

# TOWN OF ST. GERMAIN

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

P.O. BOX 7

ST. GERMAIN, WISCONSIN 54558

[www.townofstgermain.org](http://www.townofstgermain.org)

## MINUTES SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING: NOVEMBER 14, 2011

- 1. Call to Order:** The chairman noted that this was a duly called meeting in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law. The meeting was called to order at 8:00 A.M.
- 2. Board Members Present:** Walt Camp, Fred Radtke, John Vojta, Lee Christensen, William Bates, Tom Martens, Town Clerk. There were also 8 other people in attendance.
- 3. Approval of Agenda at the Chair's Discretion:** Skipped.
- 4. Agenda Action Items.**

**4.1 Review and Discuss Hunter Engineering Report, Take Action as Required:** Mr. Camp opened the discussion by saying that the public works committee had walked through the Red Brick Schoolhouse at one of its previous meetings. The committee also met last Friday. There had been a motion to recommend to the town board that the Red Brick Schoolhouse be demolished in its entirety. Mr. Camp added that the vote had been unanimous. Mr. Camp then explained that Hunter Engineering had also provided a report on the building. Mr. Hunter noted that the 1965 addition probably would not be cost effective to remodel. He did add, however, that he felt that the 1941 portion of the building was sound and that it probably could be made into a very attractive building if the entrance and windows were replaced with a period entrance and windows. Mr. Hunter also thought that a portion of the 1965 addition could be saved to provide an ADA approved entrance to the building.

Elmer Koegler, a member of the public works committee, stated that the foundation is starting to effervesce. He said that when it occurs both on the inside and outside of concrete blocks, it means that the foundation is probably failing. Mr. Koegler said that it could be very costly to repair the problem. Mr. Martens asked if there was some kind of test that could be done. Mr. Koegler said that the soil could be dug away from the foundation so that a boring could be done. The boring would have to be sent out to be tested. Mr. Martens asked if the boring could be done from the inside of the basement. Mr. Koegler said that it couldn't. Mr. Koegler also stated that everything that was done needed to be approved by the State. Also, if the building was to be used for a certain purpose, it would also need State approval for that use.

Mr. Vojta was very concerned about getting taxpayer approval to demolish the building. He found the statute that stated that the town board needed taxpayer approval at an elector meeting to dispose of town property. Mr. Martens stated that he had contacted the Wisconsin Towns Association attorney several times about demolishing the Red Brick Schoolhouse. The response had been that the electors can give authorization, but it is the sole decision of the town board as to whether the building should be demolished or not.

Mr. Bates said that he thought that if outside groups would be required to pay for remodeling the building, then outside groups should be expected to pay for demolishing the building.

Mr. Radtke said that the foundation appeared to be crumbling. The roof is wet and the ceiling boards are warped. He asked if the 1965 portion could even be removed without damaging the back wall of the 1941 building. Mr. Radtke also stated that the town needed storage and meeting rooms, but that the

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community center could be used. It would be possible to make the gym into meeting rooms by lowering the ceiling and putting in partitions.

Mr. Vojta asked how everything was going to be paid for. He said that there isn't even a plan to take care of the current debt. Mr. Martens noted that he had worked a debt reserve plan so that the tax levy for debt could be kept constant and that the Baird Loan increase and the M & I Loan balloon would be paid without increasing the levy.

Mr. Camp noted that Terry Holmes, member of the public works committee, has been in contact with Senator Jim Holperin. There appear to be block grants available for situations like ours. Those grants could cover from 30% to 50% of the cost of both demolition and remodeling.

Mr. Vojta stated that asbestos in the floor tile and adhesive might be a concern. Mr. Koegler noted that the Northland Pines School District had the rest of the asbestos abated in the building.

Mr. Bates thought that there should be a referendum in April to get the taxpayers opinion. He thought that there should be options. Mr. Martens noted that there already been a referendum with five options and that the town board at the time couldn't make any decisions based on the results.

Motion Vojta seconded Radtke that the town board take the least expensive option and demolish the Red Brick Schoolhouse in its entirety for approximately \$60,000 to \$70,000.

Jennifer Schiffmann Bolte said that she and her family really care about the Red Brick Schoolhouse and that they would do whatever they could to help save the school.

Ellen Allen said that it made no sense to demolish the school when we needed it for meeting rooms and storage.

Motion Radtke seconded Christensen to amend Mr. Vojta's motion to demolish the 1965 portion of the building, but to save the 1941 portion of the building.

By a roll call vote: Mr. Christensen – yes; Mr. Vojta – No; Mr. Bates – yes; Mr. Radtke – yes; Mr. Camp – yes. Motion to amend Mr. Vojta's motion carried.

Mr. Christensen noted that a resolution by the town board in 2004 stated that the town board shall keep the 1941 functional and usable until the taxpayers instruct the board to do otherwise.

David Weber added that the caring for kids park was paid for by donations and pledges. Why wouldn't that work for the Red Brick Schoolhouse? Mr. Weber also stated that he and his family have just been waiting for the town board to give them some direction. Bruce Weber said that if the motion carries that he would come in with a pledge amount at tomorrow night's meeting.

Motion Radtke seconded Bates to amend Mr. Radtke's amendment to say that the town board should come to the taxpayers for up to \$75,000 to demolish the 1965 addition.

By a roll call vote: Mr. Christensen – yes; Mr. Bates – yes; Mr. Radtke – yes; Mr. Vojta – no; Mr. Camp – yes. Motion to amend Mr. Radtke's amendment carried.

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Terry Holmes stated that the public works committee was charged with recommending whether to remodel or demolish the Red Brick Schoolhouse.

Motion Radtke seconded Bates that the 1965 addition to the Red Brick Schoolhouse be demolished and that the 1941 original school building is saved and that the voters of St. Germain are asked for up to

\$75,000 to demolish the 1965 addition. By a roll call vote: Mr. Bates – yes; Mr. Christensen – yes; Mr. Vojta – no; Mr. Radtke – yes; Mr. Camp – yes. Motion carried.

**4.2Bike & Hike Trail Final Phase Review/Discuss, Take Action as Required:** Mr. Camp stated that Janke had completed the patching and that the signs will be put up. Janke claims that since he didn't design the bridge, he is not responsible for it. Mr. Camp stated that the town could go after the engineering company, if it became necessary. Mr. Camp also said that he would sign off on the bond so that the clerk could pay Janke the final payment. The clerk can then apply for the balance of the grants.

Mr. Vojta handed out a breakdown of the grants and payments so far. He stated that there didn't seem to be any record of the town board agreeing to match \$40,000 of a steward ship grant. There is money in the money market fund that can be used, but it appears that the bike and hike committee will be anywhere from \$25,000 to \$50,000 short. Mr. Vojta wanted to know where that money was going to come from. He also stated that the line of credit will be due in December. The clerk checked and found out that the outstanding balance is around \$128,000. If the grant money doesn't come in on time, the town will have to come with that money also.

Mr. Radtke noted that the Chamber and the town are discussing changing the room tax allocation from 75% to the chamber and 25% to the town to 70% for the chamber and 30% for the town.

- 5. Board Concerns: Fred Radtke:** Mr. Radtke said that the board needs to figure out how much it will cost to repair the 1941 Red Brick Schoolhouse.

**John Vojta:** Mr. Vojta asked if there is anything that could be sold in the 1965 addition. The organizations will have to also be notified that they will have to get stuff out. Mr. Vojta also asked if the town could seek pledges for the 1941 Red Brick Schoolhouse. He said that if pledges came in and if the town can get a block grant he would be in favor of keeping the building.

**Tom Martens:** Mr. Martens said that his son works in excavation. He said that not just anyone can remove the 1965 addition. Whoever does it will have to be careful. He recommended Jim Harman to do the work. Tom Martens Jr. said that if the town rented the equipment, he would demolish the 1965 addition.

**Bill Bates:** Mr. Bates stated that he had just found out that the town owns the Alma Lake boat landing. Mr. Bates also asked if the board was going to have a meeting to discuss a PGA pro. Mr. Camp said that it will be discussed in closed session tomorrow night.

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**Walt Camp:** Mr. Camp said that he and Mr. Christensen were working on how to get renewals from golf club members. Next year, the rates for residents will be the same as for non-residents. Ads will be placed in newspapers. He also noted that sales tax will be charged.

- 6. Set Time and Date of Next Meeting:** The Annual Budget Hearing will be held on Tuesday, November 15, 2011 at 6:00 P.M. in the Community Center. A special elector meeting will be held immediately following the budget hearing to set the tax levy for 2012. The November town board meeting will follow the elector meeting at 7:00 P.M.
- 7. Adjournment:** Motion Vojta seconded Christensen that the meeting be adjourned. Approved. Meeting adjourned 10:20 A.M.

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Town Clerk

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Chairman

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Supervisor

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Supervisor

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