

**Town of St. Albans  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
5:30 p.m.**

On Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 5:30 p.m., at Town Hall the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met.

**Officials and staff present:** Chair, Bruce Cheeseman, Vice Chair, Sam Smith, Brendan Deso, Bill Nihan, Al Voegele, and Town Manager, Carrie Johnson.

The purpose for the 5:30 p.m. start to the Selectboard meeting was to hold an executive session to discuss pending litigation.

B. Cheeseman opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. and asked for a motion to go into executive session.

**Executive Session**

**MOTION: B. Nihan made a motion to go into executive session at 5:31 p.m. to discuss legal, contractual or personnel issues where premature general public knowledge of the subject matter would place the Town (or person involved) at a substantial disadvantage. It was further moved to enter into executive session to discuss legal, personnel and contractual issues under the provisions of Title 1, section 313(a)(1) of Vermont Statutes and to invite in Town Manager, Carrie Johnson. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to recess the Selectboard meeting at 6:25 p.m. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Regular Meeting – 6:30 p.m.**

**Officials and staff present:** Chair, Bruce Cheeseman, Vice Chair, Sam Smith, Brendan Deso, Bill Nihan, Al Voegele, Town Manager, Carrie Johnson, Town Clerk, Anna Bourdon, Assessor, Bill Hinman, Director of Public Works, Alan Mashtare and Recording Secretary, Jenn Gray.

**Public:** Peter Blouin and Jerry Dukas with Barry Callebaut.

**Reconvene Meeting**

**MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to reconvene the Selectboard meeting. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

The Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**General Warrant**

**MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the general warrant dated December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, in the amount of \$244,482.39. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Payroll Warrants**

**MOTION: B. Nihan made a motion to approve the payroll warrants dated November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 in the amount of \$26,874.56 and December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 in the amount of \$14,640.25. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Minutes**

**MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes for Monday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Barry Callebaut Building Permit Fee Refund Request**

Jerry Dukas came before the Board to request a refund of a building permit fee overpayment. There were some changes from the time the original building permit was submitted to the time it was finalized; which resulted in a square footage reduction and due to time constraints the check was accepted by Zoning and applicant was asked to request a refund.

**MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to refund Barry Callebaut the building permit fee in the amount of \$1,413. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Errors & Omissions – Bill Hinman, Assessor**

Bill Hinman explained that an excel spreadsheet has been created to catch errors and omissions in the future to hopefully avoid and reduce the times they have to come to the Board for errors and omissions approval. He continued to explain the errors and omissions he came to the Board for approval.

B. Nihan asked B. Hinman to explain the Veteran's Exemption. B. Hinman explained the State offers \$10,000. Town can add another \$30,000. To be eligible one must be 50% or greater disabled. The exemption carries over until the property changes title.

**MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to accept the errors and omissions as presented. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Town Manger's Report  
FY'19 Capital Projects List**

This is reviewed by the Selectboard every fall. C. Johnson stated she was requesting approval of the list by the Board. S. Smith suggested extended the recreation path from the Rail Trail in Franklin Park West to Collins Perley, an addition to the path from Collins Perley to Hard'Ack.

**MOTION: made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2019 Capital Improvement Projects List with the addition to the recreational path from the Rail Trail in Franklin Park West to Collins Perley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Swanton Wind**

The Town supported the legal fund in the amount of \$10,000 but, the applicants have withdrawn their application. The Town spent \$6,768 to date.

**MOTION: S. Smith made a motion to close out the legal fees for Swanton Wind at \$6768 plus outstanding and already incurred expenses. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Bay Dock**

Eric Goddard from Knight Consulting Engineers wanted C. Johnson to ask the Board what they wanted the intended use was for the Bay Dock; fishing, pedestrian and boating access. B. Nihan suggested raise the dock to 100 – 101 feet and seeing what the cost would be for raising from the level it's at to 101 feet, cost of each foot. Protect the existing uses and improve boating access without competing with the commercial marina going in.

**St. Albans Health Path Status**

C. Johnson stated that she had spoken to the superintendent, Kevin Dirth on the St. Albans Health Path.

**Public Comment**

A. Voegele took this opportunity to share some statements.

"I want to apologize for incorrectly reporting at the 20 November Select Board Meeting that the Facilities Study Committee through the Town Manager issued a RFP to assess the costs and viability of using two potential lots for the Town's new Town Hall. In fact, what the Committee did approve the Town Manager to contact Trudell Engineering, a Saint Albans Town company, to perform the scope of work outlined by the Committee and if their costs were no more than \$5000 to award it the contract. Trudell agreed to do the work for this sum and that fee, under the Purchasing Policy, gives the Town Manager the authority to award this contract to Trudell."

"As a Town Select Person, I attended three conferences, two of which my attendance was paid by the Town. I attended these conferences because of my awareness through the Board of Civil Authority hearings of appeals regarding the appraisal value of commercial and industrial organizations."

"The first conference was sponsored by the Vermont Community Development Association, meeting in Vergennes on November 2, entitled "Adapting to Changing Shopping Habits; Relentless Service. In sum, the meeting was about addressing the impact of Internet Shopping websites –most notably Amazon. A number of retail

stores in Vermont told how they are surviving online shopping by offering customer friendly service and the benefits of "hands on buying".

"The second conference was sponsored by the University of Vermont on November 3-5, entitled the "2017 Northeast Conference on Public Administration". The focus of this conference was the sustainability of Community Governance. In sum, the key to the changing environment of self-governance will be the ability to work both collaboratively and/or as consolidated organizations/institutions. Such would apply to local governments, public safety, transportation, workforce development services as examples. With constant criticism of Vermont's high taxes, addressing this issue may require the need to reduce the number of 240+ municipal governments for 620,000 people."

"The third and last conference I attended was sponsored by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, meeting in Saint Albans City on November 8, entitled "Workforce Development". This meeting focused on identifying jobs that will be needed in the future and developing pathways to anticipated (quantified) employment opportunities through K-post doctorate education. In addition to developing the training for people needed to fulfill a vibrant community creating affordable housing for these new workers will be the essential ingredient to keeping people in their communities of origin."

A. Voegele finished with saying the fiscal and social investment needs to begin now to assure the future of community sustainability.

### **Tax Increases**

A. Voegele stated that he'd been receiving complaints about tax increases. He explained that the educational tax may increase by \$.09/100. There are two separate tax bills. Education tax should be separate, get the onus off the municipality and make it the State's responsibility. We need to talk to the legislative representatives suggesting this. The municipality/Selectboard has no authority over the education tax rate.

B. Deso agreed with A. Voegele. He stated that he's received complaints about tax increases and needed to explain the difference between the municipal tax and the education tax with residents.

Referencing the educational tax rate increase, B. Nihan stated that people and resources are being increased for a dwindling population in the state.

S. Smith stated that the State needs to consider increasing revenue another way besides just tax increases.

Town resident, Peter Blouin stated that the State should not take the education fund and use it in the TIFF. He also stated that the increase in the educational tax is a raise for teachers' salaries and an increase to pay for their health insurance.

### **Park**

The Board thanked Director of Public Works, Alan Mashtare for the nice decorating job in the Park. Alan stated the ice rink is up and the 2<sup>nd</sup> gate wall stone work is finished as of today. Because of the fair weather, JL Masonry will begin work on the 3<sup>rd</sup> stone wall instead of waiting until spring.

### **Schedule**

The next regular Selectboard meetings are Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Budget kickoff meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

### **Other Business**

None.

### **Adjournment**

**MOTION: S. Smith made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 7:19 p.m. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jenn Gray, Recording Secretary