

Town of St. Armand
Special Board Meeting
Monday, June 7, 2021
5:30 PM

These Meeting Minutes were approved by the St. Armand Town Board on July 13, 2021.

A Special Board Meeting of the Town of St. Armand was held on the above date and time via a webinar conducted from the Town Hall, Bloomingdale, NY. The webinar meeting was advertised and made available to the public.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Town Supervisor Davina Winemiller, Deputy Supervisor D. Joseph Bates, Councilperson Donald Amell, and Councilperson Karl Law.

A quorum of the Board was in attendance.

TOWN EMPLOYEES PRESENT:

Town Clerk Barbara Darrah.

EXCUSED: Councilperson Jennifer Fuller

GUESTS: Kristyl Vuolo.

Public Notice was published in the Adirondack Daily Enterprise regarding the date and time of this meeting, and posted on the Town of St. Armand's website and Facebook page.

Supervisor Winemiller called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Winemiller began the discussion stating there were two topics to be discussed this evening: Rockledge Water District and Redistricting of the Town of St. Armand Water District. Winemiller stated the Town has some serious concerns going on in Rockledge and therefore, would like to address the Rockledge Water District first.

ROCKLEDGE INFRASTRUCTURE

When Dean Montroy was Town Supervisor, the Town hired MJ Engineering to do a Rockledge Water District report. They did an excellent job and their mapping is very good, as well. Specific problems were highlighted. Winemiller wanted to make the Board aware of the following and stated for the record:

The Rockledge Water District came about after Frank Cashier did the Rockledge subdivision. Frank Cashier installed all of the water and sewer lines that are in the Rockledge subdivision right now. In the early 90's, the folks at Rockledge came to the Town of St. Armand and requested St. Armand create a water district. The Village of Saranac Lake provides the water and collects the wastewater from the Rockledge area. Because Rockledge was not in the Village's district, the Village was charging them double, which was supported by the Village of Saranac Lake Water and Sewer regulations. The people of Rockledge with Frank Cashier convinced the Town of St. Armand's Town Board at that time, that because all the lines were new, if St. Armand took it over, the regular rate would be charged because they then belonged to a "district". The Town Board agreed back then. The Village of Saranac Lake has since abandoned that agreement, and Rockledge residents are now being charged approximately 3x the amount that the regular Village of Saranac Lake users are charged, because Rockledge is "outside" the district and the Village of Saranac Lake dissolved the agreement with St. Armand. The Village of Saranac Lake does bill Rockledge for Water and Wastewater, and the Town of St. Armand charges a special District tax, and we get approximately \$7,000 from those folks and the money goes toward upgrades to the infrastructure.

When MJ Engineering gave the Town of St. Armand the report, they did find that several parcels in the Town of North Elba section of Rockledge that were not paying anything as far as the taxes. They were paying the Water and Sewer rates. The Town of St. Armand corrected that. After the MJ Engineering report was received, Winemiller distributed the report to Fuller's and talked to a couple of other contractors, prior to the pandemic, stating we need to address the issues in the report. MJ came up with the amount of \$230,000 and Fuller got up to ½ a million, stating this project was way too much.

There is no Rockledge Sewer District, at all. When St. Armand took over the Water district, they never took over the Sewer District. What was supposed to happen was the homeowners of Rockledge were supposed to form a Homeowners' Association, and everyone was supposed to contribute to up-keeping the Sewer lines and it has never been done. That means if there is a sewer main break, there is no one responsible except for the homeowners themselves. About a year and a half ago, maybe a little bit more, there is a NY Alert system and every sewer system is supposed to have a contact in case of a sewer main break. Charlie Whitson and Dean Montroy both signed as the contacts for NY Alert. Winemiller sent a letter to DEC requesting that the Town of St. Armand be removed as contacts. DEC has not responded.

MJ's report indicated water lines and sewer lines are often running in the same trench. That is completely unacceptable unless a specific type of encasement is used. These lines were installed in the 1960's, so they are not right. In order to get grant funding for any sewer projects, the median household income for the target area is low to moderate income level to meet the grant guideline levels. Rockledge will not meet those requirements, based on the home values.

Winemiller referred to a map for the Town Board to view. The map indicated the Water district is twice the size of the Sewer. Some have their own septic or are vacant lots or lots with garages.

Winemiller provided the actual list of names and tax map numbers of the properties in Rockledge. There are 35 with Water and 12 with Sewer. Winemiller would recommend cutting the line at a certain point and drill a well and installed their own septic. It is a user-funded system; the homeowners would be paying a debt service of \$100 per quarter for 30 years for Water. If they took out a loan to fund the sewer, it would cost the homeowners thousands of dollars. Example: For water, if it cost a million dollars with 35 users, the cost to each would be \$28,571 per unit. They do not qualify for a penny in grants; I don't even know if they would qualify for 0% interest. They are considered outside the Village of Saranac Lake.

Discussion amongst the Town Board ensued. It was determined the Town Board will schedule a Special Board Meeting regarding the Rockledge Infrastructure for Wednesday, June 30th at 6:30 pm at the Highway Garage. The Special Board Meeting will be offered online via webinar, as well. Winemiller will send a letter to the Rockledge property owners informing them of the situation and notification of the Special Board Meeting.

BLOOMINGDALE WATER AND SEWER REDISTRICTING

Winemiller displayed Water and Sewer Maps depicting the current Bloomingdale Water and Sewer Districts and the proposed Water and Sewer Redistricting maps to the Town Board. There are no sewer lines on Poplar Street, Vine Street and Whiteface Lane. Complaints have been received for several years from residents on St. Regis Avenue that there is a sewer smell during the summer. The upgrade of lines and lift stations were discussed. There is a high clay content in our soil, which interferes with the properly drained septic systems. The Water and Sewer Regulations were also reviewed and indicated there are houses on Route 3 that are within 100 feet of a sewer line, therefore, they must hook into the sewer line as well.

Discussion ensued among the Board members. The Sewer Regulations and the Sewer Ordinance are both located on the Town's website and the Town Board members will review them. In order for the District boundaries and the Rules and Regulations to come together, the redistricting needs to happen. A question posed was what adjustments and costs need to be made in order to meet making the two match each other? CDBG grants will pay for lateral installations of those that need to connect to the sewer line main. There is a lot of money in the pipeline coming down the line for infrastructure. We need to get this in place, so that one district can apply for those grant funds for one district. Winemiller agreed to review what CDBG will cover and will report back to the Board at the next scheduled Board meeting.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

Supervisor Winemiller then opened the meeting to anyone with questions or comments?

Kristyl Vuolo: I live across from the Ball Field. There is a potential tragedy to occur where parking is taking place in front of the swing set on the Ball Field. I suggest boulders or some sort of signs be put up to keep the parking back farther away from the swing set or the play park. Back in the day it was reserved for Handicap parking.

Winemiller: I can do cones and flagging to prevent parking in front of the play park. I will go down tomorrow with the Highway crew. Thank you for bringing that to our attention,

There were no other questions or comments.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Deputy Supervisor D. Joseph Bates made a Motion to Adjourn the Special Board Meeting. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Karl Law and the Special Board Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

I, Barbara J. Darrah, Town Clerk for the Town of St. Armand, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct transcript of the Special Board Meeting minutes held on the above-referenced date.

Barbara J. Darrah
St. Armand Town Clerk

Dated: June 7, 2021