

**Town of St. Albans
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 3rd, 2019
5:30 p.m.**

On Tuesday, September 3rd, 2019 at 5:30 p.m., at Town Hall the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met.

Officials and staff present: Chair Brendan Deso, Vice-Chair Bruce Cheeseman, Stan Dukas, Jessica Frost, Al Voegele, Town Manager Carrie Johnson.

B. Deso opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. The purpose of the early start was to conduct an executive session.

Executive Session

MOTION: S. Dukas 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 Manager, Carrie Johnson. Seconded by A. Voegele. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to recess the Selectboard meeting at 6:25 p.m. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Officials and staff present: Chair Brendan Deso, Vice-Chair Bruce Cheeseman, Stan Dukas, Jessica Frost, Al Voegele, Town Manager Carrie Johnson, Director of Public Works Alan Mashtare, Town Clerk Anna Bourdon, Director of Administration Ned Connell, and Recording Secretary Jenn Gray.

Public: Bob Fairbanks, St. Albans Messenger Reporter, Michael Frett, Planning Commissioners Grant Henderson, Erin Creley, and Casey Toof, Steve Begnoche, Esther Morse, and Dan Cunningham.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda Amendment

MOITON: A. Voegele made a motion to amend the agenda to add the Parks Ordinance. Seconded by B. Cheeseman. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

General Warrant

MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the general warrant dated September 3rd, 2019 in the amount of \$32,401.84. Seconded by A. Voegele. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Payroll Warrants

MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to approve the payroll warrants dated August 23rd, 2019 in the amount of \$21,029.49 and August 30th, 2019 in the amount of \$35,030.98. Seconded by A. Voegele. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Infrastructure Development Fund

Payment for Connor Contracting for work on the new Department of Public Works garage.

MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the Infrastructure Development Fund warrant in the amount of \$719,835.30. Seconded by A. Voegele. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Industrial Park Warrant

MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the Industrial Park warrant in the amount of \$84,359.94. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Minutes

J. Frost had an edit to the August 19th meeting minutes from “cousin” to “husband” is on active duty. A. Voegele had an edit to the August 22nd ‘special’ meeting minutes to add the word “guest” for Caitlyn Frost.

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes for Monday, August 19th, 2019 as amended, the Selectboard ‘special’ meeting minutes for Thursday, August 22nd as amended, and the Selectboard ‘special’ meeting minutes for Tuesday, August 27th as written. Seconded by B. Cheeseman. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Local Option Tax Payment

A payment was received by the Town in the amount of \$232,582.88.

Public Comment

None.

Town Manager's Report

E-911 Address Changes Proposed

C. Johnson explained that some of the 911 addresses in Town are not fully compliant and need to be compliant with State regulations. The Assessor’s office will start by correcting the addresses on Maquam Shore Road and Brigham Road. The Board had been provided a draft letter that will be going out to the residents who live on these two roads. C. Johnson asked for any edits from the Board. These letters will go out in mid-September, with change of addresses being effective mid-October.

A. Voegele stated that this is for the benefit of all the people who live on these roads, primarily if there is an emergency situation in a home, that ambulance, fire, and police will know how to get there promptly and efficiently.

A. Voegele suggested the Town provide a pre-printed letter for residents that they can send out with their change of address.

S. Dukas asked if this was going to effect all the houses on these roads. C. Johnson explained that almost every single address will have a change because the proper formula wasn’t followed when originally addressed. N. Connell explained that the formula is a divisible of a mile; it’s either 5.28 feet or 52.8 feet. It is automatically calculate by GPS.

Town resident Steve Begnoche asked if the 911 numbers on mailboxes would suffice without having to change driver’s licenses and other personal information. A. Voegele explained that it is a requirement of Federal law.

Planning Update – Ned Connell

Capital Improvement Program Draft

A draft of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) was provided to the Selectboard. The Planning Commission has been working on this since April. N. Connell explained it’s an update to the current plan expiring in a few months. It follows the same process of the current program. This plan will run from 2020 to 2025. This is a guide or tool to be used to plan for budgeting in the future. The only new thing added was “Other Capital Planning Considerations”. This is for anticipated larger ticket items for the Town that are pending.

N. Connell explained the approval process states that once the Planning Commission has received any comments from the Selectboard, the Planning Commission will hold an official vote at a public meeting. After that, the Planning Commission will bring the plan back to the Selectboard for approval.

S. Dukas wanted to know how much of an increase will the next 5 years have, by year, versus what we’ve been going to the taxpayers with. What is the difference we are going to go to the taxpayers with, because it’ll be in our general fund? A. Bourdon explained that those numbers are on page 6 of the Expense Report. \$126,000 a year is transferred to the Fire Department Reserve, \$52,845.00 is transferred to the Department of Public Works (DPW) Reserve, and \$10,000 goes into the Capital Projects Reserve. G. Henderson asked that what S. Dukas wants to see in the Capital Plan is a year by year increase coming from the general fund. S. Dukas said and by department; Fire, DPW.

B. Deso asked to have the LOT Revenue numbers verified from FY 2018 to FY 2019 in the Infrastructure Development Reserve chart on page 14. Currently, it shows a decrease in the LOT revenue and is a different amount from the LOT spreadsheet provided to the Board in executive session earlier.

S. Dukas said that the voters vote on the general fund budget for funds for the reserve accounts.

To summarize, G. Henderson stated that the Planning Commission will check the LOT numbers on the three years in question, make the appropriate changes, add in increases year by year for the reserve funds by department, approve it, and then give the CIP back to the Selectboard for their approval. The Board was in consensus.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Impact Fee Ordinance Draft

N. Connell explained that this ordinance was developed to guide the Town on how to pay for sidewalks the Town would like to construct in the next 20 – 30 years. The ordinance contains the same fees as previously discussed at the joint meeting with the Planning Commission in April and again at a Selectboard meeting back in July. These fees are based on the frontage a developer would claim along certain existing Town streets and are areas that are closer to and surrounding or attached to the City. This would be \$35/linear foot. Outside of those areas the fees would be \$17.50/linear foot. These fees will go to a reserve fund and be used to expand shoulders and install sidewalks.

A. Voegele asked how do we adjust the \$35/linear foot fee in the future? N. Connell explained that this ordinance would be structured slightly differently and fees are “subject to change”. The ordinance would refer to a fee structure separate from the ordinance. This would mean we wouldn’t have to do major changes to the ordinance when adjusting the fees as needed.

B. Deso stated that he didn’t see the need to impose another impact fee that further makes us less competitive with other municipalities. B. Cheeseman stated that he wasn’t opposed to it if it’s going to increase the population in an area; if you take a single family home and make a duplex out of it, construct a sidewalk, it increases the foot traffic.

After further discussion, B. Deso suggested deleting language in Section 4-1, number 1 after the word “building”. He doesn’t want to impose more fees making development here in Town cost prohibitive. N. Connell stated he’ll speak with Zoning Administrator, Becky Perron on this. Second 4-1 mimics the Unified Development Bylaws and he would like to make sure there are no conflicts that will cause potential problems in the future.

B. Deso stated that we have to realize that we’re not the only community that’s looking to experience some serious growth. We’re not the only community looking to install more sidewalks. We’re not the only community that’s looking to revamp its existing recreation stock to attract more residents. Both Highgate and Swanton do not have impact fees. We have to be competitive. If we don’t build sidewalks within a certain set of time, this impact fee for sidewalks doesn’t make any sense. It’s just another fee.

B. Cheeseman stated that he thought B. Deso should take off his developer’s hat. He went on to say that we are talking about the safety of the community. If you’re increasing the population and the services.... B. Deso interjected saying that B. Cheeseman was bringing in the wrong argument. B. Cheeseman disagreed. B. Deso stated that the ‘health and safety’ argument isn’t the same as the ‘who pays for it’ argument. He stated that he agreed that networks of sidewalks should be built, but doesn’t agree that the impact fee is the right funding source to pay for them. J. Frost stated that she thought this was a very common practice in a lot of towns and wouldn’t be surprised if other communities went down this route that currently don’t have impact fees. B. Cheeseman stated that if you take a look at the counties around us, we are way behind the times with regards to sidewalks. These impact fees are the way sidewalks are getting built. Why should the taxpayers pay for a sidewalk in front of your development when you are increasing the population? That’s the cost of doing business. B. Deso stated that that isn’t the cost of doing business in neighboring towns. B. Cheeseman stated he didn’t care about neighboring towns, he cared about this town. B. Deso stated that B. Cheeseman should care, we have to be competitive within our region. He went on to say that we could use the Local Option Tax to pay for things other than just brick and mortar; it could be used for sidewalks and sewer expansions.

A. Voegele stepped in saying that B. Deso is the Chair and should encourage the rest of the Board to talk and rule whether or not we are out of order. He went on to say that the impact fee is not for the 400 feet in front of someone's property. It's for use of all the sidewalks in the Town. That's why it's an impact fee.

The Board agreed to table this ordinance until the next Selectboard meeting and get additional comments to N. Connell. He will then bring the ordinance back to the Selectboard for approval.

J. Frost stated that she is thrilled to see impact fee ordinance and if anything, she'd like to see the fees a little higher because she'd like to see more money invested in infrastructure. That's what the survey that came back from Town residents said, this is what they want.

G. Henderson explained that seeing that the ordinance is about 95% complete, the Board should adopt the ordinance now, knowing that it can be amended later instead of tabling it again.

MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Impact Fee Ordinance as presented. Seconded by J. Frost. Motion carried with a 4-1 vote.

Chair B. Deso went on the record and voted opposed for the approval of this ordinance.

Stormwater Update

N. Connell explained that all of our stormwater infrastructure is designed to manage a 2" rainfall in a 24 hour period. The most recent storm recorded more than 2" over a 36 hour period. He went on to explained that all four stormwater projects are with the State for their review. The wet land permit for Industrial Park Drive is under its 30 day comment period.

N. Connell explained that we received 2 bids for the rehabilitation or reconstruction of two stormwater detention ponds; one in the industrial park and the other on Tanglewood Drive. The permit holders (Tanglewood Drive) have signed MOU's that state they are responsible for a certain percentage of the stormwater budget.

B. Deso asked if any of these projects are completed. A. Mashtare explained that the Franklin Home Health pond is done and that the DPW crew has completed the clear cutting and weed whacking around the Hawk's Nest pond is done. The digging and cleaning should be done by Thursday or Friday of this week. If not completed then, it will be completed by next week. We have a deadline of the end of October, beginning of November for Industrial Park pond.

B. Deso asked if the stormwater consultant had been hired yet. N. Connell explained that the consultant has been selected and hopes to have them hired this week. We are revising the scope of work to save money.

Health Path Update - VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant

C. Johnson explained that we received a grant for \$32,000 from the VTrans Bike and Pedestrian Program which will enable the Town to complete everything on the list VTrans requested we get done in order to proceed with the health path. Eric Ailing with Stantec did the majority of the grant work.

Quiet Your Ride

C. Johnson explained this was discussed briefly at the last meeting and got support from the Board, but no budget was discussed. The Board agreed to order 10-20 signs.

Grant Update

Historic Preservation grant

We received a \$20,000 grant to do work on the cupola and the large, exterior wooden doors on the stone house in the Bay Park. The work will begin after September 9th. Pete Charbonneau won the bid to complete this work.

Proposed FY '21 Budget Meeting Schedule

C. Johnson suggested budget kick off meetings to begin in October. Dates were suggested to the Board and the Board agreed with those dates. Those meetings will begin at 5:30 p.m.

2020 Selectboard Meeting Schedule

There was discussion on changing the Selectboard meeting nights from the 1st and 3rd Monday's of the month back to the original nights of the 2nd and 4th Monday's of the month. The Board agreed to think about this and discuss soon.

Schedule

The next Selectboard meetings are Monday, September 16th and Monday, October 7th.

Chairman's Report

None.

Other Business

Parks Ordinance

Both A. Voegele and S. Dukas requested one final change to the Parks Ordinance; replace "Town of St. Albans Schools to "Maple Run Unified School District" in section 7.4.5.

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Parks Ordinance as amended. Seconded by B. Cheeseman. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Chair B. Deso went on the record and voted for the approval of this ordinance.

Shooting Birds in Town Parks

C. Johnson and the Board received complaints regarding people shooting at birds in the town parks. C. Johnson explained that she called the police this morning. Lt. Wetherby suggested posting the park. Once posted, Lt. Wetherby would issue a press release and have the area patrolled.

Mr. Begnoche explained that some people have shot off the dock in the past. He also explained that Black Bridge is a state bridge and you can hunt down there.

Paving Update

A. Mashtare talked to Pike today. They are planning to start cold plaining in the middle of September.

Adjournment

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 8:09 p.m. Seconded by B. Cheeseman. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenn Gray, Recording Secretary