



Vars Community Association / Association communautaire de Vars

P.O. Box 166, 5717 Rockdale Rd, Vars, ON K0A 3H0 info@Vars.ca

## Minutes of the Vars Community Association (VCA) Meeting

<b>Meeting date</b>	September 22, 2017
<b>Attendees</b>	<p>Gary Larocque            Jean Séguin            Genevieve Henrie            Jenny Ashdown            Ivan Tanner            Véronique Cantin            Wayne Redsell            Councillor Stephen Blais            Jason Coulas</p> <p>Of note: The meeting was held at the Alcide Trudeau Park, amalgamated with a BBQ and movie at the Park. Residents that were at the park also attended the meeting.</p>

Items	Summary of discussions/decisions	Actions
1.	<p><b>Comments from the President, Gary Larocque</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See speaking notes at the end of the document (Appendix A)</li> </ul>	
2.	<p><b>Review of projects and financial statement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jean presented the financial statement and explained how funds are reserved for specific projects.</li> <li>- Overall, we are in good financial standing.</li> </ul>	
3.	<p><b>Comments from special guests</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Councillor Blais addressed the members</li> <li>- Confirmed that grant was approved for new park sign</li> <li>- Park facilities revamping still a priority, waiting from other governments' funding partnership</li> </ul>	
4.	<p><b>Question period</b></p> <p>Members as well as residents asked questions to Councillor Blais</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is happening around us?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Paving of streets, no new developments</li> </ul> </li> <li>- The dump?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Approved by province with conditions, creation of a community committee to come</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Municipal water? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Environmental study with Russell for extending water in industrial park and across 417.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
5.	<p><b>The year ahead</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jean spoke about some of our priorities for the coming year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o A new community center in Alcide Trudeau Park</li> <li>o A tennis court in the village</li> </ul> </li> <li>- He also asked the residents that were present to fill out a questionnaire to help the VCA establish new priorities for the next 5 years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Questionnaire can be found in Appendix B</li> <li>o Results can be found in Appendix C</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
6.	<p><b>Election of directors</b></p> <p><b>President:</b> Gary Larocque  <b>Vice President:</b> Wayne Redsell  <b>Secretary:</b> Genevieve Henrie  <b>Treasurer:</b> Jenny Ashdown  <b>Directors:</b>  Ivan Tanner  Véronique Cantin  Danielle Vendette  Chris Nooyen</p>	
7.	<b>Closing remarks</b>	

## Appendix A: President's Comments

Good evening, bonsoir, and welcome to the VCA's Annual General Meeting.

I wish to take a few moments to run down the activities that your association has been involved with over the past year.

We have held monthly meetings where as a team, we have reviewed issues, projects, concerns and priorities of interest for the village.

Each member has had numerous one-on-one meetings with residents, our elected representatives, potential entrepreneurs and City officials to determine what else can be done to improve our village.

Over the year, we have been involved with;

- The Remembrance Day ceremony
- Cenotaph maintenance
- Rink management
- Market Mobile activities which have been cancelled due to lack of volunteer participation
- Canada Day celebrations supporting the Optimist Club
- St-Guillaume parish centennial celebrations
- Casandra Park design and inauguration
- Alcide Trudeau Park construction proposal which is still being contemplated, pending funding
- Key agent for Alcide Trudeau Park and Bearbrook centre
- Summer youth program which has been postponed this year due to lack of registrations
- Potential train line to the City core still in the back of our minds
- Community garden maintenance which is somewhat being used
- The annual Christmas tree lighting

Obviously, we did not do all of this alone nor did we do just that. While we have many friends throughout the community, our main partners have been Councillor Blais, his staff, especially Philip Berthiaume, and City officials, the school and most of all, the Optimist Club members.

On the financial side, a quick look at the financial statement shows that the VCA is in good financial health. We had decided to slip our savings under different categories for better management and planning exercises. The VCA receives very limited funding other than from the City for specific activities like the rink and key agent. Over the years, while we have sponsored community activities and acquired some items for our youth program for instance, we still manage to have some \$29,000 in the bank which is split under different community activities.

We are in good business standing with Corporations Canada as well as with Revenue Canada, having filed our corporate tax returns on time.

We are keeping an eye on the proposed development of the Taggart-Miller waste recovery plant as Vars might be called upon to participate in a community financial support program as was done with the Mer Blue plant.

The biggest challenge remains finding volunteers. We do notice that not only for the VCA but also the Optimist Club and parish organizations are having more and more trouble finding community members to help out. The solution is not that obvious and we all need urgent help in finding ways to increase community participation, otherwise programs will fall short. A perfect example is the Market Mobile initiative and to some extent the summer youth program.

We are putting a special call out to students who require community work hours to complete their curriculum. We also need community input on what will make our village better, both economically and socially, for the benefit of all, young and old.

While Vars is a so-called bedroom community, it is expanding with many new young families. We are most fortunate to have the St-Guillaume school at our disposal and the terrific group of committed teachers to help out. We all have to do our part to support the rural community that we have so close to urban centres. Every single one of us makes the community what it is and we only can shape its future through our participation and ideas. This is what the VCA is all about. Merci.

We will now proceed to the next items...

**YOU tell us!**

**Donnez-nous votre opinion!**

1. What do you like most about Vars OR when it comes to the village of Vars, what are you the most proud of?

Que préférez-vous à propos de Vars OU en ce qui concerne le village de Vars, d'où provient votre fierté?

2. What would you like to see in the village? Select all that apply. If you have different ideas, please add below.

Que voudriez-vous voir dans le village? Sélectionnez tout ce qui s'applique. Si vous avez des idées différentes, veuillez les ajouter ci-dessous.

- New Community Centre in the Alcide Trudeau Park // Nouveau Centre communautaire dans le Parc Alcide Trudeau
- Tennis courts / Terrains de tennis
- Splash pad / Aires de jets d'eau
- Walking and biking trails / Sentiers de marche et vélo
- Dog park / Parc pour chiens
- Restaurants /commercial development (if so, which ones – e.g. coffee shop)
- Restaurants / développement commercial (dans l'affirmative, lesquels – p. ex. café)
- Road improvements / Améliorations routières
- Recreation programs (if so, which ones?) / Programmes récréatifs (le cas échéant, lesquels?)

**Ideas are great but what's even better is implementing them!**

In order to do that, we need volunteers. If you are interested (or know someone that might be), please add your name, email address and interest below (examples of interest can be Parks & Recreation, Economic development, Events, Rink)

**Les idées sont excellentes, mais ce qui est encore mieux, c'est de les mettre en œuvre !**

Pour ce faire, nous avons besoin de bénévoles. Si vous êtes intéressé (ou connaissez quelqu'un qui pourrait l'être), veuillez ajouter votre nom, votre courriel et votre intérêt ci-dessous (des exemples d'intérêt peuvent être parcs et loisirs, développement économique, évènements, patinoire).

## Appendix C: Questionnaire results (in English only)

This is the first round of surveys (The VCA will reach out to the community on several occasions this year).

A total of 11 people filled out the questionnaire.

### 1. What do you like most about Vars OR when it comes to the village of Vars, what are you the most proud of?

Answer	Who
The activities planned for the community (family activities, Carnival, Canada Day, Halloween)	3/11
Small community, sense belonging, overall community spirit	8/11
Safe and secured community	2/11
Partnership between the Saint-Guillaume school, the Optimist Club, the VCA.	1/11

### 2. What would you like to see in the village? Select all that apply. If you have different ideas, please add below.

Answer	Who
New Community Centre in the Alcide Trudeau Park (2 of which noted that the open/covered structure should not be closed off)	5/11
Tennis courts	3/11
Splash pad	9/11
Walking and biking trails	5/11
Dog park	0/11
Restaurants /commercial development (1 of which specified Tim Horton's and Subway)	5/11
Road improvements	1/11
Recreation programs Out of the 8, some specified which programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ski club (2)</li> <li>• Volleyball (1)</li> <li>• Basketball (1)</li> <li>• Exercise (1)</li> <li>• Tennis (1)</li> <li>• Craft (1)</li> </ul>	8/11
Other comments	
Improved basketball court	1/11
More activities that involve the entire community	1/11
More advertisement (online, signs)	1/11