

Caroga News Flash

Town Board Meeting Highlights

June 25, 2025

<https://TownOfCaroga.com> contains all issues of the *Caroga News Flash*.

This special work session at Town Hall began at 5:00 PM. The Board discussed the proposal to abolish the Town's current Fire Protection Contract and to create a new regional Fire District as a separate legal entity (see proposed Public Hearing Resolution below).

Supervisor Palcovic welcomed people and summarized the meeting purpose as a discussion of "where we want to go and how we want to get there...to answer questions and move forward."

The Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Department presented the Town with a check for \$58,333.00 to reimburse for the current Fire Protection Contract. Thanks went to John and Lynne Delesky for the extensive time and effort they gave to get this contract money back from New York State.

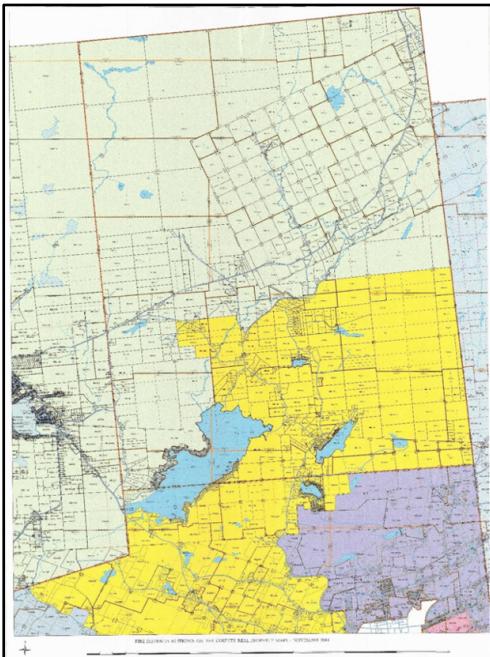
WHAT IS A FIRE DISTRICT?

A Fire District is a separate governmental entity — separate from the Town — run by a publicly elected board of five resident Fire District Commissioners. Initially, first-term Fire Commissioners are appointed by the Town Board when they approve the new Fire District. Thereafter, the five Fire Commissioners are elected — and accountable to — registered voters in the District.

Note that Emergency Service responses will not change in any area presently covered.

- The approval for a Fire District is given by the Town Board, not by an initial voter referendum.
- Another option involves petition for dissolution from a majority of property owners in a District.
- The Town Board has jurisdiction to approve or deny the Southern Adirondack Fire District.
- See <https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/publications/pdf/fireprotection0317.pdf>.
- See <https://www.afdsny.org/docs/Becoming or Consolidating a Fire District 20180210.pdf>.

PROPOSED TERRITORY OF THE SOUTHERN ADIRONDACK FIRE DISTRICT



The Southern Adirondack Fire District includes all land in the Town of Caroga and part of Bleecker (shown in light green).

Precise boundaries are described in the proposed Resolution below.

Questions remain about the complete map of the proposed Southern Adirondack Fire District.

The Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Company now responds in the Town of Arietta in Hamilton County, through contract with the Piseco Fire Department. Questions remain about whether Arietta territory will be in the new District or by contract. **Either way, there will be no lapse in services.**

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Attorney Bradley Pinsky described benefits of creating the “***Southern Adirondack Fire District***.”

FIRE DISTRICTS CREATE A TRANSPARENT PUBLIC PROCESS.

Community benefits include a transparent process and public oversight, where any resident can run for a seat on the Fire District Commission. Plus, meetings are subject to NYS Open Meetings Law and Freedom of Information Law. Bonding and reserve funding requires voter approval, and a fire district budget requires a public hearing and is subject to the NYS yearly 2% tax cap. A Fire District Board of Commissioners focuses on fire protection. That focus helps to leaders to attend specifically to safety, recruitment, and so on. Information is discussed publicly and transparently.

FIRE DISTRICTS CREATE SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC REVENUE FOR ESSENTIAL SERVICES.

- Given increasing costs, the Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Company faces urgent budget crisis.
- Inflation and tariffs have profoundly impacted costs and availability of essential fire equipment.
- Fire expenses have recently increased anywhere from 20 to 45%. For example, a fire engine that used to cost \$650,000.00 now costs \$1.1 million. Gear has gone from \$2,500.00 to \$4,000.00. Leather helmets that recently cost \$400.00 now cost \$2,200.00 or more.
- A new Fire District can set a sustainable initial budget with a 2% cap on annual increases.
- A possible initial budget change for the Fire District will most likely be LESS THAN those already imposed by the Town Board for the 2021 Town Budget (\$106 property tax increase per \$100,000 assessed value) and 2024 Town Budget (\$71 per \$100,000 assessed value). See prior Town of Caroga Budgets at <https://townofcaroga.com/finances/budgets.htm>.
- A Fire District is not on the Town’s Tax Roll for purposes of the State’s 2% tax cap.
- Spending is capped or requires voter approval. The statutory spending limit means that a fire district can spend only \$1,000.00 for every \$1 million of taxable assessed value in the district.
- Approving the Southern Adirondack Fire District puts fire services on an enduring path for all.

HOW WILL THE FINANCES WORK?

- Increasing costs mean that the current Fire Protection Contract does not meet present needs.
- The current annual Fire Co. budget is \$240,000.00, and that will increase in the near future.
- Council Member Rick Sturgess called for the Fire Company to do more fund raising, with Council Member Cooper and Ms. Kim Walker adding to this point.
- Attorney Pinsky emphasized, “Asking volunteers to give up more and more of their private lives — to pay for things that legally are a town’s responsibility — is disheartening.”
- Attorney Pinsky described his experiences as a volunteer and acknowledged the challenges of funding basic fire services and OSHA safety standards. He described talks for New York Association of Towns meetings where questions arise about fire company fundraising to meet basic needs. Some town officials resist fire districts and instead call for volunteer fire fighters to do more and more fundraising, on top of going to emergencies, trainings, meetings, and drills. What that means is that volunteers miss more family events — kids’ birthdays and such. By comparison, he said, “Why do officials ask for volunteers to do fundraising to meet basic fire and safety needs? Towns do not ask their DPW to do fundraising for equipment. Your police do not fundraise for their bullets.”
- By law, Town officials are responsible for addressing expenses for essential fire prevention.
- Nobody joins a fire company to do fundraising. We must adapt to save volunteer fire services.

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- Council Member Cooper responded, “I appreciate that, but you can’t just put a hard line out there. There’s got to be a middle ground. We’re not saying, ‘Go out and fundraise everything.’ I’m saying, let’s look at options. Don’t shut the door on some of the options. We can’t do that.”
- Attorney Pinsky said, “Federal laws require towns to provide all mandatory equipment. Everything that is a ‘want’—not a ‘need’—they should be able to fundraise for that.”
- Council Member Sturgess asked, “So if the law requires us to provide that equipment for the fire company, how come we are not? ‘Cause if laws require us to provide the gear and helmets and all that stuff — like when that happened, when your gear went up X%—how come you didn’t come to us and say, ‘The law is this—listen: it went up this—we need this?’”
- Supervisor Palcovic clarified, “It’s more complicated than that. Mr. Pinsky, I’ve been involved with the Fire Department for almost 50 years. Under Fire Protection Contracts, there is a ‘Reopener Clause’ with the forecast of the dollar values. You try to be conservative and mindful of the taxpayers, because the Fire Department receives tax dollars through the Town of Caroga. Dynamics of an annual budget with a Fire District will be more fluid, based on your Board of Commissioners regulating the cost of everything. Now, the Fire Department would have to petition the Town of Caroga Board to reopen the Contract, and then we have to go back and reset the tax rate. It’s at the low end of the County tax rates. As the Town Board, we are the authority having jurisdiction (that is the legal term). We’ve all got to be mindful of the tax rate. The Fire Company always has. Ultimately, a town is responsible (1) for making sure that the town has adequate protection and (2) setting a fair and equal tax rate based on the Fire Department requests. Probably on the conservative side of fair and equal, we’re going down that valley, and it’s getting deeper and deeper on behalf of the Fire Department. But the liability falls back to the authority having jurisdiction, and that’s this Town Board right now. I understand having gone through the Municipal Officers Training and all the other things associated with it—but also as a past Fire Chief—we understood that the Town of Caroga Town Board is responsible now, because we have that disclaimer to hold harmless and the Town is the named insured. If the ship sinks, then the Town takes a hit. Am I on board here, Mr. Pinsky?”
- Attorney Pinsky said, “100%. See Court case *Sawyer v Town of Lewis* [2004 NY Slip Op 06911].”
- Council Member Sturgess continued, “I want to go back to the budget gap, especially if you take the Town of Arietta land out of it. This paper in front of us was supplied by our assessor. So, you’ll have a couple paid positions, I’m assuming. Do you have a ballpark salary?”
- Mr. McIntosh noted, “Secretary and treasurer are part time—unlikely more than \$10,000.”
- Council Member Sturgess continued, “I’m looking at the assessed values, and there’s the equalization values. If you take Arietta out of it, then that brings you to about \$265,000.00. So, if you say that your budget now is \$240,000.00, then the net change is only \$25,000.00.”
- Fire Company Treasurer Brian McIntosh replied, “You are going someplace I am not aware of, because I do not believe that is the right number. But I hadn’t heard that \$1,000 per \$1 million assessed value until today, but I believe it. Is it the full value that is on? What is it?”
- Mr. Palcovic replied, “It’s the assessed value, and the equalization rate for the county.”
- Mr. McIntosh said, “For Bleecker, we were able to get more than we were from Caroga.”
- Mr. Palcovic added, “Bleecker is at 99% equalization rate.”
- Mr. McIntosh said, “If that’s really the number and the limit, then the Fire Company is not going to have enough money doing it that way. What is the number and the limit?”

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- Council Member Sturgess exclaimed, “That’s what I’m getting at! Throwing around all the numbers quickly! That change is just \$25,000.00! This isn’t gonna work if that’s the case!”
- Mr. McIntosh replied, “If that’s the case, then we’ll only be able to go up so much. Right?”
- Attorney Pinsky asked, “Are you saying there is not enough money for the Fire Company Budget, because of the statutory spending limit?”
- Council Member Sturgess stated, “Our property valuation is about \$265 million, with Caroga and Bleecker. The Fire Company already has a budget of \$240,000.00 right now.”
- Attorney Pinsky replied, “The limit would be more than that. It’s an hour-long discussion. Let me just jump to the point. The statutory spending limit says you can only spend \$1,000.00 per \$1 million assessed value. So, on \$265 million taxable fully assessed, you could only have spent \$265,000.00, for example. But, that’s not the absolute limit. For example, insurance is never capped, and that’s the #1 cost. Fuel is not included. An audit is not included. Heating is not included, nor is reserve fund. There are a number of exceptions that are not included. That means that the biggest expenses are not capped by that limit, basically because they are viewed as not controllable.”
- Council Member Sturgess replied, “Well, that statement made me not like it even more!”
- Council Member Jack Glenn added, “Is the statutory spending limit subject to a referendum?”
- Attorney Pinsky responded, “If you exceed it, then it goes to a mandatory voter referendum, where you ask the public to raise it to a certain amount. But remember, your biggest expenses are not capped and included in that limit. Insurance is the biggest, right? I’m guessing they pay \$35,000 to \$50,000 a year. That includes not just collision and liability, but that is also workers’ compensation. Salaries, by the way, are excluded from the limit. If they pay their secretary and treasurer anything, then those would be excluded from the limit.”
- When asked about the mortgage, Attorney Pinsky said, “Depends. So, a mortgage at the Fire Company might not be excluded if the District would end up paying rent. However, if the Fire Company transferred its building to the Fire District, and the Fire District covered it with a bond, then the bond principal and interest would be exempt from the statutory spending limit.”
- Mr. McIntosh asked, “I just want to clarify. So, if I have a property in the Town of Caroga assessed with a total property value of \$100,000.00, then the tax limit on that is going to be off of Caroga’s rate. [The 2024 Caroga Equalization Rate was 40.90%.] If I go to Bleecker and I have a house that’s \$100,000.00 that has a different equalization rate of almost 100%. [The 2024 Bleecker Equalization Rate was 99.21%, see <https://pad.tax.ny.gov/county>].
- Attorney Pinsky replied, “It’s calculated at an equalization rate of 100%. So, you first have to equalize each Town to 100%. That’s the limit.”
- Mr. Sturgess asked, “Do you instantly have that amount of \$1,000 for every \$1 million? So, if you need to double your budget, explain to me how taxes are not going to go out of sight?”
- Attorney Pinsky said, “Remember, Town Board appoints the first Board of Commissioners.”
- Mr. Sturgess said, “That doesn’t answer questions about how taxes aren’t going out of sight!”
- Attorney Pinsky asked, “Why would they? You’re assuming that limit. The Town has a 3% limit on debt. Right? As a Town Board member, have you automatically gone up to that limit? Just because there’s a limit, does not mean that you hit your head on the limit. Unless you’re the federal government. Remember, with the Commissioners you appoint, you can ask them about the budget. You control who the 5 people are for the first year. Then they are elected. They are taxpayers in the district. They would have to pay whatever amount they increase.”

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- Mr. McIntosh added, “It’s very similar to you sitting up there trying to deal with that.”
- [Mr. Sturgess has served on the Town Board since 2020. According to prior Town Budgets, he voted to increase municipal spending and 2021 taxes by \$1.06 per thousand and further approved increased spending in 2024 to raise taxes by \$0.71 per thousand assessed value, see <https://townofcaroga.com/finances/budgets.htm>. Fire Co. impacts will be less than that.]
- Supervisor Palcovic added that it would be good for all to separate Town and Fire tax caps.
- Attorney Pinsky said, “That’s the reason I’m forming so many Fire Districts, to get that out from under the Town budget and the State’s 2% tax cap. Towns have to get fire off their cap.”
- Supervisor Palcovic said, “Some Fire Districts throughout the State—like in the capital districts—now pay firefighters, because trucks were not moving without that. So, they’re paying guys to sit in the station, and that got into costs of paid career fire fighters on duty.”
- Ms. Kim Walker said, “That makes me nervous! And...”
- Council Member Sturgess interjected, “It’s not like we can predict fires! Nobody here can!”
- Mr. Bob Sullivan clarified, “It’s more than just fire. It’s also EMS.”
- Mr. Sturgess continued, “So, with EMS calls, you guys don’t get any refunds back on EMS? If you’re a district, do you still go to EMS calls, or not?”
- Mr. Sullivan responded, “Nothing changes. We have volunteers. We don’t have ambulance.”
- Supervisor Palcovic clarified, “We are a volunteer first responder agency, coordinated with an ambulance 6 miles down the road to respond.”
- Mr. Delesky stated, “My analysis of calls from 2023 was that we had 237 calls for the year, with 162 for EMS. There were 4 structural fires, 8 grass fires, 1 chimney fire, 1 vehicle fire.”
- Supervisor Palcovic added, “Just one structural fire may need \$1,000 in fuel, plus the hose and so on. It’s nothing to spend more than \$5,000 on a single structural fire.”
- Ms. Greta Frasier added, “I have a couple questions. Commissioners that oversee the District, do they have to live in the District? [Yes] The Fire District, does it open the District to more grant opportunities? [Significantly more] And when they vote on a budget, are they Town residents or District residents, and do they have to be registered voters?”
- Attorney Pinsky replied, “There is no public vote for basic budget approval, just a public hearing for a routine budget. People can vote on other things, especially financial things. Voters each must be a registered voter in the District at least 23 days before the election. They all must have domicile in the district and be a registered voter with the county.”
- Council Member Cooper stated, “They don’t vote on it, but there is a public hearing required.”
- Fire Auxiliary Member Lynne Delesky said, “Back to fundraising. It takes an enormous amount of time for a few people to make a small amount of money, so I know it sound great, but the reality of it today is that is not going to happen.”
- Council Member Sturgess replied, “Lynne, I don’t want you to think that by me saying that, that I was discouraging what you guys do. Of all the people in the room, them two people back there do a lot of fundraising! They’re at every single event! I was coming more along the lines of looking for an opportunity.”
- Mr. John Livingston asked, “Mr. Palcovic you are a volunteer fire fighter in Caroga? [Yes] And are you the Town Supervisor? [Yes] Mr. Pinsky, is there any conflict of interest there?”
- Attorney Pinsky replied, “No. There are a number of Attorney General Opinions on what we call party conflicts. He probably could not sign any leases, if the firehouse is owned by the Town, but it is not. In this case, no. There is not a statutory conflict.”

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- Attorney Pinsky continued, “There’s no law that creates a conflict with the Supervisor approving resolutions for a Public Hearing and to create the Fire District. Could there be situations, where a question comes up? Well, there could be, but there is no absolute conflict. Voting for the District itself has zero conflict, according to well-established legal standards.”
- Supervisor Palcovic added, “Having gone through the political training, I believe there are 5 exceptions the Comptroller noted. The entire Town Board could be volunteer fire fighters. There’s an exemption approved by the Comptroller for to Fire Department operations.”
- Attorney Pinsky added, “State law explicitly says that there is no conflict. That said, the only question here is, ‘Can you as a member of the Fire Company vote to form a Fire District?’ The answer is, ‘Yes.’ That is not the Fire Company. It is a new government entity. The law is very clear that is not a conflict of interest. It’s definitely not a conflict.”
- Council Member Matt Cooper said, “I’ve done some independent research and talked to people, and I think I have more questions now than before. I’ve only been in Town here since 2007, when I bought my property. I live and work in the Town. I have a business. I’m here on purpose. I’m not trapped. I figured that if I was going to be in this Town and be opinionated, then I should be educated on my opinion, so that I can talk intelligently about it and have two-way conversations. The one thing, to me, that I think is missing is that there should have been a mailer that went out to the public. In the State Comptroller’s Review about establishing Fire Districts, it says clearly that one of the issues they have with public meetings and voting and everything is turnout. It’s not at a normal polling place. It’s normally at the Fire Department. It’s not on a normal polling day. It’s different. So, we need to get information out. We are a remote Town. Not everyone is on Facebook. I don’t see signs flying around saying, ‘Hey, we have a Fire District coming.’ If we put out notice of a Public Hearing right now, then people will be drinking through a fire hose of information when we do that. Some people don’t even know that it’s coming. When we propose a Public Hearing for the Town, we need to hear people. We need to put our best foot forward. If we put the information out about ‘Here’s where we are. Here’s what we’re doing. Here’s why we’re doing it.’—such as in a mailer—then we give a lot of people the information they need. I just look at the sales pitch. There’s truth in lending. We want to get everyone involved. Caroga is a small town. Rumors spread like wildfire. If you get information together, and put it out in a mailer to the public, then they can read it, and when they come to a meeting for a Public Hearing, then they can have their questions answers, and people are not asking the same question a thousand times, because information was provided to the public in a mailer about the new proposed Fire District.”
- Supervisor Palcovic said, “I heard the rumor that taxes will double with a Fire District.”
- Mr. Brian McIntosh asked, “Do you know what the property tax was for the Fire Company was this year? 98 cents per thousand. So, when someone has a \$100,000 property, then they paid \$98 per year specifically to cover the Fire Contract.”
- Supervisor Palcovic said, “To Matt’s point, the public out there needs to understand that.”
- Mr. Brian McIntosh added, “It’s not much. We’re not asking for a bunch of money. We’re asking mainly for oversight.”
- Ms. Kim Walker asked, “But will taxes go up?”
- Attorney Pinsky said, “Once the district is setup and has a budget, the NYS Comptroller will set a new tax cap—both for the Town and for the new Fire District—and those budgets need to stay within the 2% per year max increase, according to New York State laws.”

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- Mr. Brian McIntosh added, “We do not have a budget yet, but we put some numbers together. Where we are today is about \$400,000. Our recommendations are about there. We haven’t yet figured out reserve funds and so on.”
- Council Member Cooper said, “If you’re putting your best foot forward, you’ll need that. If I’m planning, I’m going to have a preliminary budget, knowing that the District will need that.”
- Mr. Bob Sullivan said, “I worked on one and put numbers together. If it’s about \$350,000, then we’re looking at a possible tax rate between \$1.50 and \$1.75 per thousand. Ballpark.”
- [That is a tax increase of just \$0.52 to \$0.77 per thousand, or \$77 per \$100,000 assessed. Essentially, a tax increase for a sustainable budget adjustment would cost less than \$100 more for a property assessed at \$100,000. This is less than the Town Board’s 2021 tax hike.]
- Council Member Sturgess said, “So that’s the initial shock, and then 2% after that?”
- Mr. Sullivan added, “Yes. Plus, as the Town’s assessed value goes up, then that helps too.”
- Attorney Pinsky said, “Mr. Cooper, you made the right point to put your best foot forward. There’s always this chicken and egg. If they sent a letter to the town people, then the Town Board would say, ‘Hey, wait! You didn’t even come to us!’ So, there’s a chicken and egg.”
- Council Member Cooper replied, “Here’s the chicken and egg. The last Board meeting, they wanted a Resolution passed to set the Public Hearing. The egg’s out of the henhouse now.”
- Council Member Sturgess added, “Well in retrospect—well, not to interrupt Matt—I don’t differ on a lot of things, but I do want to take back a little bit about throwing out the 2027 date of your time line when the Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Company anticipating being broke. So, I guess this proposal is a way of pre-planning approximately a year-and-a-half to two years out. Know what I’m saying?”
- Council Member Cooper said, “Their plan was for the Fire District to start in 2026. They needed the July 22 Public Hearing to get there.”
- Attorney Pinsky said, “In truth, what the law requires and what we put in is that you have to put in the paper. It’s horrible. Nobody reads. It has to be on the Town sign board. It has to be on the Town website to notice the Public Hearing. And we have to post it in public places in each Town, and the other Town’s websites as well. It’s supposed to be all out there, and hopefully people come to the Public Hearing with a lot of questions, and we do the same format. Hopefully, we have all our ducks in a row predicting what questions will be asked, most of these. I’m not discounting what you said. I agree. It was sprung on you. That was my fault, because I was told that we have to get this done. I said that, oh, they’re meeting tomorrow, sure. If they agree, then I’ll sent everything. I had the incorrect assumption that you as the Town Board were already in favor of this, and I was just providing documents to get there. It was not my intention—and certainly not the intention of the Fire Department—to shove it down your throat. I was just trying to get it to you in time for the Board meeting. It came across as rude, and that was not my intention. I want to be clear.”
- Highway Superintendent Roy Stock asked, “I have a question. So, if you’re budgeting, what is your gear? Is it 10-year fire gear? What do you budget for gear?”
- Mr. Brian McIntosh responded, “The budget for his gear was like \$2,800. That’s not working. So we have been replacing gear, but we don’t have enough to replace all of the older gear fast enough. So, the interior fire fighters will get gear first. Guys directing traffic are going to get it last. Some have nothing. There’s a lot of reasons behind it. We’re required to replace older gear, even if it’s pristine.”

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- Town Clerk Linda Gilbert said, “I feel kind of bad here now as an auxiliary member! We spent money on a pontoon boat and a dock, when we should have been spending for turnout gear!”
- Mr. Bob Sullivan clarified, “There were grants and donations for that boat, and it did not come out of the operating budget. It was all special donations. To fund turnout gear, we have requests into the federal government to support that essential equipment need.”
- Mr. Sturgess said, “So Bleecker has to go through this? What if they say yes and we say no?”
- Mr. McIntosh replied, “If either Caroga or Bleecker turns it down, then we do not go forward now. At the same time, we’re still coming back for money. That’s not going to change.”
- Council Member Sturgess asked for an audit going back 5 years, with Town paying for it.
- Attorney Pinsky suggested simply sharing the Form 990s for review and information.
- Council Member Cooper said, “I’m for the district, but it’s our responsibility to look out for the Town and for the Fire District. Let’s not make a hasty decision. We have time.”
- Town Board members emphasized that they are not trying to jeopardize fire service in any way, but they want to set up an information gathering process and work this out together.
- Mr. McIntosh emphasized the timing and choice between the Fire District vs. Fire Contract, stating, “Without Fire District approval, we need to open our Fire Contract within the Town Budget again. We’ll have to open that by August 10 at the latest. It’s one or the other.”

HOW EXACTLY WILL THE FIRE DISTRICT TERRITORY BE DEFINED?

- Council Member DeLuca asked for a map of the whole Southern Adirondack Fire District, and she suggested Arietta should remain within the Fire District for mutual benefits and safety.
- The Attorney noted additional time and paperwork required to include Hamilton County land.
- Discussion also debated questions about SEQR requirements within the Adirondack Park.
- The Attorney was unaware that the Town of Caroga is entirely within the Adirondack Park. In the Adirondack Park, State Comptroller consent may be required. That’s another step.
- Attorney Pinsky asked, “I have my own question. The law has special conditions if the Town is within the Adirondack Park, and if the State lands within it are subject to taxation, and if it is more than 30% of the total taxable assessed valuation of the Town. Do we know that?”
- Supervisor Palcovic said, “It may be more than 30%. We have a lot of State land.”

NYS Owned Adirondack Forest Preserve Lands Taxable Under RPT § 532(a)‡

Town (Acres: 2022 Full Market Value)	#	Acres	% Acres	Full Value	% Full Value
Caroga (32,899: \$324,444,331)	93	20,404	62%	\$21,026,671	6%
Bleecker (37,243: \$126,900,932)	110	18,424	49%	\$13,176,200	10%
Arietta (206,511: \$1,187,720,735)	619	191,175	93%	\$165,547,500	14%

‡ see ADK Reports 2022 NYS ORPTS at <https://adkreports.org/protect/census/3603512573.htm>

DID THE TOWN BOARD APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR A PUBLIC HEARING?

- Attorney Pinsky emphasized the Resolution before this Town Board is for notice of Public Hearing, not the Fire District itself. A Resolution to create a Fire District comes after that. Moving forward with a Public Hearing does not bind the Town Board to the Fire District.
- Council Member Rick Sturgess made a motion to table the agenda on the Fire District proposal, and Council Member Jack Glenn gave a second. The Town Board voted 5-0 to table the proposed Resolution for a Public Hearing, thereby deferring all decisions.
- Supervisor Palcovic thanked everyone for input and questions in this informational session.
- The Town Board did not approve the proposed Resolution for a Fire District Public Hearing.

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ON JULY 25, THE TOWN BOARD TABLED THE FOLLOWING TO ALLOW FOR FURTHER INFORMATION-GATHERING AND OPEN DISCUSSION.

<https://townofcaroga.com/agendas/fire-district.pdf>

PROPOSED PUBLIC NOTICE AND RESOLUTION

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Town Board of the Town of Caroga is considering the following resolution: "NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED, that the Town Board of the Town of Caroga determines that it is in the public interest to dissolve the existing Fire Protection District pursuant to the proposed dissolution plan for the dissolution of the existing Fire Protection District, attached hereto as SCHEDULE A and to form a new Fire District over the prior existing boundaries of the Fire Protection District, and that the territory of the new Fire District shall be described as follows [SEE RESOLUTION BELOW].

The proposed formation of the Southern Adirondack Fire District (or as it will otherwise be known) shall become effective upon the effective date of the dissolution of the Fire Protection District and upon the diminution of the Town of Bleecker's Fire Protection District;

The Town Board will meet immediately following the public hearing to vote on the proposal.

PLEASE TAKE FUTHER NOTICE THAT A PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD on the 22nd day of July, 2025, at the Town of Caroga Town Hall at 1840 NY-10, Caroga Lake, NY 12032, which shall commence at 6:00pm to consider the resolution (in similar form). A copy of the description and map of the territory affected is available for viewing at the Town of Caroga Municipal Building at 1840 NY-10, Caroga Lake, NY 12032. All interested persons may be heard.

WITH APPROVAL DEFERRED, A PUBLIC HEARING DATE WAS NOT YET SET.

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF CAROGA TOWN BOARD PURSUANT TO TOWN LAW § 170 TO ESTABLISH A FIRE DISTRICT

WHEREAS, the Town of Caroga contains one fire protection district;

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Caroga is in the process of dissolving the Fire Protection District;

WHEREAS, the Caroga Fire Protection District will no longer be in existence after the dissolution; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Bleecker is in the process of diminishing the boundaries of the existing fire protection district so as to participate in the formation of this single fire district which will be formed in the portion of the Town of Bleecker excluded from the fire protection district; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board hereby intends to create a fire district in the area presently encompassing the Caroga Fire Protection District as well as the diminished portion of the Town of Bleecker via Town Law § 170;

WHEREAS, it appears to the Town of Caroga to be in the public interest of this Town to form a new fire district over the entire territory previously as the Caroga Fire Protection District, and including the Town of Bleecker's diminished portion of its fire protection district, upon the dissolution of the fire protection district on or about July 22, 2025 and upon completion of the Town of Bleecker's diminution process.

NOW THEREFORE, It is hereby **RESOLVED** that the Town of Caroga shall provide notice of and host a public hearing on whether to form the new "Southern Adirondack Fire District" over the territory previously constituting the Caroga Fire Protection District and the diminished territory within the Town of Bleecker, as shown on the attached map (in green) and as described as follows:

All of the Town of Caroga, Fulton County, New York, and all that portion of the Town of Bleecker, described as follows, and as depicted in the map shaded in Green only, and excluding all parcels in any other color:

Starting at the northeast corner of the Town of Bleecker, running southeasterly along the eastern border of the Town of Bleecker, Fulton County, New York, with the western border of the Town of Benson, then continuing southeasterly along the western border of the town of Mayfield, until arriving at the southeastern border of property located at Tax Map 056-1-29, then running westerly along the southern border of tax map 056-1-33

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and 056-1-36.1 and 056-1-37 and along and above the northern border of tax map 055-1-48, then southwesterly along the western border (but not including) 055-1-48 to the southern border of tax map 055-4-49, then west along the southern border of 055-4-49 until the intersection with the northeastern border of Tax Map 070-2-6 and (and running along the southern border of Tax Map 055-1-52 and) running along the southern border of Tax Map 070-1-79 and along the southernmost borders of Tax Maps 070-1-19.1, 070-1-19.2, 070-1-18, and including all of 070-1-17 and then northerly along the western (most) border of 070-1-17 until the intersection with the southeastern border of tax map number 070-1-4, and then westerly along the southern borders of tax map numbers 070-1-4, 070-1-3, 069-1-27.2 (and including 069-1-27.1) and then southeasterly along the eastern boundary of 069-1-43, 069-1-68, 069-1-44, and then east along the northern border of 069-1-38 then south along the eastern border of 069-1-38 and 069-1-37 then east along the northern border of 084-1-6 until the intersection with 070-1-64 (but not including such lot) and south along the eastern boundaries of 084-1-6 until intersecting with Peck Lake, then running along the western border of the lake to include all parcels touching the lake (including all of those properties on Hemlock Drive, Evergreen Drive, that portion of North Shore Road in the town of Bleecker, Little Gem Terrace, and that portion of Maplewood Drive in the town of Bleecker) until the intersection of the southern border of the Town of Bleecker and the northern border of the town of Johnstown, then westerly until the intersection of the southwest border of the town of Bleecker with the eastern border of the town of Caroga, then northerly along such western border of the town of Bleecker until reaching the northwest border of the town of Bleecker, then easterly along the northern border of the town of Bleecker, then to the northeast corner of the town of Bleecker, the point of the beginning.

The public hearing shall be held on July 22, 2025 at the Caroga Town Hall at 1840 NY-10, Caroga Lake, NY 12032 consecutive with a public hearing upon the dissolution of the Town of Caroga's Fire Protection District and the Town of Bleecker's diminution of its fire protection district;

A public meeting to consider the resolution to form the fire district shall be held immediately thereafter;

The estimated rate per thousand dollars of assessed valuation, based on the aggregate assessed valuation of taxable real property of the proposed fire protection district shown in the latest completed final assessment roll, projected to be assessed, levied and collected for purposes of the proposed fire protection district for the fiscal year of its operation, of the property located in the proposed Fire District, upon a taxable assessed valuation (at 100% valuation) of \$240,000 (2024 tax rolls) is approximately .90 - 1.10 per thousand.

It is further **RESOLVED** that notice of such hearing be provided in accordance with Town Law §§ 170(2) and 171(2) and the clerk of this municipality is directed to:

1. cause such notice to be given by publishing notice of the hearing in a newspaper having general circulation in the proposed Fire District at least once, and
2. posting such notice conspicuously in the Town of Caroga's Fire Protection District, the first publication and post of which is not less than ten (10) days nor more than twenty (20) days before the date of the hearing
3. post the notice on the sign-board of the Town maintained pursuant to subdivision six of section thirty of Article 11 of the Town Law, not less than ten (10) nor more than twenty (20) days prior to the hearing; and
4. serve each member of this Town Board with such notice by mailing such notice to the address of each member at their last known post office address, at least ten (10) days before the date of the hearing.

This resolution has received the affirmative vote of at least a majority of the Board of the Town of Caroga, as signed below and such resolution is hereby approved.

Ralph Palcovic, Supervisor; Barbara DeLuca, Councilor; John Glenn,
Councilor; Matthew Cooper, Councilor Rick Sturgess, Councilor

BY ORDER OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF CAROGA, FULTON COUNTY, NY

Dated: July 22, 2025

Linda Gilbert, Town Clerk

WITH APPROVAL DEFERRED, THE RESOLUTION WORDING AND HEARING DATE ARE NOT YET FINAL.