.** You can see that on the top near the main entrance. There are two golf simulators. They are extremely profitable.

The meeting room on the left would be a meeting room. Some people called it a "banquet room". I think I called it that initially, but it wasn't. That projected a connotation that we were going to have food service. We're not having food service. There's a kitchen there. But that is a service kitchen only. This room would hold maybe a 100 guests. I envision that being used for outings and for anniversaries, birthdays, celebrations. **People could come up, and they could rent that space at low cost, but it would bring additional revenue in some fashion or another.**

In the winter time, I'm sure of the simulators. It can be golf simulators, or you can throw baseballs or softballs. They have all kinds of programs. It's something else. And then we have an idea that we're trying to put this together, but basically, there's additional revenue that would bring to the Town somewhere around \$100,000.00. **So, you could imagine what \$100,000.00 a year would do in helping to pay off the debt for the capital cost to build this.**

I think what's the most exciting part of this is that the Town pride that would come from having a beautiful facility like this. Hopefully, we could attract better people. I mean, we really need younger people in this Town to come up. You know, they bring a lot of energy with them. They put children in the seats of the school. We've been thinking about this. It isn't just a building. **This project isn't just a facilities project. It is about redeveloping a community here.**

It's long range. The idea is to make it long range and to make it the cheapest option that we have. That's it. So, that's the Club House. I will open it up to the public, if it's ok with the Board to get feedback.

Question: So, you said \$100,000.00 in revenue. Is that from the Golf Course or the simulators?

Supervisor: It's kind of a combination between the simulators that we'd open year-round. You know, the Club House was always shut down six months out of the year. That's ridiculous! We're now paying people to be here. We should be using it. So, we'll be getting revenue from that. I think that's actually on the low side. I think that the attractiveness of this facility is extremely important. I would just like people to think back to two years ago. They thought I was out of my mind for changing how we're going to be doing business on the Golf Course. You know, I thought I was going to get thrown out of Town before I got through one year of office. And we brought in \$50,000.00 more [from carts], just by making some smart business changes. This is the same kind of project. I envision this Town being a destination. We can see the change. People tell me that they already see changes. The highways are better. But a facility like this, it would get the extra revenue from play on the Golf Course, from outings at the Golf Course which are very profitable. We have a short season, and we need those outings. We have some major outings, but we could have a lot more. If we just have this accommodation, and the rental obviously with the room for special events and parties and things like that.

Question: So, \$100,000.00 a year, you're saying?

Mr. Sturgess: It's an estimate. Until it's there, you don't really know. You have a place holder, you know?

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Question: What is the Golf Course bringing in now?

Supervisor: Right now about \$240,000.00. It should be bringing in around \$500,000.00. That's potential.

Question: Talk about that big room on the left. You said there's no food service. How would that work?

Supervisor: The food service could be catered, but the Town is not going into the restaurant business.

Question: Can you have a liquor license?

Mr. Sturgess: They would probably get a special use permit or a special day permit. Don't quote me on that. I'm not sure exactly how that would work with Town liability and their liquor license. I'm sure there's a way to do it, but I'm not 100% certain.

Supervisor: I do know from past experience, we've approved off-premises liquor licenses. CAC had one. As far as insurance, I have to check. The insurance company has no issues with this whatsoever.

Question: I didn't see a site plan. Do you have any kind of site plan?

Supervisor: We do have a site plan. Unfortunately, I don't have it available right now.

Mr. Shekerjian: It's very outdated, Scott.

Supervisor: The new building will be just to the south of the existing Highway Department Garage. There's more environmental factors involved in this. I can get in the weeds a little bit. I'll try not to be too detailed. What we wanted to do is we wanted to have a nice buffer between the creek and the parking area and provide for that. We may also need some sort of water retention pond. That creek next to it feeds Canada Lake, as everybody knows. We really want to check that. I'm so happy to get that salt shed out of there. We already had to buy a house because of a contaminated well. I don't think we need to have any more environmental issues over there. By the way, the old salt shed will be converted over to the maintenance and cart storage facility for Steve and his crew at a very reasonable cost. So, you would have parking in the rear, which would service the Town Hall, and then there's a set of stairs. We have to have a couple retaining walls. We have the elevation from here to here, and then there would be a set of stairs that would go up to come into the Club House. There will be some parking as well. We won't have to do anymore parking on the road, which has been a complaint since day one, I think. And then we also have parking for the golf carts. There's an insurance thing that we've been dealing with. I'm in the weeds again. The insurance company does not like to see the comingling of parking and traffic with the carts and automobiles. We all know that we cheat a little bit on that. But here we have a separate area for the staging of the golf carts. It's extremely handsome. The Town Barn is just a disaster.

Question: In the Town Hall part of the building, you characterize the square footage as more here than in the new building. It looks like the Club House would have an expanded area. Right?

Supervisor: It is a little bit. I think we've gone from 5,000 to 6,700. It's a little bit less upstairs because of the porch, and if you take the porch out of it.

Ms. DeLuca: When the designer was here, he said that the whole building was about 17,000 square feet.

Question: Highway Barn. When you take that down, where will it go?

Supervisor: Down the road here about a tenth of a mile off the highway, where the cell tower is. Eight acres of that was alienated some time ago. I've forgotten the date. We can use that. We can put the salt shed there. We don't have any environmental issues. If we have oil spills and stuff like that, we're not going to have stuff go into the creek and into Canada Lake.

Question: So eventually you're going to put a new Town Barn over in that cell tower area?

Supervisor: Yes. We have a real problem with the Town Barn. A lot of people don't realize this. The Highway Department is an emergency department at times. They have to get out with snow. They're considered emergency vehicles. With the current facility that's 70 years old, if the first piece of equipment

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can't get out, then the rest can't get out. There's one door. There's a door on the side, but that's not functional for moving equipment in and out. **These new pre-engineered buildings are not very expensive. Maybe about \$800,000.00 for what we would need. It would be about 40 feet deep to accommodate the equipment, and you would have five bays, and then there would be a shed at the very end for the garbage truck. The garbage truck can't be inside an enclosed space. So, that has to be outside. So, it would have a shed roof. Then to the right of that would be the salt storage facility. So, we're thinking of a linear design going from the left to the right it would be about 100 feet long and 40 feet deep with a small office area and obviously a bathroom. Further to the east would be a shed area and a 30 x 40 salt shed.**

Question: **Do you have any plans drawn up yet [for the Highway Garage and Salt Shed]?**

Supervisor: No. We're going to probably have some fairly soon on that. It's not going to knock your socks off, but it's going to work. Basically, what you're going to have is just a corrugated metal building with a lot of garage doors in it and an office area, with a shed roof that goes to the back. It's just for utility.

Mr. Travis: Heating it now costs \$11,000 a month.

Supervisor: The new one will cost about \$1,000.00 a month to heat.

Question: Can the combined Club House and Town Hall be built with money that the Town has or from the insurance settlement or is it going to require a vote for borrowing?

Supervisor: It's going to require a vote of the citizens. I hate it. I have numbers. They're not to the tenth decimal place. We're still looking for any grant funding that we can get. In a nutshell, here it basically is.

If we did the whole thing, it would be like \$10,000,000.00.

We're hoping not to have to borrow more than \$5,000,000.00.

We looked at bonding, and a large majority of that would be paid for by saving on energy, maintenance. We've got deferred maintenance. Our current facilities are in deplorable condition.

If anybody came in here, if you have a sense of smell, you can sense the mold. It's been bad a long time.

Question: What would happen to the current Town Hall?

Supervisor: It's an extremely attractive site. It has fantastic water. It has a leach field. I think it would be an ideal site for an Adirondack-Style Inn. We would lease the property and not sell it. We get \$1,000.00 a month for the property that Nathan Littauer is using. That's something I negotiated. I think that we could probably get \$35,000.00 or more a year for leasing this property. Then think about the tax revenue. Most inns do not have restaurants in them. They may have a place like a coffee shop. People staying there would go to local restaurants that desperately need business in the winter time. The snowmobilers would come to play and party across the way here. I think doing something like that would enhance economic activity from the Golf Course. The way we've got this planned out, it would bring about \$2,000,000.00 or so a year. It's taxable revenue. Maybe \$40,000.00 of that goes to the Town. So, there's another \$40,000.00 that helps offset costs. I want to have a long-range plan to reduce taxes.

It was a little under \$1,000,000.00 about 20 years ago to build a Town Hall.

Now, if we add a Town Hall to this Club House structure, we're talking around \$2,500,000.00.

If we build a separate brand new Town Hall, we're talking about \$3,750,000.00.

So, I'll give you the plan and the best projections I can, but it's going to be the taxpayers that save.

Is that \$100.00 a year in extra taxes worth it, so that you're not paying \$200.00 extra down the pike?

That's not my call. That's my point.

Question: Is there a timeline you're looking at for this project? Are there constraints on insurance money?

Supervisor: **There are no constraints with the insurance money.** I heard people say, "The insurance company is holding us hostage." The insurance company is not holding us hostage. We're negotiating.

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I just shared with Councilman Sturgess. We just finally got to a point where we know what's being **offered to us by the insurance company**. It's been a series of negotiations.

We started out at \$1,400,000.00, initially right after the fire.

We're now over \$3,000,000.00.

So, I think that we've done a pretty good job for the taxpayers. It takes time. I know there's been frustration on the public's part. Why can't you go faster? Well, it's not that I'm trying to squeeze every drop out of this lemon, but we have a policy. We want to make sure that we get everything. Just as an example, the first settlement offer was for a stick-built structure. That's not what we lost. We lost a post-and-beam structure. So, we went back, and that resulted in \$350,000.00 increase in the settlement amount. Those are the things we've been working on. We had horrible records on some of our equipment. It took a lot of negotiating, but we were able to get that. The temporary clubhouse was all paid for by the insurance company, and it's ours at the end. They're not taking that back. So, it was a horrible loss. It's very difficult.

Question: Does the building include a sprinkler system?

Supervisor: Yes. If the Town approves putting the Town Hall in this building, then it requires a sprinkler. It's about \$185,000.00.

Question: Are you considering solar for the building to provide supplemental or complete power?

Supervisor: We did take a quick look at it. We think that the esthetics of the solar panels and that the trade-off for doing that wouldn't be worth it. This will be a brand new structure. It's going to be very, very well insulated. It will only be a fraction of the cost to heat it. Obviously, any heat loss through the ceiling area of Town Hall goes into the structure up above in the Club House. So, we looked at it briefly, and we didn't know how we could do that. It's an Adirondack feel and it's situated in that direction, but no. We looked at it, and we decided against it.

Question: You say that this has to go to the voters? Have you done any kind of survey or polling to find out if there's resistance to this or support?

Supervisor: I think with a project like this, we automatically assumed that there would be a lot of questions. We have not done polling. There's so many things you can do, but everything you do costs money. We're trying to save everything we can. Right now the plan is to go out into the community. I'll be addressing the West Caroga Lake Association. This forum here is a good forum. I want to do another public presentation, probably some other place in a larger room. When I do it, I would like to have the numbers a little bit better. Right now we have a pretty good idea on costs, but we don't have a good idea.

We know that to bring this building up to speed (and still be old) would approach \$2,000,000.00.

For \$500,000.00 more, you can get a brand new Town Hall that's smaller and energy efficient.

There's no insulation here, except the asbestos in the basement.

So, then we also lose the ability to have revenue and to improve the appearance of Town Hall.

I think that when the whole program comes out, I think that the question people need to ask is:

Do you want to roll the dice and hope we don't have a catastrophe pending,

or do you want to have a slight tax increase that's going to go down year after year?

Do you want to have the Wheelerville area a gorgeous part of Town and bring community pride?

I digress too much, but we have an old Fire House down here. The Fire Company decided that they were not going to renovate that 70 year old Fire House. They were going to build a brand new Fire House. They did. There were some amenities added to it to make it a little bit more attractive. I can tell you that when I drive by, I look at it and I say, "This is beautiful!" That was \$2,500,000.00 for the new Fire House.

Mr. Sturgess: It's a shell, basically.

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Ms. DeLuca: Ah, I have a few things I'd like to say, if you wouldn't mind, with regard to the Fire House.

Supervisor: Well, as soon as I finish. Ok. So, I think that it's reasonable. Like you can say about the Capitol, it's the People's House for the Town of Caroga.

Mr. Shekerjian: Scott, you've got another virtual question. Do you want to take it?

Supervisor: Councilwoman DeLuca?

Ms. DeLuca: A couple of things. The Fire House building is beautiful — absolutely beautiful. For those of you that don't know this, I was the Fire Chief for 18 years. I wrote the original RFP (Request for Proposal) for the new building down there. One of the reasons that we had to build that building is because we couldn't walk between trucks in this old building here. It was not compliant with the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association). The Fire Company has to be compliant with the NFPA, and we were out of compliance. It became too small for us. We had to build a new station. There wasn't enough land there. It's all rock in the back requiring blasting. It would have been outrageous. That's the reason we built down here. But I wrote that RFP in 2006. The RFP is Request for Proposal; it's what we want in this new building. It changed drastically over that period of time. A couple of things to compare.

- That building down there is not a "shell." It's all compliant, and it's all well used.
- **The square footage on that Fire House is just under 10,000 square feet. This building that is proposed here is almost two times the size of the Fire House. It's almost 2X: almost double.**
- In that Fire House, we have 8 offices, a full kitchen, a meeting room, and a truck bay that holds 8 pieces of apparatus, a boat, and a trailer. The square footage is just under 10,000.
- So, it's a perspective thing. When we were building that building, we looked at it. They laid it out for us, and we saw how big it actually was. **That's when we started to scale down. We looked at wants and needs. We tried to build that building without a huge impact on the taxpayers.** I think that we did a really good job of it, because we haven't raised our fire contract very much in the last 10 years since we started the work on this building.
- **I think that it's important that people understand 17,000 square feet and how big that is.** It's twice the size of the Fire House. If you've been inside that Fire House, you know it's pretty big.
- So, the other thing that I wanted to say is, to answer your question, "Have we done any studies or polls?" I'm out in the community, and I'm listening to voters and to taxpayers. **The response to the building and some of the plans is not as favorable as you would like it to be.** It's just things that people are saying — things that voters are saying that I've heard. I want to bring this to the Board. For example, they say that we don't need a kitchen. We don't need a catering kitchen. We don't need a banquet room. It's being perceived that the Town is going to get into the restaurant business [when golf outings have been done up to now by local restaurants]. There may be some conflicts with regard to taking this on. These are the things that people are asking about.

Supervisor: Councilman, how do you respond when people say that? You know the facts.

Ms. DeLuca: I tell them. I tell them that it is there for all of the businesses to use. People still don't like it.

Supervisor: Do you tell them that it's an emergency shelter?

Ms. DeLuca: Well, I didn't know that until yesterday when I talked with you that it's an emergency shelter.

Supervisor: It's pretty obvious. You know the rules. You know that there cannot be an emergency shelter in a Fire House. Correct? You know that?

Ms. DeLuca: Yes. I do.

Supervisor: So, I think what's incumbent on all of us when people have these questions. I'm not saying that this isn't expensive. I think it's the cheapest option. We're going to try to lay that out for the public. But we have to be honest with people. I don't want to tell you that it's going to cost you this amount of money. We still haven't gotten to that final stage. I'm not sure if one of your points was that the Fire House was per square foot maybe it was less money than what this is, and when it was built vs. today?

Ms. DeLuca: No. I'm just talking about the actual size of the building.

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Supervisor: But the footprint is 10,000 square feet. And the footprint of this is 6700 square feet. It's just that it's two stories, which is where the savings comes to the taxpayers. It's like comparing a Maserati to a Yugo. They're two different buildings with two different functions and two different spaces. My point just is that I think it's a gorgeous building. I think of the utility of it and the safety it brings to the community. That building versus what we had before brings community pride. I mean, I love this Town. I don't do this job because I have nothing else to do. I do it because I love the Town. I see the potential. When I came back here 15 years ago, and it looked the same or worse than when I left, I said, "I can't believe it!" We've got all of these lakes. We've got all of these things. We see property values. The auction. A place that should have gone for \$5,000.00 to \$6,000.00 went for \$52,000.00. We are on this cusp, and we've got a lot of things to deal with, but the most important part of my job is watching the Town's finances and to try to prepare for long-term tax savings and to get rid of this up and down thing with taxes. It's not the right way.

Mr. Sturgess: Barb, I wanted to share a quick story with you about what happened on Saturday. I was with an extremely reputable businessman, who has been in business for well over 30 years. He came up to me, and I was standing out in front of my store. He said, "Rick, I've got a question for you. Maybe you could clarify or answer for me." So, I said, "Ya. Sure. What's going on?" He said, "I'm hearing the skuffle-buffle, or whatever, the drama, I guess, that the insurance company is holding 95% of the Town's money, and it hasn't received any of the money." I said, "That is 100% not the case." This is what I'm getting at with you, Barb. Most of this stuff that people are saying is not true whatsoever. Ok? Then he came back with another one. He said, "Well, I also heard that the insurance company is telling you that if you do not build a new Town Hall that we're not going to give you the insurance money that's owed to you." I said, "That's not the case either." You can't move forward until you have a plan. This is up to the voters. Ok? Everything that we're doing right now is up to the voters. That's the beauty of America. That's why I wanted to sit up here. I wanted to know that the vote makes a difference. If the voters say, "No. We have to try Plan Two," how do we improve this Town without asking the voters if we can? If we can't ask them, "Do you want to improve this Town?" without a plan set in place, then we can't just say, "Hey, guys, do you want to spend \$5,000,000.00? We're going to build you a beautiful building." No. We have to get everything set in stone, and it's not like it takes a month to do it. It takes months and years.

Ms. DeLuca: I get how long it takes.

Mr. Sturgess: It took you, what, 14 years?

Ms. DeLuca: Yes.

Mr. Sturgess: So that's what I'm trying to get at. When people come up to you, and they say this stuff to you. They don't understand that behind the works that happens. It's extremely frustrating that people don't get how much stuff happens behind the scenes just to get something to the public to say, "Hey, do you want to invest in your community, or do you not want to invest in your community?" You are fortunate that you guys didn't have to go to the public for a vote. You guys didn't have to say, "Hey, Joe, do you want to vote for this or not?" No. You guys are a private entity. Nobody can tell you, "No." **Voters can tell us, "No." That's why we have to make sure everything we're putting in front of them is as close to facts as you can possibly get it, so that it doesn't get side tracked and spun a hundred different ways. You know? That's kind of what I'm getting at. What I hear is just asinine. It's asinine!**

Ms. DeLuca: **My motivation to speak up is that a lot of people don't understand what your plan is.**

Mr. Sturgess: Because the plan is still: the plan is what we're telling the public. We told you! I mean, how many more times, Barb, do we have to tell you about the **banquet room? We're not getting into the restaurant business!** We have not hired Mazzone Catering to come and sit in that banquet room! You should have the answer! The answer is, "No! That's not what we're doing!" It still keeps coming back that we're going into the catering business! We're NOT doing that! I hear it every single day!

Supervisor: It was the opposite. It was to provide an opportunity.

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Supervisor: One of the tenements [sic, tenets] that I have in my administration — and what I want to do — is I don't want our businesses in Town to have to rely on the summer traffic in order to just survive. That's wrong. That's not good. It's not healthy for the community. It's just not. What we'd like to see is that we'd like to see our local businesses and support our local businesses and have an economy here in Town where they can stay in business all year round and that when the summer crowd comes, that is just an additional opportunity for them to do well and get rewarded. As a small business person, I know this well. And I want to put kids in the seats in the school. I do. This and the sewer program that we've been talking about. When I came into office, there were no plans for this Town. None. Zero.

Ms. DeLuca: Hopefully, the meetings that you are going to have with the Town will inform the voters better so that they will have a better idea of what's going on. Right?

Supervisor: Well, I'm going out.

Mr. Sturgess: Maybe you could give us a plan on how to inform the public better! I mean, how much more transparent to the public can you get? Scott, we talk about this every single meeting!

Dr. Glenn: You talked about the use of this Golf Course in the summer. What about the winter months? During the winter months, as you know, the Snowmobile Club is a thriving community. Is this type of facility going to be setup in such a way that they can use it in the winter?

Supervisor: Absolutely! There's cross country skiing. There's an opportunity for the Town. We could rent skis. And every time we have an activity in Town, we bring people to Town. And just to finish what I was saying about small businesses, is this. We really do want to have these businesses be viable all year round and not have to think about whether they have to close or not. So, yes. There would be that.

Plus, the golf simulators are an extremely important part of this. I thought they were about \$50,000.00 a piece, but they're like \$20,000.00 a piece, and they make like \$50,000.00 each a year! Folks, that's real money! I'm not going to blow it! That's going to be used to offset the cost of the building!

And they have this thing with frisbees now, and it could be a great place for snow shoeing and use these bike trails that we're paying for and developing. They could use that. I just see the Wheelerville area — and it's the only thing we have control over, because we own the property here — I just see this as the gem of Caroga Lake.

Mr. Sturgess: Hey, guys. We sit here, and we have these folders that sit in front of you. Every single month you see bills that are in these folders that have to do with the repairs on this building. It gets extremely frustrating. There's another piece of paper right here. I just saw it. \$14,800.00 for new boilers! When does it stop? I've been up here for two years, and the money that we put into this building. It is just unbelievable that the general public doesn't see that stuff. I mean, they're welcome to see it whenever they want. But they don't physically see it on a monthly basis the expenses that we have on this building. As far as getting more transparent, I don't know how to get more transparent! Except talking at meetings. I mean, the boilers have been broke for six months here! We can't even get them repaired! We heated the place with a propane heater this winter. When does it stop? It's up to the voters!

Dr. Glenn: We've been kicking the can down the road for several years.

Mr. Sturgess: Doc, you were on the Board when you got turned down last. Was it 1994? [laughter]

Supervisor: It's been turned down twice.

Dr. Glenn: Has it gotten any better since it's been turned down twice?

Mr. Sturgess: No! They say, "Why doesn't the Town do anything with this?" Well, here's our chance to do something! But it's up to the voters. So, if nothing happens, then we have to go back to Plan B. Obviously, it's not going to go out to the voters until we have all of the facts, so that we can explain it to

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you guys so everything is there. But we have to keep you informed on us getting the facts. It's not like it just comes in a mailbox. It takes hours and hours to get — days — two years. Jesus.

Supervisor: I'm still mulling over the idea of doing a survey. I think that if we could get the information out there, so that people know what they're talking about, so they know the facts, and then do a survey.

Question: More facts! I want to know if it's put out for a vote, and it's voted down, then what's Plan B?

Mr. Sturgess: Plan B is just the ProShop. That's Plan B. We'd still have to borrow money for that! Because there's a depreciated value that we get from the insurance company, so we don't get all of the money. They depreciate that value. So, there's still going to have to be X amount of money that's going to have to be borrowed. You know? It's another vote. It's very frustrating to try to figure it out and to try to get it out to you guys. I can't tell you the meetings that we've had when it was during COVID. Nobody was in the audience. We're sitting here twiddling our thumbs. We'd open up the floor for public speaking, and nobody had anything to say on this! No one ever asks questions on this! You know! And we want people to ask questions! We want to get the facts out! But if you're not asking questions, then how can we? We're assuming that you're understanding what we're saying! You know! But clearly people aren't! I don't know how else to get it out!

Supervisor: Well, where we need to be is what I'm working very hard to do. I just got another piece of the puzzle today. This is hot off the press! It's our insurance settlement. We need the taxpayer to know how this is going to affect their taxes. Maybe some people are thinking: \$500.00, \$600.00, \$700.00 more a year, or something like that. We're not talking numbers like that! I hate to just throw numbers out there. We're talking, last year the taxpayers of this Town from the County received 60 cents per \$1000.00. So, say that the average assessed value is \$100,000.00, that's \$60.00. We're talking about eating up a little bit of that to bring us neutral and maybe a little bit more, and long term having it go the other way. The last time I did the projection after 14 years, and that was using energy costs back when I did that a year ago this past March. It was 14 years. With energy costs the way they are now, I think that this thing is going to start to pay for itself in about 10 years. But I don't have those numbers yet. I don't want people to be scared talking about hundreds and hundreds of dollars impact on your taxes. That's not the kind of money we're talking about. I also know that things can get voted down for 10 cents! And there's places that the Town could save. But I don't know that we want to save in areas where we have programs. So, just to keep things moving, I just want to say, "Thank you" to everybody.

Mr. Sturgess: Maybe a public hearing on this, so people can come and drill us on this. It may be better, because I don't know the way to get it out better to the public where you're not going to hear the rumor lies. That's important to you guys. You guys have the power of the vote. I mean. I own property in this Town. I'm worried too. I don't want my taxes going up \$1,000.00 on every property! I can't afford it!

Question: You need to summarize the information and numbers and get it out. Educate people.

Supervisor: We want the numbers to be as accurate as possible. I can't just throw something out and say, "Trust me." The Board, rightfully so, said, "We don't need any more studies." We don't need to spend another \$50,000.00. We already spent \$60,000.00 or \$70,000.00 studying this building, and nothing has been done to address any of those problems. So, it has not gotten any better,

Question: One thing that would help me understand is if you put out something like a RFP that the Fire Department did. Do you have a document like an RFP for this project?

Supervisor: No. You can't do it until you have design specs.

Supervisor: Unfortunately, in government, what we have to do is we have to come to the voters with something. I've had probably 20 different suggestions on what we ought to do. That's why

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we hired an architect. We looked at locating here. We looked at locating it south of where the old Club House was and having to redo the 9th hole. We looked at trying to put it on the same footprint of the other Club House. We looked across the street. We looked at possibly buying or condemning a house across the street and locating it there. We looked at everything — everything that was reasonable. We looked at five seriously. It all came down to where the Club House function has to be and where to put it. I talked to other people. I asked the architect, “Is it cheaper to add on to a building than to build a separate building?” I knew the answer, but what I didn’t know when we talked about combining the two buildings, I didn’t know that the savings was going to be over six figures! It was going to be a million something. My eyes just popped like that! I said, “I’ve got to look at it!” And that is how this has snowballed.

NYMIR INSURANCE UPDATE (6/8/22)

Supervisor: I just wanted to say, since I got this hot off the press, I’m sorry to the Board that I just gave it to you today. But people want to know. We’ve got to talk to citizens about the insurance.

- **So, the original insurance settlement proposed to us was around \$1,400,000.00.**
- **This is where we are now, and I’ll explain a little more about *if we build or don’t build*.**
- **The total claim was \$3,538,448.00.**

-
- **If we decide *NOT to build* and we just want to take the money and run, then:
our insurance settlement is \$2,235,848.62
of which we have already been paid \$1,388,342.36.**

-
- **The depreciation was \$1,332,599.52, of which we can recoup \$616,512.00.**
 - **There’s another Ordinance of Law coverage which is another \$644,600.00.**
 - **What we can’t recoup by rebuilding is \$41,487.25 (depreciation on mowers).**
 - **We got payment for equipment and tools. It was difficult, because we had no records.**

[6/15/2022 Town Topics: “According to the insurance policy conditions, the Town is eligible for an additional insurance reimbursement of \$1,261,00 if the Town rebuilds the club house.”]

Question: Can you put that out? I think it would help keep the rumors at bay.

Supervisor: Yes. I couldn’t agree with you more. It’s just that this is all I have to go on. I haven’t been able to do anything to it.

Mr. Shekerjian: We have the *Caroga Town Topics*. I think that we will be doing something shortly after this meeting that might help.

Supervisor: **The best synopsis that I’ve seen actually came from our grant writer.**

- **He said that this is the project costs.**
- **And this is where we’ll get our source of funds (insurance, reserves, bonding).**
- **We want to add another line which is cost savings and avoided costs.**

We’re running a 70-year-old school house and have energy savings and possible revenue. It’s horrible what we’re spending: +\$10,000.00 a month.

I’m not making up numbers. I have a confidentiality agreement with an investor, and he was interested in the numbers that I’m telling you about right now. So, it’s not pie in the sky. I’m not making it up. Ok. I want to get into regular business. I thank everybody.

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