

**VILLAGE OF ST. BERNARD**  
**COUNCIL MEETING**  
**December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

The St. Bernard Village Council Meeting was held on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, in Council Chambers.

The meeting was opened with a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call showed seven members were present: Mr. Moreton, Mr. Stuchell, Mr. Edwards, Ms. Hausfeld, Mr. Schildmeyer, Mr. Culbertson and Ms. Rytov.

A motion by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Edwards, to dispense with the reading of the last council meeting minutes and approve of the written minutes of the last council meeting. Motion passed 7-0. Minutes stand as submitted.

**REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIALS**

Mayor, Mr. Stuchell- Thank you to the St. Bernard Service Department for their response to the most recent snow fall. It was a difficult snow, and you all did a great job getting our streets in excellent condition. Congratulations to who will soon be our newest Firefighter/Paramedic, John Davidson who will be sworn in on Wednesday, January 7th. We will be hosting a ceremonial swearing in and pinning for John and our two newest police officers at an upcoming council meeting, hopefully in January. The CIC will not be having a December meeting and will be back on schedule for Tuesday, January 27th at 6 pm unless a special meeting is called. We will also be holding elections at the January meeting. There are 3 positions available, 1 for Elected or Appointed, which is the position that I am serving, 1 for Business Rep. which Joe Brickler is serving and 1 for Resident Rep. which Tom Rolfsen is holding. Those individuals may run again but anyone who qualifies to fill one of positions may declare their interest to run. If you are interested, please contact me at 513-543-3780. You will be given an opportunity to make a pitch to the board at the next meeting when the elections will be held. Thank you that concludes my report.

Auditor, Ms. Brickweg- Thank you, Mr. President. On the agenda tonight is Ordinance 34 2025. This is the end of the year ordinance. What it all came down to is the normal additional appropriations to 2-A-2 Miscellaneous \$100,000, 7-A-1 Fire Employees \$10,000, General Fund \$62,000, Medicare \$4,000 and Capital Improvements \$225,000. It also decreases the following, Tax Refunds \$50,000 outside council \$25,000 Building Maintenance Safety Center \$20,000 Building Maintenance City Hall \$55,000 Landfill and composting \$20,000 Gas Well Monitoring \$22,000 Service employees \$120,000 OPERS \$27,000 Capital Improvements \$200,000 Police Pension fund \$24,000, Fire Pension fund \$14,000, C-9 trust fund \$50,000, Service Department

Leasing \$30,000 and employee health expenses \$375,000. We are decreasing \$1,032,000 but increasing \$339,000, which is a difference of \$793,000 if we do not use the 2-A-2 Miscellaneous funds. I also have on the agenda, Ordinance 35 2025, which is the 2026 Budget. The total for the budget is \$15,835,302.46, which is approximately \$64,000 under our current projected revenues. That concludes my report.

Law Director, Ms. Van Valkenberg- Thank you, Mr. President. We have on the agenda a couple different ordinances, Ordinance 31 2025, which has to do with the installation of screening and landscaping and various off street parking areas. We have not requested that we go emergency on these ordinances, however I did notice on ordinances 32 and 33, of which are rezoning ordinances, and there's a typo where we ask in Section 3 that they do go by emergency, but we did not in the caption at the top or the title "and declaring an emergency." So, I think Caroline could write that in at the top or I can get you a copy before the end of the evening. There hasn't been a reading of it yet, so it's not like we have to amend it. But if we just write in "and declaring an emergency" and I would ask ordinances 32 and 33 go by emergency. This will allow especially Friars Club to go forward with the construction that it needs. That concludes my report.

Treasurer, Ms. Darrenkamp- Absent.

Safety and Service Director, Mr. Wendling- Thank you. Mr. President. We have received several complaints regarding the odor being generated by Synthica. You're probably all aware of this. Synthica is the anaerobic digester plant that was constructed at the corner of Vine Street and Murray Rd. The company processes and converts pre-consumer food waste and industrial organic waste into natural gas. I went down there this afternoon to investigate the complaints. There was a noticeable and overwhelming odor emanating from the plant. I have discussed the situation with AJ, our Zoning Administrator, and together we were going to work on strategy to address the situation going forward. The village is also working with the administration of Roger Bacon to help facilitate the expansion of the school's parking lot that is accessed from Leonard Ave. As you're aware of, the parking situation has been a long-time concern of the residents surrounding school. Some of the residents of Leonard Ave are very concerned about what that means for them. Obviously, the goal of the village and the school is to provide students with greater access to parking on school property. Once details of the plan are fully developed, the school plans to reach out to its neighbors. That concludes my report.

Tax Administrator, Ms. Helmes- November 2025 end of month receipts:

Tax collections for November 2025: \$683,019.

November 2025 is up 14.13% or \$84,550.00 from November 2024.

Refunds for November: -\$100,280.

Delinquent tax collected with Capital Recovery: \$305.75.

Delinquent tax collected with the Ohio Attorney General's Office: \$7,538.

Final reminder to those who have not filed their 2024 St. Bernard tax return. Please get your return filed before the end of the year, as Tax Assessments will begin in January of 2026.

## REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance, Mr. Moreton- Thank you, Mr. President. Again, I would like to share my encouragement for the passage of the proposed 2026 budget tonight. Folks know where a government's priorities are based on where the money goes. For St. Bernard, this proposed budget reflects years of strategic spending, smart debt management, and a prioritization of our streets and Service, Fire, and Police Departments. Thank you again to Auditor Brickweg, Mayor Stuchell, and Safety Service Director Wendling for preparing it and to my colleagues on the Finance Committee for their questioning and reviewing it. Also, we will be hosting the folks from Energy Alliances here in Council Chambers on January 5th at 1PM and on January 8th at 5PM for a public hearing. At this hearing, the team at Energy Alliances will present the Plan of Operation and Governance for both the electric and gas aggregation programs. This document lays out a high-level plan for the onboarding of these programs and the roles our Village and Energy Alliances play. At the January Committee of the Whole, I plan to ask Council to add an ordinance to approve this plan to the table. The passage of this associate ordinance by Council is the next immediately necessary step to arrange energy aggregation, but there will be more opportunities in the spring for Town Halls to cover a broader range of topics and receive and incorporate more resident feedback. For now, I again invite you all to Council Chambers on either January 5th at 1PM or January 8th at 5PM. In the meantime, I encourage folks to visit [www.energyalliances.com/stbernard](http://www.energyalliances.com/stbernard) for more information. Directly after the hearing on the 8th, I will be hosting a condensed Community Connect in Council Chambers to discuss anything regarding the Village beyond Energy Aggregation. Lastly, I wish everyone a warm, safe, and happy remainder of the holiday season. Thank you. That concludes my report.

Service, Mr. Stuchell- Thank you Mr. President. The Waste Collection Fee Report for October 2025 shows that \$27,942.73 was remitted to the Village, while the report for November 2025 shows that \$23,431.07 was remitted. As part of the November 2025 Waste Collection Report, the Service Department completed the following:

- Spotted 27 dump trucks at residences.
- Spotted 9 dumpsters at residences.
- 108 special pick-ups at residences.
- Hauled 138.4 tons of garbage to the landfill.
- Hauled 21.3 tons of recyclable material to Rumpke Recycling.
- Responded to 5 nuisance property complaints, all of which resulted in the properties being cut and billed by the Village. The Service Department and City Hall will be closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day. There will be no trash or recycling collection on Thursday, December 25th or Thursday, January 1st. The modified collection schedule for those weeks will be as follows: Thursday collection will be moved to Wednesday, Monday, Tuesday, and Friday collections remain on their regular schedule. Yesterday, the Service Committee met to finalize discussions on the revised draft of the hall rental contract. The committee, along with Mayor Stuchell and Mr. Wendling, discussed and reached consensus on two key components of the updated hall rental policy: liability insurance requirements and rental costs. The committee agreed that special event liability insurance will be required for any rental where alcohol is served, based on the recommendation of the Village's insurance provider. To reduce the burden on renters, the administration will explore allowing renters to purchase this insurance directly

through the Village as part of the rental process, with costs varying based on event size and the type of alcohol served. In addition, all renters will be required to sign an agreement accepting liability for any damages incurred during their rental. Regarding cost, the committee agreed to require a \$200 security deposit and set up a flat rental fee of \$250, intended to help cover on-site staffing, administrative overhead, and a portion of cleaning costs. This fee structure is designed to balance cost recovery for the Village while keeping the facility accessible to residents. Unfortunately, the halls will not be ready to rent to residents beginning January 1st but are expected to be available by the end of the first quarter of 2026, likely in February or March. This timeline will allow the Village to identify and hire on-site staff for rentals, ensure the online rental portal is fully operational without errors or glitches, and confirm the administrative staff are fully trained on the new software. Administrative staff will also retain the authority to adjust rules and policies related to the hall rental contract as needed, given their role in managing rentals on a day-to-day basis. Any proposed changes to rental costs, however, would return to the Service Committee for discussion and review. Once all edits to the hall rental contract are finalized, the updated version will be presented to Council for consideration. Thank you, that concludes my report.

Public Improvements, Mr. Edwards- Thank you, Mr. president. There was no need for a Public Improvement Committee Meeting, but I would like to report on The St. Bernard -Ludlow Grove Historical Society program. This month's presentation was on The Origin of Santa and other world gift bringers. This presentation was given by Dann Wollert, a local food historian and author of numerous books on goetta and Cincinnati chili and has researched the origins of our modern-day Santa. To be honest, this was probably the hardest program to report on. Most of the traditions he discussed were from Germany. Most were dark and not stories I would read to my grand kids. Most had names I'm not sure if he knew how to pronounce himself. It was interesting none the less. St. Nicholas and Kris Kringle was the forerunner to our Santa Claus. It is believed that the Dutch first brought the legend of St. Nicholas to what is now New York in the 17th century. In 1823 a poem, A Visit from St. Nicholas, in which St. Nicholas arrived on roof tops in a sleigh pulled by flying reindeer gave us the Santa we have today. The image of Santa we have today is one developed by The Cocoa Cola company in the 1940's. The Happy round figure we all love. One last thing I would like to say, a quote from Santa that I have personally heard many times. Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night." Thank you, Mr. President this concludes my report.

Safety, Ms. Hausfeld- Thank you, Mr. President. Tonight, I have both the police and fire reports. So, for the month of November, the fire incidents were structure fires 13, other fires 3, vehicle fires 1, auto accident 6, hazmat incidents 5, service calls 6, fire alarms 11, CO alarms 1, EMS assists 7, for a total of 53. Mutual aid given was Elmwood Place 3, Norwood 5, Reading 1, Springfield Township 1, Deer Park 1, Delhi 1, Green Township 2, North College Hill 2, Miami Township 1, and mutual aid received was Norwood 1. ESM transports were 39 and non-transports were 34 for a total of 73. EMS mutual aid given were Elmwood Place 10, Norwood 5 and Cincinnati 2 with zero mutual aid received. All personnel for the fire department have completed their Confined Space rescue refresher training and toured the BASF site. The Fire Department also would like to wish a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year to everyone. The Police Department report for the month of November is as follows. The Police Department had 504 calls for service, resulting in 367 contacts. There were an additional 386

other services details that were not necessarily called in by the public. These calls for service included 29 total criminal offenses resulting in 55 criminal arrests, 28 traffic citations, and 49 traffic warnings. They responded to 21 accidents through three of those involved injuries. With winter getting ahead start, and boy did it, the citizens are cautioned to not leave their vehicles unattended while attempting to warm them up during the cold weather. Also remember that all last-minute online Christmas gifts can be shipped to the Saint Bernard Safety Center, and they can be picked up with proper identification. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all. That concludes my report.

Laws, Contracts and Claims, Mr. Schildmeyer- No report.

Marketing, Mr. Culbertson- No report.

Business and Industry, Ms. Rytov- No report.

Committee of the Whole, Ms. Stegman- Thank you Mr. President. The minutes for the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting were submitted December 17th, and I have no communications this evening.

ORDINANCE NO. 31 2025  
AMENDING SECTION 1181.15 OF THE ST. BERNARD CODIFIED ORDINANCES  
REGARDING DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF OFF-STREET PARKING  
AREAS.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Culbertson, to have Ordinance 31 2025 go regular course.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- Is that correct? That is the one that does not have the emergency clause in it.

Law Director, Ms. Van Valkenberg- That is correct.

Council Member, Ms. Hausfeld- Before we take a vote, there seems to be some conversation down there. What is going on?

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- It was my understanding that if we introduce an ordinance in year 2025 and it does not pass in year 2025, we will have to start over in year 2026 for that ordinance.

Law Director, Ms. Van Valkenberg- I forgot about that. I apologize, that is my fault. So, then it does need to go by emergency, or we can reintroduce it in January. Thank you for finding that and pointing that out.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Culbertson, to rescind the motion to go regular course.

ORDINANCE NO. 32 2025

APPROVING THE REZONING OF CERTAIN PROPERTY, AMENDING THE BUILDING  
ZONE MAP AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Moreton, to suspend with the 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
reading of Ordinance 32 2025. Motion passes 7-0.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Edwards, to adopt Ordinance 32 2025.  
Motion passes 7-0.

ORDINANCE NO. 33 2025

APPROVING THE REZONING OF CERTAIN PROPERTY, AMENDING THE BUILDING  
ZONE MAP AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Moreton, to suspend with the 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
reading of Ordinance 33 2025. Motion passes 7-0.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld, to adopt Ordinance 33 2025.  
Motion passes 7-0.

ORDINANCE NO. 34 2025

AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE AUDITOR TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL  
APPROPRIATIONS AND DECREASE APPROPRIATIONS AND DECLARING AN  
EMERGENCY.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Moreton, to suspend with the 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
reading of Ordinance 34 2025. Motion passes 7-0.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld, to adopt Ordinance 34 2025.  
Motion passes 7-0.

ORDINANCE NO. 35 2025

AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE APPROPRIATION FOR EXPENSES AND OTHER  
EXPENDITURES OF THE VILLAGE OF ST. BERNARD, STATE OF OHIO, DURING THE  
FISCAL YEAR 2026 AND ESTABLISHING NEW LINE ITEMS AND DECLARING AN  
EMERGENCY.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Moreton, to suspend with the 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
reading of Ordinance 35 2025. Motion passes 7-0.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Ms. Hausfeld, to adopt Ordinance 35 2025.  
Motion passes 7-0.

ORDINANCE NO. 31 2025

AMENDING SECTION 1181.15 OF THE ST. BERNARD CODIFIED ORDINANCES  
REGARDING DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF OFF-STREET PARKING  
AREAS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Moreton, to suspend with the 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup> reading of Ordinance 31 2025. Motion passes 7-0.

Motion made by Mr. Schildmeyer, seconded by Mr. Culbertson, to adopt Ordinance 31 2025. Motion passes 7-0.

President of Council, Mr. Asbach- At this time, does anyone on council have anything under old business? New Business?

Council Member, Ms. Hausfeld- I have already voiced my opinion when I was a part of the committee, but I would like to publicly voice my opinion again. I am really disappointed and upset with the committee that is making the policy and pricing on hall rentals. I'm not saying that there should not be something in place, I'm just saying I'm looking out for people that can't afford and I don't think a few bad apples should dictate to us that we have to make things more costly. That's my personal opinion and maybe I am old school. I was born and raised here, and that was always a perk for our residents. Now that they are going to be charging more money to rent the halls and a deposit on top of that and insurance on top of that, I mean maybe I should be talking as a citizen right now, but I am talking as both. As a citizen, I do not appreciate it, and I do not think it is fair to people that do not have the means to pay that kind of money. I do not think it is fair that the few bad apples are dictating this now. Just my opinion. Thank you.

## **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Tom Cunningham, 702 E Ross Ave.- Want to start by saying thank you to the service department for the excellent job that was done on the snowfall. I also saw the new snow plow out front that looks nice. Let's hope you don't get much use out of it. I read an article in the Enquirer on December 4th. Cincinnati ordinance requires homeowners to clear snow. Cincinnati residents digging themselves out of this month. People might be wondering who's responsible for clearing the sidewalk near their home. Here's what Cincinnati has to say about resident's obligation to remove snow and ice from sidewalks after winter weather. Homeowners and tenants are responsible for keeping sidewalks free of snow and ice. A city ordinance on the books and Set 1972 burners property owners and tenants to remove snow from sidewalks within the first daylight hours after snow stops falling. The snow cannot be removed from sidewalks and placed in gutters, according to the ordinance. Another ordinance also requires owners and tenants to make icy sidewalks safe for pedestrians by either removing the ice or treating the sidewalk with a substance such as sand. Can I be fined for not clearing the sidewalk? Yes, you can be fined, but you probably will not be. In Cincinnati failure to comply with either city ordinance requiring snow to be removed from sidewalks and icy sidewalks to be made safe, it's punishable by a fine of no more than \$25. However, the city has previously said it is not issuing citations for violations. It's city spokesperson told the Inquirer there are no records pertaining to penalties for violating the ordinances. No citations have been issued. Now after all, that is my question, what is Saint Bernard's rules and regulations about clearing snow and ice from sidewalks near your home?

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- I have the codified ordinances pulled up. It's 521.06 Duty to Keep Sidewalks in Repair and Clean. It says under Section B, it shall be the duty of the owner of

each and every parcel of real estate in the village abutting upon any sidewalk to keep the sidewalk abutting his premises free and clear of snow and ice and to remove all snow and ice accumulated thereon within a responsible time which will ordinarily not exceed 12 hours after the abatement of any storm during which the snow and ice may have accumulated violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the 4th degree. So, after reading this, it sounds pretty similar to the ordinances that you cited from Cincinnati other than I don't think we were mentioning anything in here about it says 12 hours after the abatement of any storm rather than a day.

Tom Cunningham, 702 E Ross Ave.- So, we won't have to worry about someone knocking on our door with a citation if we do not follow the ordinance?

Council Member, Mr. Moreton- I am unaware of how much we are enforcing this. I would guess that you do not have to be concerned about it.

Tom Cunningham, 702 E Ross Ave.- I know they are busy at the police department. They do not need that extra work to be added to their list of duties. Thank you.

The next Committee of the Whole will be held on Thursday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm in Council Chambers.

Motion made by Mr. Moreton, seconded by Mr. Stuchell, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passes 7-0.

Meeting is adjourned.