

**Town of St. Albans
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 21st, 2019
5:00 p.m.**

On Monday, October 21st, 2019 at 5:00 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.

Vice Chair B. Cheeseman opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The purpose of the early start was to conduct an executive session.

Executive Session

MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to go into executive session at 5:00 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 6:26 p.m. Seconded by S. Dukas. 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, and Recording Secretary Jenn Gray.

Public: David Schofield, Mitch Carib, St. Albans Messenger Reporter Michael Frett, Bob Fairbanks, Jonathan Giroux, VTrans Operations Project Manager Jim Cota, and Bethany Remmers from Regional Planning.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

General Warrant

MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the general warrant dated October 14th, 2019 in the amount of \$166,795.34. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Payroll Warrants

MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to approve the payroll warrants dated October 11th, 2019 in the amount of \$19,112.81 and October 18th in the amount of \$18,321.78. Seconded by B. Cheeseman. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Infrastructure Development Fund

MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the Infrastructure Development Fund warrant in the amount of \$677.00. Seconded by J. Frost. 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 \$990.68. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Minutes

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes for Monday, October 7th, 2019 as written. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to approve the Selectboard 'special' meeting minutes for Monday, October 14th, 2019 as written. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Public Comment

Town resident David Schofield and City resident Mitch Carib came before the Board to advocate for walking and biking. Mr. Schofield explained that he sat on the committee that worked on the first Sidewalk Master plan and stated that the Town needs to move to next step which is a scoping study. Mr. Schofield went on to say that the Sidewalk Master Plan has two phases and the scoping study is the second phase. The study looked at constructing a path from the City of St. Albans to the former Union Carbine building and continue down Route 7 to Walmart.

A. Voegele asked J. Frost if RiseVT participated in this study. J. Frost stated yes and that for the Town to move forward towards the next step the Town would need to apply for a grant to do the scoping study. J. Frost also stated that the initial plan was for the path to run from the City to Walmart.

A. Voegele asked what would need to be done to apply for grants. C. Johnson stated we could talk to the Park and Recreation committee for a list of priorities, what is at the top of the list, and then figure out what grants we should apply for. Mr. Schofield stated that the study that was done had included some scoping. We need to now make a decision as to what side of the road to put these paths on.

C. Johnson explained that the Planning Commission and Selectboard met in the spring to discuss planning priorities. Mr. Schofield stated that these projects should be included in the Capital Plan. B. Deso explained the Planning Commission is working on a funding source to work on capital projects. One suggested funding source is the Local Option Tax (LOT). Mr. Schofield suggested going to the voters to bond a sidewalk project. The Board was not supportive of that suggestion.

Mr. Schofield brought up the Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Impact Fee Ordinance and mentioned that if contractors don't build a sidewalk right away, funds would be set aside into an account for future construction. Mr. Schofield asked why the price per foot of sidewalk so low in the sidewalk ordinance? The State estimated a basic sidewalk in 2014 at a cost of \$85/foot. He continued by saying that at that price, the Town could have funds for future projects. The Board agreed to evaluate the in lieu fee.

Mr. Schofield stated that there is a state law that motorists must maintain a 4 foot distance when passing a cyclist or pedestrian. He would like to see the Town install some signage stating this law along Maquam Shore Road. J. Frost explained that Swanton had just received a grant to study that area and we were going to wait to see what that study says before doing anything. B. Cheeseman stated that we could install signs in the interim. C. Johnson explained we need to find out if those signs are legal before installing and asked Mr. Schofield for a copy of the poster.

Selectboard Meetings

C. Johnson stated that about a month ago, she had asked the Board if they would prefer moving their meetings back to the 2nd and 4th Monday's of the month because we had a lot of conflicts with holidays on the 1st and 3rd Monday's. Northwest Access TV was no longer broadcasting the meetings live which was the original reason for changing the regular meeting dates. After a brief discussion, the Board decided to continuing holding their regular Selectboard meetings on the 1st and 3rd Monday's of the month.

Town Manager's Report

VTrans – Jim Cota – Taking Over State Route 36 as a Class I Road

Operations Project Manager Jim Cota and Bethany Remmers from Regional Planning came before the Board to answer questions regarding what the Town would need to do to take over a section of State Highway 36 in the Bay and make it a Town Class I road. C. Johnson explained that the initial stage was for the Town to get some consensus on what we wanted. She went on to say that it had been previously discussed and suggested by Mr. Cota that if we were interested in pursuing this that a Purpose and Goal letter be sent to VTrans this fall. Mr. Cota stated that VTrans has a deadline of December 1st to get this letter to the legislature. B. Deso stated that this was discussed before and due to the fact that there would be a loss of parking for the business in the area, that the Board did not want to support that. He went on to say that we discussed that it was \$12,000 - \$13,000/mile per year for maintenance. Ms. Remmers stated that the annual cost to maintain a Class 1 is actually \$11,213/mile per year. This does not include paving. The State would pay for the paving. B. Cheeseman asked A. Mashtare how many miles this included. A. Mashtare said it's 2.73miles. B. Deso stated that this would be on a 20 year paving schedule. Mr. Cota stated that it is 15 to 20 years the

State gets to pave the Class I roads. B. Deso asked if the Town decided to move forward with taking over this section of road, could we stipulate that paving take place every 15 years seeing that our current Town roads are on a 10 year schedule. Mr. Cota explained that the Town could include that in their request to the State.

Mr. Cota explained that one of the reasons a town would want to take over a road is to have more local access control. B. Deso asked if adding parking would be a possibility. Mr. Cota stated again that is something the Town could include in their request.

Mr. Cota explained that a Class I road is a shared responsibility between the Town and the State. The Town would take over the everyday maintenance; patching a pothole, plowing, picking up a dead animal, etc. The State would come through and line stripe the center line and the Town would do the on street parking stripping. Mr. Cota went on to say that it allows freedom for the Town to do what they want to do without having to come to the State for a permit to work in the right of way.

Mr. Cota explained that if you're just taking over the road and not a bridge, it's a pretty good deal cost wise. If you're going to take over a bridge, the deal is not so good anymore. S. Dukas asked Mr. Cota of any MS4 concerns on 36. Mr. Cota stated absolutely and that St. Albans is a MS4 area. The rest of the area is TS4.

A. Voegelé asked Mr. Cota if the Town could install a 4-way intersection? Mr. Cota said there are 4-way intersections on State highways, but if the Town wanted to install one, the Town would need to get a permit to work in the State right of way. The Town could hire a consultant to work with VTrans to come up with a plan.

Mr. Cota stated that if the Town is ready to move forward that the Town write a letter of intent to David Blackmore, the Regional Manager. Then, VTrans will forward it to the Legislature. Mr. Cota also suggested that a draft letter of intent be run by him first. He will then forward it to Jonathan Croft.

B. Cheeseman asked if we could change the road's weight limits. Mr. Cota stated Class 1 must follow State highway weight limits.

Parks Ordinance Update

C. Johnson explained that the Board had been provided an email from Garrett Baxter from VLCT regarding carrying a firearm in our parks. A. Voegelé disagreed with the Town not being able to regulate carrying a firearm. A. Voegelé stated his concern to make people aware that anybody, for whatever reason they want to carry a loaded gun into a park with children playing on a playground has an uncertain major moral issue.

A. Voegelé read from the Vermont Gun Laws the Guns to Carry Guide, "Vermont gun laws have a forceable law of "no weapons" signs. The are legal penalties for entering a private property or business that has posted these signs. Guns to Carry recommends that you do not enter a property displaying a "no weapons" sign whether the law is for or against signage. If asked to leave a property and to refuse to do so, then you are breaking the law and you put yourself at risk of being charged". B. Cheeseman asked A. Voegelé if that was private property? A. Voegelé stated that with the email from the lawyer states, you get into a non-tested point of view of whether municipal property can be governed like private property. A. Voegelé's compromise was if someone wants to go hunting into the wetlands across the highway, carry an unloaded gun, but posted it; no guns in the Town parks that are loaded.

Town resident Jonathan Giroux stated he was fine with it either way, whether a gun is loaded or not. He just doesn't want to see people denied access to hunting. His initial issue was with the "no trespassing" language on the posted signs that were posted in the Park. B. Cheeseman stated that we want to eliminate the words "no trespassing". C. Johnson stated that the signs should read that there are no loaded firearms or hunting allowed in the parks and remove the words "no trespassing". The Board agreed.

Department of Public Works (DPW) Garage Update

C. Johnson explained that the roof is complete on the DPW garage. Garage doors and other windows and doors will be installed this week. The concrete slab in front of the garage doors has been poured. Matt Young will be at the November 4th Selectboard meeting to present his monthly status report (MSR).

Schedule

The next Selectboard meetings are Monday, November 4th and Monday, November 18th.

Town offices will be closed November 11th, 28th, and 29th.

There will be an executive session at 4pm on Monday, October 28th prior to the 5:30 p.m. scheduled budget meeting. There will be another budget meeting on Monday, November 4th at 5pm.

Chairman's Report

B. Deso explained a potential business owner reached out to the Town regarding starting a commercial daycare center in the Town. We found an oversight in our zoning bylaws that a couple of our zoning districts do not allow conditional use of a commercial daycare center. We will consider for adoption an interim bylaw at the November 18th meeting to fix this issue. Our Zoning Administrator is also looking at other potential areas of concern within our bylaws.

B. Deso explained that he received a comment from a resident at Hawk's Nest about the excellent job the Department of Public Works crew did on the retention pond recently and they appreciated the new sidewalk.

Paving

A. Mashtare provided an update on paving explained that the paving should be finishing up this week. High Street and Quarry Court will be paved in the morning and Button Road later in the day. Notices were posted on residents doors who live on Button Road, as a portion of the road needed to be closed during paving.

Brine Machine

S. Dukas asked A. Mashtare about the brine machine. A. Mashtare explained it was sold to Hyde Park. In its place, A. Mashtare has added a molasses mixture to the salt which keeps it tacky and keeps it from freezing in the salt shed. The Town changed from applying brine at the spinner to treating salt with this new mixture in the salt shed.

Other Business

J. Frost explained that Rise VT awarded the Town the Gold level. This was achieved by adding the Farmers Market, improving the walking path at the Bay Park, making the parks smoke free, and the work being done on the trails in the Town forest. There are only four towns in Franklin/Grand Isle County with this designation.

Adjournment

MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 7:51 p.m. Seconded by B. Cheeseman. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenn Gray, Recording Secretary