

**Town of St. Albans
Selectboard Special Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 9th, 2023
5:30 p.m.**

On Monday, January 9th, 2023 at 5:30 p.m., the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met at Town Hall for a budget work session.

Officials and Staff: Chair Jonathan Giroux, Vice Chair Bryan DesLauriers, Brendan Deso, Jack Brigham, Jeff Sanders, Town Manager Carrie Johnson, Public Safety Administrator/Fire Chief Bob Cross, Director of Public Works Dave Allerton, Town Clerk Anna Bourdon, Interim Director of Operations Al Voegelé, Director of Community Development Megan Sherlund, and Facilities Manager John Montagne.

Public in Attendance: Andy Crossman.

Staff participating via Zoom: Executive Assistant Jenn Gray.

Public Participation via Zoom: None.

J. Giroux called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The purpose of the special meeting was to hold a budget work session to continue work on the fiscal year 2024 budget.

Fire Department – Bob Cross

C. Johnson explained there haven't been many changes since the last review of the fire department budget. B. Cross stated that there was a FY' 24 increase to the salary line for the volunteer firefighters. There was some discuss regarding the recent roof damage to the existing fire department building. C. Johnson explained that we are waiting on an estimate from the adjuster for the repairs.

Equipment

B. Cross explained that he spoke to the local apparatus distributor who stated that the prices for apparatus have gone up 30%. We've been putting \$125,000 into a reserve account for several years for apparatus purchases.

B. Cross explained a lease to own plan for a new pumper truck is available. If we put funds down on a \$1 million truck, we can take advantage of a discount for us; we don't plan on paying for it all moving forward as its taking 3 years to get a truck. The plan for the next 5 years would be to ask the voters to add \$50,000 to the existing \$125,000 reserve account for five years and then another \$25,000 for another five years. This would cover apparatus purchases for everything that is scheduled to be replaced.

C. Johnson explained that this is not a separate question, it is in the budget. If the budget is approved, the allocation is approved.

FD = 22 mins.

Parks and Recreation – John Montagne

C. Johnson would like to add a landscaping line within the Parks and Recreation budget to cover tree and flower planting in the amount of \$4,500. It was agreed upon to change the "Landscaping" line in the Department of Public Works (DPW) budget to "Tree Services" and to add a "Landscaping" line in the amount of \$4,500 for Park and Recreation.

J. Montagne explained the department has two older mowers he would like to trade in for a new zero turn mower. A new mower would cost \$14,599 with a trade-in of \$11,814. J. Montagne also mentioned Champlain Valley Equipment provided him a quote of \$24,776 for an ATV piece of equipment to keep trails clear and has a dump body that can be used to pick up trash around the parks. It is a Kubota. A used golf cart is also an option. These items would be paid for from reserves. The Selectboard approved purchase of a used golf cart.

J. Montagne would like to include more lighting during the holidays and some more fireworks. An increase was approved to the "Bay Events" line by \$9,000.

C. Johnson explained that we need to replace the roof and do other extensive repairs at the Stone House. The estimate to fix the roof is \$114,000. To fix the fascia as well would be a grand total of \$160,000. The roof is leaking and we would like to get the work done this summer. The estimate to fix the roof with a PVC/composite product instead of slate would be \$138,500. Before any work can be done, we would have to go to Historic Preservation for approval. J. Giroux suggested using \$100,000 from the LOT. The Board agreed to spend down

the Stone House fund first and then use up to \$100,000 from the LOT to replace the roof. The Board requested this be discussed at the January 18th, 2023 Selectboard meeting

P & R = 47 mins.

Andy Crossman – Town Forest Trails

A. Crossman came before the Board to propose expanding existing trails in the Town Forest by 1.5 miles. The cost for this work is estimated to be \$35,000. A. Crossman explained that funds have been raised (\$18,000) and he would like to ask the Town to contribute \$17,000 for this project. C. Johnson explained that \$10,000 has already been added to the budget for trail maintenance. The Board agreed to use the \$9,000 in the budget and Park and Rec. Impact Fees to fund the rest of the work for this project.

Town Forest Trail = 11 mins.

Planning Commission – Director of Community Development – Megan Sherlund

M. Sherlund came before the Board to discuss the work the Planning Commission (PC) has been doing on sidewalks, setting priorities, and funding. In 2021, the Planning Commission made a recommendation to the Selectboard to utilize 25% of the Local Option Tax (LOT) revenue for sidewalk projects over the next 5 years. The PC would like three projects to be considered.

1. St. Albans Bay Area (St. Albans Bay Marina to the new Town Hall)
The St. Albans Bay Area is a designated Village Center. This area was designated as our Village Center to help businesses, our parks, our beautiful bay. There is an existing sidewalk from the intersection of Lake Road and Georgia Shore Road. It would be beneficial for the Town to install a sidewalk from the Marina to the new Town Hall. This project would be approximately 1,926 linear feet and would affect nearly 100 homes and accommodate many pedestrians.
2. Route 7 South: Phase 1 (Harbor View Dr. to City/Town Line)
Harbor View Drive is one of the newest and largest residential subdivisions within the Town of St. Albans. With over 75 homes (and growing), creating a connection from this street to the Town/City Line would not only connect those residents to the Town School but also to the City's downtown area. This sidewalk project would also connect Mary Drive, Parsons Avenue and Lane, Orchard Street, Wiley Drive, Philomena Drive, and Elizabeth Street. These neighborhoods have almost 200 homes that would have the opportunity to utilize this sidewalk for ease and convenience. The project is approximately 1,331 linear feet in length.
3. Route 7 South: Phase 2 (Harbor View Dr. to Prospect Hill Rd.)
Connection of residential neighborhoods to schools and shopping via pedestrian access is a crucial part of the safety and public health of our Town. Creating a pedestrian connection between Harbor View Dr. and Prospect Hill Rd. opens up pedestrian access to nearly 100 additional homes. The project is approximately 642 linear feet in length.

The Board agreed to \$125,000 a year for five years to fund sidewalk projects and prioritize the three sidewalk projects that the PC had given priority. The Board would like to see this topic added to the January 18th, 2023 meeting agenda. The Board also agreed to add the Stone House roof repairs to the same agenda.

PC/Sidewalks = 45 mins.

General Fund Expenses

C. Johnson stated there haven't been many changes since the last review of the expenses. There was a slight rate increase for the Northwest Vermont Solid Waste Management District.

General Fund Revenues

No further discussion.

Capital Program

No further discussion.

Ballot Questions

C. Johnson pointed out that question number 3 asks that \$100,000 be used to reduce taxes for fiscal year 2024. The \$100,000 is what was left in the fund balance for fiscal Year 2022.

The Board would like to discuss mailing ballots for Town Meeting Day at the next Selectboard meeting on Wednesday, January 18th.

Other Business

C. Johnson suggested the Town Hall ribbon cutting ceremony that was tentatively scheduled for January 18th be moved to February. The Board was in consensus.

Town resident Amanda Headley joined the meeting and stated that she likes the idea of a sidewalk in the Bay.

Executive Session

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to go into executive session at 8:08 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter 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 a personnel matter under the provisions of Title 1, section 313(a)(1) of Vermont Statutes and to invite in Town Manager Carrie Johnson and Interim Director of Operations Al Voegele. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: J. Sanders made a motion to come out of executive session at 9:28 p.m. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

There were no motions made coming out of executive session.

Adjournment

MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 9:29 p.m. Seconded by B. Deso. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenn Gray Executive Assistant