

**CITY & TOWN OF ST. ALBANS
JOINT STUDY COMMITTEE
SIX MONTH STATUS REPORT
June 2012**

Bernie Boudreau
Selectboard Chair
Town of St. Albans

Liz Gamache
Mayor and Council Chair
City of St. Albans

The City & Town of St. Albans Joint Study Committee (JSC) was formed October 18, 2011. The first meeting, organizational in nature, was held on November 16, 2011. The committee is comprised of ten members from each community. City and Town Managers may participate as non-voting committee members as well. The City of St. Albans JSC members were appointed by the City Council. The Town of St. Albans Selectboard declined to participate as members of the JSC. The Town of St. Albans JSC members were appointed by the Town of St. Albans Planning Commission.

The charge of the Joint Study Committee is as follows:

1. To facilitate a thoughtful, deliberate, and public process for evaluating the feasibility of this proposal.
2. To select and retain consultants or independent experts as recommended by the Committee as necessary funds are made available.
3. To prepare a plan for Re-constituting the Town of St. Albans for consideration by the voters in the Town and City.

The Joint Study Committee decided to work in a subcommittee structure. The initial subcommittees were:

Legal/Process
Governance
Finance & Budget
Facilities & Assets
Personnel & Operations
School Issues
Economic Development & Growth
Study Resources & Outreach

The subcommittees meet once or twice per month and the full JSC meets monthly. After initial meetings of the subcommittees, the Legal/Process and Governance subcommittees merged together and the Finance & Budget and Facilities & Assets subcommittees merged together. It was determined that the subcommittees were looking at like information and traveling down the same paths. At the full JSC meeting in March it was determined that the Personnel & Operations

subcommittee would merge with the Finance & Budget and Facilities & Assets subcommittee. It is now called the Finance, Assets and Operations (FAO) subcommittee.

The JSC's work to date is a good step forward. There is much more to be done. It has been frustrating for the JSC to not have a participating member or members of the Town of St. Albans Selectboard on the committee. Cooperation, information sharing and support on the part of St. Albans Town have been difficult, often non-existent. It was anticipated that as a result of the Town voters approval of Article 4, Town Meeting Day, March 2012 which read "Shall the Legal Voters of the Town of St. Albans authorize Town Officials to engage in exploratory discussions with the City of St. Albans to determine potential efficiencies and cost benefits on the issue of "reconstitution" or merger of the two municipalities?" that members of the Selectboard would become fully engaged members of the JSC. This has not happened.

The JSC has prepared a six month status report, copy enclosed. The report is intended to update the public and the governing bodies of both municipalities on the work that the subcommittees have done to date. Each subcommittee has identified what is needed in order to move forward in their studies. In addition to the status report, meeting minutes and supporting documentation are available.

Currently there are members of the City Council participating on the JSC and the City Manager is a non-voting member as well. The City has been committed to the work of the JSC and has willingly provided all information requested. It is requested that the Selectboard of the Town of St. Albans become involved in an equitable manner.

It is respectfully requested that the Town of St. Albans Selectboard respond in writing regarding:

1. Responses to the subcommittees' specific requests and;
2. Your intention regarding participation as members of the JSC

It would be appreciated if your response were provided within 30 days.

The JSC welcomes comments from the public, the St. Albans Town Selectboard and the St. Albans City Council. The full JSC will schedule a meeting later in August to review and consider your comments and responses. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like additional specific information. You may reach me via email at ctfarmhs@yahoo.com or phone 802-524-4183.

Thank you,

Cheryl Teague, Chair
City & Town of St. Albans
Joint Study Committee