

**Town of St. Albans**  
**Selectboard 'Special' Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**5:00 p.m.**

On Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 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 Clerk Anna Bourdon, Fire Chief and Public Safety Administrator Bob Cross, Director of Public Works Alan Mashtare, Director of Administration Ned Connell, and Town Manager Carrie Johnson.

**Public:** David McWilliams and Jonathan Giroux.

Chair B. Deso called the Selectboard meeting to order at 5pm.

**Fiscal Year 2120 Budget Review**

The Board reviewed the draft budget by department.

**Town Clerk, Assessors, and Planning and Zoning**

No major changes to these departments except for increases in health insurance costs. Those costs increased by 14%.

**Director of Administration**

The Stormwater Consultation line will not be funded in anticipation of a stormwater utility. A. Voegele asked how soon after a stormwater utility is established can the Town begin to collect fees and if there is a great amount of time before that happens, how do we fund a stormwater consultant? B. Deso stated that we could use reserve funds. C. Johnson pointed out that there are some funds left in the current stormwater line to help pay for some stormwater activities. J. Frost asked when the consultant's report due? C. Johnson explained that the report was due next week, however, a new deadline has been set, likely early March, 2020.

**Selectboard and Town Manager**

Stipends for the Selectboard will remain the same. Legal and Engineering Consulting lines have been cut in the Town Manager's budget. C. Johnson explained that there is a new line called Public Access TV. Due to reductions in their funding, Northwest Access TV is charging the Town a stipend. Previously they were charging us a smaller amount quarterly and it was being funded from the Advertising line. C. Johnson explained that in order to keep better track of this charge, a new line was created.

**Solid Waste**

This line item was increased slightly. A. Voegele explained that the increase was due in part to the costs of haulers increasing their rates.

**Enforcement (Animal Control and Junk Ordinance Enforcement)**

No major changes.

**Fire Department**

The Salaries line item was increased due to moving from paying volunteer firefighters an annual stipend to hourly. Fire Chief Bob Cross was asked when the last time the Fire Department stipends had been increased. B. Cross stated that the last increase was in 2008. There was discussion about adding another person to go on calls during the daytime with B. Cross. C. Johnson stated that we need to look at this in the next 6 months and discuss it again when we start work on the next budget. B. Cross stated he would like to propose something to the Board in the future. A. Voegele suggested funding the position now, \$30,000 - \$35,000. B. Deso stated that the position needs to be defined first. C. Johnson suggested at least putting funds in the budget now. The Board agreed to add \$35,000 to the Fire Department Salaries line in support of adding a part time firefighter to our staff.

**Police Contract**

This is the 5<sup>th</sup> and final year of the existing contract with the St. Albans Police. B. Cross asked for clarification on dispatch fees. C. Johnson explained that dispatch fees for EMT (AmCare) and fire are included in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the police contract.

**Ambulance**

C. Johnson explained that the amount of \$148,698 does include the EMT dispatch outlined in our police contract.

### **Park & Recreation**

C. Johnson explained that updating a part time, 20 week supervisor to a full time supervisor was discussed at a previous budget meeting. There was an increase in the Salaries line as well as the fringe benefits to reflect the hiring of a full time supervisor. After discussion, the Board agreed to leave the Bay Park Events line at \$20,000 until there is a discussion on the Capital Improvement Plan.

### **Local/Regional/State Organizations and Route 7 Sewer**

No changes.

### **Department of Public Works (DPW)**

B. Deso asked why the Engineering line was at \$20,000? C. Johnson explained that any time we apply for a grant, a structures grant, the project has to be engineered. A. Mashtare also explained that having hydraulic studies done require engineering.

B. Deso explained that Stormwater and MS4 Permit line is up from \$30,000 to \$75,000. We have over \$100,000 in the reserve for it and we are going to try to go after a utility next year. He suggested cutting it all down to zero. S. Dukas explained that when he 'barked' about it (stormwater), Director of Administration Ned Connell provided all the details as to how \$73,000 was spent. C. Johnson confirmed this and stated that it'll need to be spent in the 12 month period. S. Dukas went on to say that we stopped all work on Tanglewood because the bid came in high. We already have a lot of money vested there. We've got to keep that in focus and go back there if we've got enough money. C. Johnson explained that we are going to apply for another grant and they promised us they understand where we're at and they are going to help. We also need the match for that. B. Cheeseman stated he didn't feel comfortable leaving nothing in that account. B. Deso stated that we have \$100,000 in reserve. Why ask for more? Consensus was to reduce stormwater to \$40,000.

### **Paving**

S. Dukas stated that we have got to look at French Hill. B. Cross stated that the road is in dire needs of work. A. Mashtare stated that he is probably going to get another Pilot program grant. It has already been looked at with Regional Planning, the cross culvert near the beaver dam on French Hill. The other one is the cross culvert near Al Voegelé's. A. Mashtare stated that the grant is about \$11,000 or \$12,000.

### **Stormwater**

The Board agreed to move \$35,000 from the DPW Stormwater and MS4 Permit line item to the Fire Department budget for the new position.

### **Capital Improvement Program**

B. Deso stated that there was new support to take out Fire and DPW equipment from the Capital Program. That way we don't have to vote to un-restrict the LOT (Local Option Tax) for capital and infrastructure. We can leave it just as infrastructure. S. Dukas said he thought we were going to use reserve account for equipment. C. Johnson stated we did at one point. She went on to explain that there were discussions about using LOT revenue to fund equipment for DPW and the fire department. S. Dukas asked do we know if we can yet, do that? C. Johnson explained that we asked the Town Attorney and did get an opinion from him that we can do that. The way he suggested using LOT funds to do that was to redefine the use of the LOT revenues by authorizing any and all sales tax to be deposited into reserve funds established by the Selectboard for use on existing and future Town infrastructure, to include existing and future capital reserve fund accounts. S. Dukas asked if we need to get voter approval for that. C. Johnson stated no, voters don't approve a Town municipal capital improvement program, but they can approve redefining how the LOT funds are spent. C. Johnson said they have to approve the question before you can move the funds.

C. Johnson further explained that what was discussed at last night's meeting was do we (the Selectboard) really want to fund the pool with LOT funds because it is infrastructure and leave the fire department equipment and the DPW equipment the way we are currently doing it. B. Cheeseman asked what is wrong with the way we are doing it now. C. Johnson stated that there isn't anything wrong with it. The Board agreed to leave the equipment questions on the ballot as is and fund the pool with LOT funds.

S. Dukas asked with using the LOT funds, what does that do for a new Town Hall? C. Johnson stated that it still leaves plenty of money. S. Dukas asked how do we draw out (those funds)? The same way? C. Johnson said yes and she went on to explain that N.

Connell did a full analysis and we can still accommodate the pool payment and a Town Hall payment out of our LOT.

### **Town Meeting Day Warning**

The Board reviewed the articles for the warning.

#### **ARTICLE 4**

Shall the Town of St. Albans issue general obligation bonds in the amount of \$2.75 million for the purpose of financing the construction of a community pool, pool house, air supported dome, and associated site work, roadway construct, sidewalk construction, utility improvements, and professional services, to be located at the Hard'ack Recreation Facility, and for the payment thereof pledge the credit of the Town, in particular the revenues generated from the local option tax?

C. Johnson explained that Article 4 is the question about the community pool. The City is planning on using the same article number as the Town and the verbiage will be similar. The Board was in consensus with Article 4.

#### **ARTICLE 6**

Shall the Legal Voters of the Town of St. Albans authorize the Selectboard to spend up to \$65,000 to fund the pre-development phase for the construction of a new Town Hall?

C. Johnson explained that the \$65,000 to fund the pre development phase includes a schematic design (SD), a possible Geotech report, and a professional cost estimate for a new Town Hall to include the employees' needs. The Board was in consensus with Article 6.

#### **ARTICLE 5**

Shall the Legal Voters of the Town of St. Albans support moving Town Hall from its current location?

There was much discussion on how to word the question and whether "from the Bay" should be included in the question.

B. Cheeseman explained that he had a conversation with Jackie Brown. Ms. Brown had told B. Cheeseman that she would like to see Town Hall remain in the Bay and that if the current DPW location wasn't large enough, she owns property next to it. She can sell up to 5 acres. B. Cheeseman would like to invite Ms. Brown to their next Selectboard meeting. He went on to say that the 5 acres are already approved for two mound systems and that she has 2 approved wells. C. Johnson pointed out that the next Selectboard meeting has already been warned, but without an executive session at the beginning of the meeting. The Board would need to hold the executive session at the end of the meeting and invite Ms. Brown. The Board was in consensus with Article 5.

#### **ARTICLE 7**

Shall the Legal Voters of the Town of St. Albans authorize the Selectboard to continue to fund \$126,000 into the Fire Department reserve fund annually?

The Board agreed to change the amount from \$126,000 to \$125,000 and the word "continue" was added. The Board was in consensus with Article 7.

#### **ARTICLE 8**

Shall the Legal Voters authorize the Selectboard to purchase a new medium duty plow truck for the Department of Public Works not to exceed \$14,0000 using previously collected Department of Public Works Reserve funds? The Board was in consensus with Article 9.

### **Adjournment**

**MOTION: A. Voegele made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 6:42 p.m. Seconded by S. Dukas. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Carrie Johnson