

**Town of St. Albans**  
**Selectboard 'Special' Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
**5:30 p.m.**

On Monday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 5:30 p.m., at Town Hall the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met for a budget meeting.

**Officials and staff present:** Chair Brendan Deso, Vice Chair Jessica Frost, Erin Creley, Jonathan Giroux, Bryan DesLauriers, Town Manager Carrie Johnson, Town Clerk Anna Bourdon, and Director of Operations Corey Parent.

**Public participation available via Zoom:** None

**Public participation in person attendance:** Will Rosenberg and Clem Roger with AmCare.

Chair B. Deso opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. The purpose of the special meeting was to continue work on the fiscal year 2023 budget.

**Budget Work Session**

**Town Clerk's Office**

A. Bourdon stated that there is a \$48,000 increase to her budget from the current fiscal year. She explained that the increase in salaries is \$3.04/hr. for herself and \$2.26/hr. for the Assistant Town Clerk. They are taking on a lot more work due to stormwater. A. Bourdon went on to say that there is no longer a need for the "Audit Consultations" line which currently has \$5,000. The Board was in consensus to separate the "Ballots/Town Report" line item to be one line for "Ballots/Postage" and a separate line item for "Town Report". The \$5,000 from the "Audit Consultations" line will be added to the "Ballots/Postage" budget line.

J. Giroux asked A. Bourdon with her increased workload when she thought she may need extra help. A. Bourdon stated that it was hard to tell, but maybe next summer we could start with an intern. B. Deso explained that we going to roughly figure out how much of A. Bourdon's time is spent on stormwater and see if the Stormwater Utility budget can reimburse A. Bourdon's salary.

**Executive Session**

Will Rosenberg and Clem Roger of AmCare were in attendance to discuss the ambulance contract and funding request with the Board in executive session.

**MOTION: E. Creley made a motion to go into executive session at 5:46 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. Further moved to enter into executive session to discuss legal, contractual or personnel issues under the provisions of Title 1, section 313(a)(1) of Vermont Statutes and to invite Town Manager Carrie Johnson, Town Clerk Anna Bourdon, and Will Rosenberg and Clem Roger with AmCare. Seconded by J. Giroux. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to come out of executive session at 6:30 p.m. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Budget Work Session Continued**

**Assessors**

C. Johnson continued going through draft #3 of the fiscal year 2023 budget by starting with the Assessor's Office. She explained that expenses have gone down for this department because we have gone down from 3 employees to 2. By doing that, we changed Molly Mashtare's part-time position to a full-time to provide better service. Bill Hinman is a part-time employee and only works 8 hours per week. C. Johnson stated that we are hoping to get an intern in the spring of 2022 who can help us digitize more of the Town's records. This will allow us to put these records online.

There was discussion about using funds from the reappraisal account to go towards the fund balance. A. Bourdon explained that statutorily we are only to use those funds for the reappraisal. If there Board would like to change that, they have to be in consensus and A. Bourdon will look into it.

## **Planning and Zoning**

No significant changes, just lowered the salary line a small amount.

## **Director of Operations**

No changes except for a salary increase.

C. Parent joined the meeting at this time.

## **Selectboard**

C. Johnson explained that she added a "Miscellaneous" line item within the Selectboard budget to include \$5,000 to be used for items such as studies or surveys and possibly some engineering for projects they want to get done in a shorter span of time. The Board agreed to leave the new line item in for now.

## **Town Manager**

No significant changes except for the 5% salary increase, the "Cleaning" line, and the "Heating Fuel" line. The current budget for heating fuel is \$6,000, but C. Johnson increased it to \$20,000. Not knowing what we will be doing with the current town hall after we move, we may have to heat it along with the new town hall.

J. Giroux asked if the "Weed Harvester" line could be moved to the Stormwater Utility budget. C. Johnson explained that we could discuss that at the next budget meeting on Monday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> when Stormwater Coordinator Emmalee Cherington is in attendance. C. Parent stated that we may also consider moving the annual non-profit allocation request from The Friends of Northern Lake Champlain to the Stormwater Utility budget.

## **Solid Waste**

No number has been provided at this time, current amount is a placeholder in the budget.

## **Enforcement**

C. Johnson explained to the Board that "Enforcement" means Animal Control and Junk Ordinance complaints. She stated that we are usually under budget for this department, so no changes were made. The line was level funded.

## **Law Enforcement**

C. Johnson explained that we had to purchase a cruiser in fiscal year 2022, but do not need to in fiscal year 2023. This line went down some.

## **Stormwater Utility**

C. Johnson explained that it was discussed at the last budget meeting to, we zeroed out the budget for 2023. That is where you'll see the expenses come out at the end, but we are not going to budget or spend if from our general fund. A. Bourdon pointed out that we will be over budget for fiscal year 2023, but when you look on the revenue side, you'll see that it'll offset.

J. Giroux asked why the Town has to pay for a cruiser instead of it being included in the contract. Why is it always broken out? C. Johnson explained that with the first (St. Albans City Police) contract we didn't get charged. Separately, they (SAPD) started catching on to the Sheriff's deal and they charged for cruisers. J. Giroux asked if they charge us for a cruiser, how come we wouldn't get, at the end of the cruiser's life, they value when they trade it in? C. Johnson explained that the Sheriff's Office has occasionally offered it to us at the end of its useful life (i.e.; Animal Control).

## **Park and Recreation**

There was discussion on the progress on the Stone House and it's repairs as well as the difference in costs between City residents and Town residents when it comes to participating in St. Albans City Park and Recreation programs.

C. Johnson addressed the question of policing cost for special events. There is a cost of \$43,000 in the Sheriff's contract for "Specialized Services". C. Johnson explained that those include Bay Day support, dedicated park patrol, and traffic patrol. We will only be billed for actual costs. It also includes canine and detective services as needed.

## **Local/Regional/State Organizations**

C. Johnson went over the list provided to the Selectboard of the non-profits requestion allocations. The list shows the entity's name, what we paid them last year and what their request is for fiscal year 2023. C. Johnson pointed out that with the last year, with the

pandemic coming, we were not approving any increases and the non-profits were level funded by the Board, despite what the entities asked for.

C. Johnson stated that she felt Northwest Regional Planning should not be included in the non-profit list. B. Deso suggested that with more people coming forward for allocation requests, there should be a policy for organizations requesting money. He explained by saying if your operating budget for your organization exceeds the Town's, we won't give them any money. Or, if their CEO or Director makes more money than the Town Manager, they shouldn't get a donation from the Town. B. Deso stated we need to do a better job when it comes to the list of non-profits. J. Frost stated that GMTA (Green Mountain Transit), they probably wouldn't meet our criteria, but they provide a crucial service. B. Deso suggested possibly moving GMTA to Public Works budget. C. Parent stated that Friends of Northern Lake Champlain has a budget of \$100,000, so \$2,000 is 2% of their budget. C. Johnson clarified that the Board wanted to put that allocation in the Stormwater budget. C. Parent said yes.

There was discussion about the voted \$15,000 to the St. Albans Historical Museum. B. Deso stated his concern about giving the museum \$15,000 without any oversight.

#### **Other Financing/Uses**

B. Deso asked whether we needed the \$20,000 in the Capital Equipment Fund if we already have \$61,000 in Capital Equipment. C. Johnson said not necessarily, if we are talking about changing the DPW (Department of Public Works) one. B. Deso said that we are going to take the DPW Reserve and increase it. C. Johnson stated if it gets approved, we could do that.

#### **Continued Local/Regional/State Organizations**

B. Deso suggested that FCIDC (Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation), NRPC (Northwest Regional Planning Commission) should come out of the non-profit budget.

The Board was in consensus to not contribute to the American Red Cross and set the allocation to \$0.

To get a better understanding as to what services the non-profits provide and their operating budgets, the Board requested copies of the non-profit request letters emailed to them and provided to them at their next budget meeting on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.

#### **Executive Session**

**MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to go into executive session at 8:18 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. Further moved to enter into executive session to discuss legal, contractual or personnel issues under the provisions of Title 1, section 313(a)(1) of Vermont Statutes and to invite Town Manager Carrie Johnson. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to come out of executive session at 9:01 p.m. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Gray