

**TOWN OF ST. GERMAIN**  
**OFFICE OF THE CLERK**  
**P.O. BOX 7**  
**ST. GERMAIN, WISCONSIN 54558**  
[www.townofstgermain.org](http://www.townofstgermain.org)

**MINUTES TOWN BOARD MEETING: December 11, 2023**

- 1. Call to Order:** Chairman Tom Christensen called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Roll Call to Establish a Quorum:** Jim Swenson, Brian Cooper, Tom Christensen, Ted Ritter and Kalisa Mortag along with Jeanna Vogel town treasurer, Jenn Jones deputy clerk/treasurer and June Vogel town clerk are in Community Center in room 4 with 44 community members. There were 49 community members present via Zoom.us.
- 4. Open Meeting Verification:** Mr Christensen noted that he had posted the meeting agenda at three locations in town on Saturday, December 9, 2023 before 6:30 pm.
- 5. Citizen's Comments – Citizens are encouraged to share their concerns and ideas with the Board. Please limit your comments to five minutes or less.**

Marv Anderson – Update from Vilas County. Law enforcement committee is gathering more information about potential county wide ambulance service. There will be another public hearing for towns and officials to attend. DOT contact and county highway commissioner indicated Hwy 155 road length will be repaved in 2024. Hwy C will not be done in 2024.

Tim Clark – Town crew started sanding, only doing end of Moon Road; asking for intersection by snowmobile trail to be sanded. Would like copy of town bills available for meetings.

Dierdre Strass – Concerns about light trespass/pollution. Could an ordinance to control hours of when lights can be turned on and be considered.

Samuel Lustig – Light pollution comes from storage units. Lights need to be on sensor or detector.

- 6. Cemetery Sexton's Report** Decorations were cleaned up. One cremation burial in November.
- 7. Fire Chief's Report** Fire chief not in attendance.
- 8. Discussion/Action Items:**
  - a. Update on the Rumored Septic Dump Field in St. Germain.** Mr Ritter read a note from WTA, asking for history on state statute 281.48 (5p) regarding local regulation of septage sites has been challenged. Town board hands are tied on this issue. Currently the landowner has not applied for a permit from the DNR. DNR response is it would be difficult to approve both parcels in their entirety. Ritter asked DNR specific questions on permit application, grade of parcels, protection of wetland and soil conditions: DNR limited with answers as there is not an application for the site. Ritter is impressed with a public movement that is underway organized by landowners. Town board is restrictive in involvement in reaction, the town's people are not restrictive. Zoning committee looking into potential of violation due to clear cut and didn't stay within 200 feet of center line of adjacent road; reason to explore and investigate.

This topic is not a reason to threaten landowner. Email read that was sent to Ella Baltus threatening her from a concerned citizen writing as a messenger.

Email read from Ella in which she states that the intended use of property is for housing from December 6, 2023.

Michael Connors – Represents a group who is heading up 'Don't Let St Germain Go To Waste' campaign which started 4 days ago. It is a difficult situation. Currently has 996 petition signers. Watershed is threatened. This group does not trust landowners stating now it will be used for homes. Looking for legal owners to sign a contract not to seek application for those parcels. Group talking about sending out printed matter, billboards. Will continue with campaign, not believing parcels will be used for housing.

Rick Schmidt – Parcels are under land contract until September 2024. Can they pull a permit if not deeded owner?

Bob Schell – Is daughter of owner in attendance and could she be asked what the plan is? Asked if she was in attending via Zoom to make a statement and there was no response.

Georgie Southwick – What are the other requirements of DNR that would impact approval for septic field. Need to look at NR 113.

Tracy Wendt – Lac du Flambeau tribe currently suing DNR and state for similar situation.

Bill Krueger – Property is subject to towns zoning ordinance until application is applied for.

Hunter Connors – Commented on clear cutting. Citizens need to make a statement to the state to protect Vilas County and St Germain. Opportunity to correct the wrongs and hopes zoning committee looks at this situation via ordinance for future land use.

Eric Eade – Does Forestry allow for multi-family building? Multi-family housing is not a permitted use, would need to apply for a conditional use permit.

Bob Ryan – Any studies conducted for environmental impact? Again, permit needs to be in DNR hands first.

Terry Duke – What violations have occurred currently that should be addressed? County is enforcement of that for the state. Will make County zoning administrator aware of that.

Al Anderson – Ask Ella Baltus to attend a meeting to state intentions of property. Have board coordinate meeting with property owners and have discussion. Also bring a community member to this meeting.

Tom Christensen – Better to have two representatives of the board to meet with property owners in a private setting. No problem to contact them and have a meeting.

Jack Peil – Why would they clear cut, de-stump and berm is there is not an application?

Mike Hermesen – Read from a DNR code – NR 113.07 (c) regarding setbacks.

Sam Lustig – Does town allow low income housing development. Permits would have to be followed strictly.

Jack Bourgeois – Does Forestry district allow for housing development? It does, would have to start with zoning administrator and go through process.

Don Walters – If they are not allowed to build what they want, they will develop into septic field.

Kristen Hanson – Did not see storm water postings. Laws in place supercede what town can do. Recent statute changed this so that the town's hands are tied. Contact legislation as to how this affects the town/county.

Fred Williston – Has anyone consulted with attorney, is it binding to have them sign a contract stating they will not use property for this intended use? This is being researched by campaign group.

Motion by Christensen for chairman and Ted Ritter along with an individual from the town, to be determined by Ritter and Christensen, to contact Baltus family and set up a meeting to discuss intention for piece of property in question; second Cooper. Discussion none. The motion passed by voice vote unanimously.

Break 7:34 – 7:36

- b. Presentation of a new trail bench from the Wildlife Club.** Bob Schell gave a history of Wildlife Club that has been in existence for 40 years. Plastic recycling project; recycle plastic into benches and decking. St Germain Fish and Wildlife Club sponsors this program. Bench donation will go to the playground area. Goal is to take plastic out of landfills. Will send out Constant Contact about this story.
- c. Approval of Town bills for payment.** Motion by Mortag to approve bills as presented; second Cooper. Discussion none. The motion passed by voice vote unanimously.
- d. Approval of past meeting minutes.** Motion by Ritter to approve amended minutes of November 13, 2023 and minutes of November 30, 2023; second Mortag. Discussion none. The motion passed by voice vote unanimously.
- e. Consider Zoning Ordinance public hearing input and adopt amendments to Chapter 1.** No public comments at public hearing. Motion by Ritter that the amendments to chapter 1 be adopted as previously approved by town board subject to public hearing; second Cooper. Discussion none. The motion passed by voice vote unanimously.
- f. Adopt amendment to Chapter 5 – Division of Land - Platting or Condominiums.** Motion by Ritter that the amendments to Chapter 5 Division of Land - Platting or condominiums be adopted as previously approved by town board subject to public hearing; second Cooper. Discussion none. The motion passed by voice vote unanimously.
- g. Approve 2023 town budget changes.** Discussion by board. Motion by Swenson to approve 2023 budget changes as discussed; second Mortag. Discussion none. The motion passed by voice vote unanimously.
- h. Continuing discussion on how to spend the remaining ARPA Funds.** Ongoing discussion by the board.
- i. Michael Harris delinquent tax payment.** Discussion by the board. Not enough information to make a decision on. State statute does not give the town a method to collect an omission. Tom Christensen will present more information when he gets it. Motion by Christensen to table until next meeting; second Mortag. Discussion none. The motion passed by voice vote unanimously.
- j. Change of Assessor in 2024 or 2025, due to retirement.** Discussion by the board to come up with a plan. Swenson will work with Jeanna, June and Jenn to get something going on this.
- k. BoBoen request for trail counters, paid out of Room Tax Funds.** Will be installing TRAFx Infrared trail counters at a cost of \$1820.00. This will help when needing documentation on how busy the trails are for grant applications and repairs. Will be adding 3 more counters to town's existing account. Have not applied to the Chamber grant program for this. Discussion by the board. Motion by Cooper for

funding for trail counters for BoBoen Snowmobile Club to be paid for out of room tax; second Mortag. Discussion: Clarify funding source, room tax vs community development. The motion passed by voice vote unanimously.

- I. **Dissolve Parks & Recreation Committee.** Discussion by the board. Problems with volunteers and committee struggling as a whole. Hard to push committee forward without passionate people willing to help. Mortag, Christensen and Stoltman to talk about future plan of Parks and Rec. Motion by Christensen to table until the first meeting in February 2024; second Ritter. Discussion none. The motion passed by voice vote with four affirmative votes and one negative vote by Mortag.

9. Christensen adjourned the meeting at 8:51 pm

\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor