

**Town of St. Albans  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
6:30 p.m.**

On Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 6:30 p.m., the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met at Town Hall.

**Officials and Staff:** Chair Jonathan Giroux, Vice Chair Bryan DesLauriers, Jack Brigham, Jeff Sanders, Brendan Deso, Town Manager Carrie Johnson, Interim Director of Operations Al Voegelé, Town Clerk Anna Bourdon, and Administrative Assistant AJ Johnson.

Chair J. Giroux called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Public in Attendance:** Maple Run Superintendent Bill Kimble, Franklin County Sheriff's Office Lieutenant Mark Lauer, Planning Commissioner Hannah Rounds, and Caela Peterson.

**Public Participation via Zoom:** Amanda Giroux

**General Warrant**

**MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to approve the general warrant dated October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in the amount of \$148,497.20. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Payroll**

**MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to approve the payroll warrants dated October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in the amount of \$53,831.14 and October 14<sup>th</sup> in the amount of \$16,790.22. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Industrial Park Warrant**

**MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Industrial Park Warrant dated October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in the amount of \$656.67. Seconded by J. Sanders. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Stormwater Utility Warrant**

**MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Stormwater Utility Warrant dated October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in the amount of \$8,026.25. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Farmers Market Warrant**

**MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Farmers Market Warrant dated October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in the amount of \$195.00. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Infrastructure Development Warrant**

**MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Infrastructure Development warrant dated October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in the amount of \$736.25. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Minutes**

**MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to approve the regular Selectboard meeting minutes of Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 as presented. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Public Comment**

Caela Peterson appeared before the Selectboard to discuss her concerns regarding signage recently placed along Lower Newton Road and Maquam Shore Road. The signage indicates the roads are a designated pathway for bicycles and pedestrians. C. Peterson does not feel Maquam Shore Road accommodates the volume of bicycle and pedestrian traffic that is being advertised by the signs. She stated the road is not only unaccommodating, it is dangerous. The current vehicle speeds are too high and the roads are not wide enough. She wondered if there are any future projects along the roadway to make the area safer for all forms of travel.

B. Deso explained the signs were put up by our Department of Public works in conjunction with Lake Champlain Byway. C. Johnson stated the signs are meant to be wayfinding, helping people already traveling along the path find their way, not necessarily to advertise the paths. B. Deso explained the road has been subject to recent studies exploring options such as striping for bicycles and pedestrians with one lane for vehicles. The studies did not lead to a proposed

project, but the Town did upgrade the shoulder to allow for safer bicycle and pedestrian travel. B. Deso explained a previous selectboard member was a driving force behind the studies and they are no longer on the Board. He hopes a resident will come forward to help steer the studies further. C. Peterson explained she cannot move the project forward as she is a Civil Engineer – it would be a conflict of interest with her job. C. Johnson stated the Planning Commission has outlined Maquam Shore Road as an area they would like to see pedestrian infrastructure, but it is not the highest priority project. She explained any future studies need to be discussed with the Planning Commission to see how they affect the Sidewalk Master Plan.

C. Peterson would also like an advanced warning sign put along Maquam Shore Road prior to the turn onto Samson Road. The turn is often missed and vehicles use her driveway to turn around in. C. Johnson asked C. Peterson to send her an email with her requests.

Maple Run Unified School District Superintendent, Bill Kimble, came before the Board to introduce himself. He has been in the position for two years but due to the pandemic has been unable to meet with various local boards until now. He explained the school district will be presenting thirteen different listening sessions designed to better understand how to reduce barriers and create equitable opportunities for all students, particularly those who have been marginalized. He invited the board members to join a listening session. C. Johnson asked him to share the invitation so it can be shared on the Town's Facebook page to reach more community members.

### **Cannabis Control Commission**

A. Voegelé prepared a substantial amount of information for the board regarding forming a local Cannabis Control Commission. C. Johnson explained the residents voted to allow retail cannabis and forming the Commission will allow for more control at a local level. It is not a requirement. Applicants proposing to open a retail cannabis location will be required to apply to the Cannabis Control Commission for review.

B. DesLauriers inquired about enforcement. For example, what if a retail establishment allowed a 19-year-old to purchase, when the state law is 21. Who is responsible for enforcement? The Town is not responsible for enforcing laws, that is up to the Sheriff's Department, but the Town will be notified of violations the same way they are notified of Liquor Control violations. A. Bourdon will receive violations. J. Brigham asked how the Commission members are chosen. C. Johnson explained much like the Liquor Control Board, the Selectboard members will form the Commission.

J. Giroux wondered if the Commission will be responsible for approving commercial growers. The Commission will only review retail applications.

The Board agreed to form a Cannabis Control Commission.

**MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Cannabis Control Commission and sign the resolution. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

### **Childhood Cancer Awareness Week Proclamation**

The Kids Cancer Connection reached out to the Town and asked them to proclaim a week as Childhood Cancer Awareness week.

B. Deso read the proclamation out loud.

**MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to proclaim October 23<sup>rd</sup> – October 29<sup>th</sup> as Childhood Cancer Awareness Week. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

A. Voegelé reminded the Board that October is also Breast Cancer Awareness month and encouraged women to get mammograms.

### **Northwest Communications Union District (CUD) – Alternate Representative Appointment**

C. Johnson explained Steve Deal, current representative, is requesting additional support from an Alternative Representative as he is currently serving on the executive committee. She asked if anyone would like to be nominated. B. Deso recommended emailing the current Town volunteers to see if they, or someone they know, would like to be appointed.

The goal is to bring open access fiberoptic internet service to the district.

A. Voegele explained the project is in a difficult place as some counties have pulled out. He hopes a Selectboard member will join the CUD since they have some political pull, and the project is very important.

#### **Health Officer Appointment**

The State of Vermont provided notice that the Town of St. Albans Health Officer term, currently held by Fire Chief Cross, will be expiring at the end of November. C. Johnson advised that B. Cross is willing to be appointed for another 3-year term. J. Giroux asked if there is an official job description for the health officer. C. Johnson explained the health officer acts as a first contact for local residents who have complaints regarding rentals, health hazards, or dog bites.

**MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to appoint Harold R. Cross Jr. as the Health Officer for a 3-year term to begin December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Seconded by B. Deso. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

#### **Zoning Administrator Appointments**

The Zoning Administrator position is currently held by M. Sherlund who is transitioning to Director of Community Development as part of the proposed reorganization. The Planning Commission made a motion to recommend A. Johnson as Zoning Administrator and M. Sherlund as Assistant Zoning Administrator at their meeting of October 11<sup>th</sup>. The Selectboard agreed to make these nominations.

**MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to appoint AJ Johnson as Zoning Administrator and M. Sherlund as Assistant Zoning Administrator for a term of 3 years. Seconded by J. Sanders. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

#### **Town Manager's Report Monthly Sheriff Update**

Lieutenant Mark Lauer, Franklin County Sheriff's Office (FCSO), provided an update to the Selectboard regarding recent activity in the Town. The most common calls are listed as suspicious activity. He explained that is a broad term that he would like to redefine. So far this year 25 arrests have been made. Arrests due to driving with a suspended license has been the most common. So far this year, traffic violations have been less frequent than the previous year. Lt. Lauer believes this is due to an uptick in criminal activity investigations. If the officers are responding to more frequent calls for say, shoplifting, they have less time to be on traffic patrol. There are certain stores that require frequent officer investigations and often-time more than one deputy is involved in the investigation.

Lt. Lauer outlined the need for more deputies within the department. Of the recent seven applicants, only two were viable candidates. He explained a full-time, or level three, officer must spend sixteen weeks at academy, followed by four weeks of post basic training and other additional trainings. The Sheriffs Office pays the officer while in training, but it has been difficult to recruit officers interested in a full-time commitment.

B. Deso wondered if FCSO should consider charging a certain amount of money to stores who require frequent policing. The money could be used to hire a deputy who specifically focuses on this type of investigation.

Lt. Lauer stated he is still exploring the best way to provide policing information, and to please contact him with suggestions.

#### **Town Hall Update**

C. Johnson anticipates a move in date the week of November 28<sup>th</sup>. The offices will be closed for a week while the equipment and services are moved. The water line from the building to the holding tank was installed last week and the reverse osmosis system was delivered. Chevalier has been on site to make sure all of the components will fit where they need to and the water should be hooked up to the system soon. The boardroom doors have been fixed and Main Street Graphics will be providing an etched graphic on the glass.

B. DesLauriers complimented the ability to pass the project and have it almost complete and under budget within a reasonable timeframe, especially for a project being constructed during the pandemic when the cost of materials has sky-rocketed.

#### **Personnel Policy Draft**

C. Johnson stated most of the policy was found by Vermont Leagues of Cities and Towns (VLCT) to be in good shape. VLCT recommended a few words to be changed. J. Giroux wondered if the Town should add a section regarding nepotism. The Board would also like to see a whole section on retaliation created to define it better.

### **Regional Priority Project List**

The Selectboard reviewed a priority project list presented by the Regional Planning Commission and Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation. The list outlines projects that are eligible for State and Federal funding and present a benefit to the region.

B. Deso stated the Town should have projects that are shovel-ready should funding become available. He explained projects take a long time from study to completion. He feels the Town should be putting out Requests for Proposals to work on projects on the list while we have a healthy LOT fund. He would like to see more money put into the community.

J. Giroux stated there is a scoping study being completed for a potential St. Albans Bay Sewer System and proposed St. Albans Health Path project.

C. Johnson reminded the Board budget sessions are coming up and this would be a good conversation during that time.

### **Schedule**

The first budget meeting will be held on October 26<sup>th</sup> at 8 a.m. The next Selectboard meeting will be held Monday, November 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

### **Other Business**

The Selectboard would like an update on the Gricebrook road at the next meeting. A. Voegele is researching previous State and local approvals.

C. Johnson heard a presentation at Rotary from a group called "Wood 4 Good" whose mission is to help local low-income families secure wood to heat their home. C. Johnson wondered if the Board would support having a drop off location at the old DPW garage. J. Giroux is concerned people may use the site to dump unwanted items. C. Johnson explained the property will need to be locked when staff isn't available to keep an eye on the site.

### **Executive Session**

**MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to go into executive session at 8:05 p.m. to discuss contractual matters 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 issue 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: B. Deso made a motion to come out of executive session at 9:25 p.m. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**MOTION: J. Sanders made a motion to hire Forty Four Seven Strategies to perform the new Town Manager search. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. B. DesLauriers, J. Giroux, J. Sanders in favor, J. Brigham and B. Deso abstained, motion carried.**

### **Adjournment**

**MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 9:30p.m. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,  
AJ Johnson