

**Town of St. Albans  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
5:30 p.m.**

On Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 5:30 p.m., at Town Hall the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met.

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

B. Nihan called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The purpose for the earlier start to the meeting was to conduct an executive session to discuss contractual and personnel issues.

**Executive Session**

**MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to go into executive session at 5:30 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 Attorney, Chad Bonanni, and Town Manager, Carrie Johnson. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**MOTION: B. Nihan made a motion to recess the Selectboard meeting at 6:22 p.m. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Regular Meeting – 6:30 p.m.**

**Officials and staff present:** Chair, Bill Nihan, Vice Chair, Bruce Cheeseman, Brendan Deso, Stan Dukas, Al Voegele, Town Manager Carrie Johnson, Director of Public Works Alan Mashtare, and Recording Secretary Jenn Gray.

**Public:** Bob Johnson, David McWilliams, Bob Farrar, Caitlin Farrar, Vaughn Comeau, Kate Larose, Pam McCarthy, Lynn Dickinson, Dustin Tanner, Roger Langevin, Randy Brock, Corey Parent, Mike McCarthy, and Jim Fitzgerald.

Chair, B. Nihan called the meeting back to order at 6:30 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance.

**Payroll Warrants**

**MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the payroll warrants dated October 1<sup>st</sup> – October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 in the amount of \$15,586.44 and September 24<sup>th</sup> – September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 in the amount of \$16,498.97. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Industrial Park Warrant**

**MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Industrial Park warrant in the amount of \$13,993.85. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**General Warrant**

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the general warrant dated October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 in the amount of \$61,363.39. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Minutes**

**MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Selectboard ‘special’ meeting minutes as amended for Monday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Motion carried with a 4-1 vote with S. Dukas abstaining as he was not in attendance.**

**MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Selectboard ‘special’ meeting minutes as amended for Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes for Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

## **Candidate Forum**

The Board asked that the candidates to focus on 3 questions: Polarization in politics, education costs and school safety, and breaking the cycle of drug addiction.

### **State Senator Candidates**

**Corey Parent** – currently a House Representative for St. Albans City and 1/3 of St. Albans Town. He would vote “no” on a carbon tax. He stated that he found polarization in politics during his first term in office but, worked hard to bring folks together. We need a younger perspective. For school safety, he stated that we continue to assess where schools are, doing audits, and get list of costs. The drug issue he stated that we’ve done a lot in terms of helping those with addiction but, soft on the other side. We need to continue to support our law enforcement. We have to really dig in regarding the cost of education, local voters don’t know what it means on their tax bill, need to better connect with the voters.

**Randy Brock** - running for reelection, 4<sup>th</sup> term. He wrote a column in VT. Digger and the Messenger regarding polarization in politics pointing out that we are different than Washington. The Vermont Senate isn’t as polarized. We agree more than we disagree but, still stand up for our principals. Education costs are difficult, calculation of costs is confusing and difficult. We need the Tax Structure Commission to look at all our taxes to see how we can reconfigure them and have a tax system everyone can understand. School safety, we do things like S55 gun bill that doesn’t protect anyone. We spent on time how to harden school. Need to spend more time on mental health.

**Pam McCarthy** – regarding polarization, she stated how important it is to listen well to one another across parties and come to agreements. Need to connect with people, set a climate of communication and civility, work on this on a local level. School safety, respects the idea of the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment but, critical within schools that we be safe. Bar is set high, we need to do more to make schools safer. The cost of education should not be funded by property tax. She has lost two very close friends to drugs and believes we need to focus more on treatment and punishment of dealers.

**Dustin Tanner** - from Fairfield/Enosburg town line. Regarding polarization in politics, he understands we need to talk about the issues but, remove the political label. Safety in schools – we have a lot of high schoolers without any direction. They don’t like the curricular. We need to invest in tech centers for them to learn a trade or a skill. School Resource Officers are very important. Education funding – property taxes are too high. We should move to a system where we use income to calculate taxes. Drugs – would like to help treat people and get them back into work force. There needs to be more follow through after a person goes through treatment.

### **Franklin 3-1 State Representative (St. Albans City & 1/3 Town of St. Albans)**

**Mike McCarthy** stated that the polarization in politics is mostly coming from online. Current candidates have been very civil to each other and respect each other. Education costs – focus first on the quality of education, where are we spending that isn’t giving our students the education they need, getting them ready. He believes an income base system would work. Drugs – he lost 3 close friends. We need to start with criminal justice reform, invest in the Street Crimes Unit, focus on evidence based situations. Need funds to help get people into treatment.

**Casey Toof** – lives in the Town. Doesn’t agree with a carbon tax. Education spending is the reason why we have high property taxes. School safety – everyone has a goal for safety. The Governor allocated \$5 million to help with school safety. Drugs – hub and spoke is working. Treatment is the answer. Go harder on the dealers. Polarization – we all have good intentions for running, just different ways to get to the goals.

**Jim Fitzgerald** – served as Town Manager for the Town of St. Albans and a member of St. Albans City Council. He served 3 terms in the House of Representatives. Need someone who has experience in getting things done. Unless you are willing to work together, you’re dead in the water. Got to work on both sides of the isle. School costs – ACT 46 was a knee jerk reaction, not thoroughly thought out and not properly designed. Believes in local control. We know better than folks in Montpelier. Bring it back to the people. Fixed costs don’t go away when the enrollment goes down. Invest in tech centers.

**Kate Larose** – polarization, if you don’t do politics, it does you. People have two reactions – partisan or I don’t do politics. We need not to look for policies, look for trust and the ability to create communication. What can we work on together, continue to do

that on the local level and at the State House. She reached out to everyone who is running and had a cup of coffee with each of them to discuss the issues. Education costs – she spent 6 years in Agency of Education. Currently not a fair system using property taxes to fund education. Recommends moving to an income tax to fund education. Drugs – punish the dealers, the most egregious is big pharma.

#### **State Representative – Franklin 3-2 (2/3 St. Albans Town)**

**Lynn Dickinson** – has served on several committees; commerce, economic, agriculture, corrections, and judiciary. Polarization – trying to work across party lines. School costs – did vote for Act 46 because, we needed to put a cap on school costs. Consolidation of schools supported that. Not really going to cut costs. School safety – community day at BFA, spoke to students. Would vote no on Carbon tax.

**David McWilliams** - Polarizing – do away with the two party system. He would vote no on a carbon tax. Education costs should be funded through income tax. Safety, need better security in schools. Drugs – our treatment center is working. Need to punish dealers.

#### **Probate Judge**

**Bob Farrar** - handles estates, adoption. Previous judges made this a full time position. Larry Bruce is retiring so, Bob is running. Pledge to be a full time judge. Main issue is polarization – difference in opinion but, conduct a civil conversation. Spent entire law career in Franklin County, Public Defender, private practice, and was a St. Albans City attorney.

**Vaugh Comeau** - grew up in Swanton, went to MVU. Moved to UK but, back in Vermont to raise a family. Adopt a girl 3 years ago, understands the impact of probate court having been there. This is a part time position. 9 out of 14 Probate Judges in the state have maintained a private practice. He has a private practice. Has 5 people working for him and doesn't want to lay anyone off to be a full-time Probate Judge. Probate Court will be first priority. Professional staff will assist him.

#### **Vicious Dog Draft Decision**

B. Nihan read the conditions of the decision;

1. dog must be muzzled and leashed at all times when it is outdoors;
2. dog must be licensed, registered and vaccinated in accordance with Vermont Law; and
3. failure to fully comply with the conditions set forth in this Order shall allow the Selectboard, its agents and assigns, to take immediate possession the black pit-bull and transfer it to an animal shelter or rescue organization; and the owner of the black pit-bull shall be subject to the penalties provided for 20 V.S.A. §§ 3546, 3550 and the Town of St. Albans Animal Control Ordinance effective June 1, 2018.

**MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Vicious Dog Decision and authorize the Selectboard Chair to sign. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

#### **Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure**

A. Voegele explained that the current policy focuses more on sexual harassment. He recommends a policy for non-sexual harassment to set standards for conduct within the municipality. Broad range, no matter where you work. He recommended we incorporate this into our policies.

B. Deso stated it would make a good addition to our personnel policy.

B. Cheeseman has concerns and wondered if VLCT had reviewed the current policy or our attorneys. C. Johnson explained that she has not had VLCT or the Town Attorney review the policy, she asked Jill Muir, VLCT HR Consultant for advice. Ms. Muir recommended adding a section on harassment as a best practice.

B. Nihan explained that Kerin Stackpole who conducted the Respect in the Work Place training said our policy is more than adequate. He also stated that employees should be able to go to anyone to register a complaint.

S. Dukas stated that he feels we are in compliance with our current policy, he doesn't feel the need to change it. Doesn't think we need it for 12 good people. If there are complaints, they can go to the Selectboard. C. Johnson stated that employees should

not go to the Selectboard first to register a complaint as the Selectboard is the appeal board.

A. Voegele stated that he feels that harassment is being trivialized. There should be an expectation for younger folks to behave a certain way.

B. Deso stated that this year's version of our Personnel Policy is better than last year's.

**MOTION: B. Nihan made a motion to adopt the harassment policy as presented by Al Voegele. Motion fails with 3 opposed and 2 for the motion.**

#### **Town Manager's Report**

##### **Department of Public Works Update**

The RFQ and RFP for qualifications and design work have been posted. Project Manager, Matt Young is taking all questions. We need to have costs estimates by the end of January. There will be a Selectboard meeting on Monday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, at 5pm to review the bids with M. Young.

##### **Second Round of Survey Mailing**

Second and last wave of surveys were mailed out. People are responding.

##### **Water/Wastewater Allocation Request – James Hungerford – Rewes Drive**

This request is for a contractor shop that will employ a maximum of 33 employees. The request is for 1 EU per day for water and 1 EU for wastewater.

**MOITON: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the water/wastewater allocation request for James Hungerford as presented. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

##### **Public Comment**

None.

##### **Schedule**

The next regular Selectboard meetings are Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup> and Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Election Day is November 6<sup>th</sup>. Special meeting on Monday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.

##### **Other Business**

None.

##### **Adjournment**

**MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 7:42 p.m. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted  
Jenn Gray, Recording Secretary