

Town of St. Armand  
Special Board Meeting – Rockledge Infrastructure  
Monday, March 28, 2022  
5:30 PM

*These Meeting Minutes were approved by the St. Armand Town Board on May 17, 2022.*

A Special Board Meeting of the Town of St. Armand was held on the above date and time at the St. Armand Town Hall, 1702 NYS Route 3, Bloomingdale, NY. The meeting was held virtually only due to an uptick in new Covid cases. This meeting is the fifth Special Board Meeting held to discuss the Rockledge Water districting and Rockledge Sewer lines.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Town Supervisor Davina Winemiller, Deputy Supervisor Karl Law, Councilperson Donald Amell, and Councilperson Stephanie Mikesell, all on line.

*A quorum of the Board was in attendance.*

**TOWN EMPLOYEES PRESENT:**

Town Clerk Barbara Darrah.

**EXCUSED:** Councilperson Sheridan Swinyer

**GUESTS:** Rhan Estling, Jay Federman, Katie L., Becky Ladue, Klaus Meissner, Judy Odell, Brad Pollock, and two (2) unidentified callers.

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. Emails were sent to the Rockledge Water District users, advising them of the meeting date and time.

Supervisor Winemiller called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Winemiller asked everyone to stand and join in the Pledge of Allegiance. Winemiller thanked everyone present for attending this meeting.

Supervisor Winemiller had previously emailed the draft Rockledge Rules and Regulations to the Rockledge residents, and at this meeting she asked them to state what they felt needed to be changed or reworded in the draft regulations:

Page 1: Brad Pollock had submitted an email and one item (section 3) was that people with wells should be grandfathered because some properties now have wells and they are in the district. Winemiller stated she had an updated map and displayed the map on the screen. All she could tell them is from the data she had now: whether or not they receive a water and sewer bill and whether or not they receive a tax bill from the Town of St. Armand. Whether they have a well or not, she does not have that information.

Rhan: Is there an issue if people have a redundant supply of water? Winemiller explained that the Department of Health frowns upon that because at times well water has fed into the public water supply. Winemiller explained it cannot be both ways. We need to figure out which way you all want to go.

Rhan: He thinks if someone has a well already and hooked up into the water system, should be grandfathered somehow. He asked Davina to scroll the map up to the top. From what he sees from the inside corner of his boundary, he has two empty lots, which are not in the district and someday he might want to build on those properties. If he wanted to have water at a proposed garage, he would have to get permission to hook into the water system and if he wanted to put a well, he would not be allowed?

Winemiller explained this happens in Bloomingdale. The residents have an option of drilling a well or get permission from the Town to tap into the Bloomingdale water district. She continued that if he wanted to tap into the existing water line at his expense and add into the Water district and the Town Board would approve or not approve. Once he did that, he would pay Fuller's or someone to do the tap, and the piece would be included into the district.

Brad Pollock: The deeds all say they have a right to all utilities; water, cable, etc over the town roads. He asked what is with the 1,000 feet? He has a well outside the district. How can the Town have jurisdiction over someone who is not in the district?

Discussion ensued regarding property lines, district, etc.

Brad Pollock stated his house and Matt Cook's house are in the Baker Mountain District. Brad stated he is paying \$700.00 a year and he does not use a drop of water. He asked what he needed to do to unhook from the water line, because he does want to belong to the Rockledge District. He stated he has a curb stop, and if the resident has a curb stop, they are charged \$168.00 per quarter by the Village of Saranac Lake. He wants to remove the curb stop and asked if he removes that curb stop, does that remove him from the District? He stated Frank Casier put the curb stops on each lot in order to sell lots. Judy Odell stated she does not have a key and never had a key to turn the water off.

Discussion ensued regarding the right to remove the curb stop or turn it on and off. Winemiller explained that is why we are here talking so that we can make changes to the draft regulations. Proposed wording changes:

Page 1, Section 3: Change the language to say the homeowner can turn their own tap on or off.

Page 3, Section F: Add language to say along with the homeowner, the Village of Saranac Lake or the Town of St. Armand can also be called upon to shut the curb stop off, and the homeowner must keep the curb stop in good working order.

Page 3, Section of Entry of Premises in Emergency situation: If the curb stop is broken, and the water cannot be shut off, that is what the Entry of Premises is for. Only Emergency Personnel can enter in this situation. Discussion ensued regarding various emergency situations that would require entry into the premises.

Page 4, Section E: "No private wells are permitted". Winemiller stated this goes back to the map. The three lots that don't have anything; they are right smack dab in the District and are benefitting by having the water lines going by the front, but they are not being billed. They are vacant lots. The NYS Comptroller's office ruled that vacant lots that are in the Water District, and have water or sewer lines, that they have to be charged something. The Town of St. Armand charges ½ debt services on those lots. The Rockledge residents need to decide how they want it. Do they want the vacant lots to be charged ½ debt services for having the resource? Discussion ensued regarding the 1,000 feet distance. Winemiller stated page 4, section #, that last sentence will be deleted.

Page 7, Section C: Behavior has to be enforceable. A local law can be on the books all day long, but if there is no consequences to not following the local law, it is not worth the paper it's written on.

Notes: Brad Pollock stated he is paying \$168.00 per quarter and using no water, and then he pays for an empty lot at \$31.75 on my taxes. There are lots inside not paying anything. Every lot which has a curb stop has a water bill of \$168.00 per quarter. Discussion ensued as to the various charges. Winemiller explained the reason that Rockledge, Beechwood, and Trudeau are being charged 3x the usage fee (the outside district rate) by the Village of Saranac Lake. Those areas are not inside the Village of Saranac Lake and therefore cannot be charged the debt service. So, the higher user rate is making up for the debt services they cannot charge. Winemiller reported she will be meeting with the new mayor regarding the possibility of the Village of Saranac Lake charging the debt service rather than paying the higher user rates. The charges would then be the one flat rate (debt service) plus the actual usage.

Discussion ensued regarding the connections to the Main. Winemiller explained that the residents need to decide how they want the language to read regarding the connections. The Rockledge Water District is user funded. That means that everyone that is paying that St. Armand tax, is responsible for those water lines. In the St. Armand Water Regulations, if the person who wants the line to go to their house, then all the residents in between are required to connect to that line. That is what the Department of Health wanted in the wording of the St. Armand Water Regulations. An audience member asked if water use is charged for Fire Department Tax. Winemiller added that Fire tax is a separate line item on the property tax bill.

Winemiller stated she will put the changes discussed tonight in a second draft and will forward that draft to the Rockledge residents, along with the updated map. She continued that the next Rockledge meeting date will be set at the next Town Board Meeting.

#### HIGHWAY GARAGE FURNACE

The quotes were forwarded to the Board members. The Highway Committee members will meet on Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 am, and the recommendations will be discussed at the April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Regular Board Meeting.

#### WATER CONTROLS, ALARMS AND EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION QUOTE

Supervisor Winemiller displayed the updated quote from Arvid on the water controls, alarms and emergency communication that was recommended by the Department of Health. She stated she will email the updated quote to the Board members as she had just received it and it was not in their packets and they will discuss at the April 19<sup>th</sup> Regular Board meeting.

#### CANNABIS SURVEY AND SURVEY SCHEDULE

The Cannabis survey was updated and Winemiller displayed it on the screen. The Board members agreed the survey was good. Winemiller stated the dates and times for the Survey to be conducted would be discussed at the April 19<sup>th</sup> Regular Board meeting.

#### QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR CONCERNS:

Winemiller asked those present if anyone had any more comments, questions, or concerns. There were no further questions, comments or concerns.

#### MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Councilperson Stephanie Mikesell made a Motion to Adjourn the Special Board Meeting. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Donald Amell and the Special Board Meeting adjourned at 7:20 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.

Dated: March 28, 2022

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Barbara J. Darrah  
St. Armand Town Clerk