

**Town of St. Albans  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
Monday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020  
5:30 p.m.  
Via Zoom Teleconferencing**

On Monday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020, at 5:30 p.m., the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met.

**Officials and staff in attendance:** Stan Dukas and Town Manager Carrie Johnson.

**Officials and staff participating via Zoom Teleconferencing:** Chair Brendan Deso, Vice Chair Jessica Frost, Erin Creley, and Jonathan Giroux.

Chair B. Deso called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. The purpose for the earlier start to the Selectboard meeting was to discuss the fiscal year 2022 budget. However, the Board was in consensus that they did not need to enter into executive session and decided to recess the meeting until 6:30 p.m.

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to recess the Selectboard meeting at 5:46 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Regular Meeting – 6:30 p.m.**

**Officials and staff in attendance:** Stan Dukas and Town Manager Carrie Johnson.

**Officials and staff participating via Zoom Teleconferencing:** Chair Brendan Deso, Vice Chair Jessica Frost, Erin Creley, Jonathan Giroux, Director of Operations Corey Parent, Director of Public Works Alan Mashtare, new Zoning Administrator Megan Sherlund, and Recording Secretary Jenn Gray.

**Public Participation via Zoom Teleconferencing:** Franklin County Sheriff Roger Langevin and Jackie Brown.

B. Deso called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**MOTION: E. Creley made a motion to reconvene the Selectboard meeting. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**General Warrant**

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the general warrant dated December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 in the amount of \$61,192.25. Seconded by J. Giroux. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Industrial Park Warrant**

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the Industrial Park warrant in the amount of \$693.64. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Department of Public Works Capital Equipment Warrant**

Trailer purchase for the Department of Public Works (DPW).

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the DPW Capital Equipment warrant in the amount of \$25,047.00. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Infrastructure Development Warrant**

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the Infrastructure Development warrant dated December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 in the amount of \$1,222.50 for Ruggiano Engineering. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Payroll**

S. Dukas pointed out that the DPW crew was paid a month in advance for their on-call pay to help them out at Christmas time.

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the payroll warrant for December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 in the amount of \$25,883.89 and December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 in the amount of \$19,139.82. Seconded by J. Giroux. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

## Minutes

**MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes from Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 as presented. Seconded by J. Giroux. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

## Public Comment

None.

## Zoning Administrator Appointment

B. Deso welcomed and congratulated Megan Sherlund on her position as the Town's new Zoning Administrator. M. Sherlund stated that she is happy and thrilled to be working for the Town of St. Albans. The Board made a motion to officially appoint Ms. Sherlund to a three year term expiring on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

**MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to appoint Megan Sherlund as the Zoning Administrator for a term of three years expiring on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

## Town Manager's Report

### Vermont Land Trust Update

Both C. Parent and C. Johnson updated the Board. The closing on this land has already occurred. There is no action at this time, but the Board should consider long term planning. C. Parent explained the closing was scheduled that Friday after the last Board meeting. The property owner is open to a conversation post-closing. However, this should be something the Planning Commission looks at and decides how we want to handle land going into the Land Trust in the future.

### Town Hall Education Campaign – Corey Parent Director of Operations

C. Johnson explained that weekly design meetings are taking place on this project. We are working with Freeman French Freeman (FFF) on interior design and finishes. C. Parent went through his presentation with the Board on how to educate the public on why the Town needs a new town hall. He explained that the focus will be on space, accessibility, and revitalizing the Bay. He went through the media outlets to be used; social media, targeted educational paid media, Letter to the Editor, and Front Porch Forum. C. Parent went over the budget for the educational piece stating that it would cost an estimated \$7,681.00.

E. Creley stated that in the time of COVID-19 with people staying home, direct mailing makes more sense and will reach more people. She asked if we should consider including any Selectboard meetings scheduled to discuss the Town Hall prior to the vote to give the public notice. C. Parent agreed and stated that we will need to remind the public that there will not be an increase in property taxes as well. The Board supported the plan.

### Website Redesign

We issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to design and build a new Town website. Our current website is dated and doesn't offer the functionality needed to meet the needs of our residents and this has been exacerbated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

C. Parent explained that six firms responded to the RFP and of those, four work specifically with municipal governments. Proposals ranged in price from \$3,000 to \$12,250 for the initial build out and from \$1,400 to \$82,800 for annual costs. C. Parent went on to say that we want the website to be set up for receiving payments, licensing dogs, and to allow citizens to reach out more to the Town. We also need to make site ADA compliant.

C. Parent explained that he has chosen a firm called Revize. Their initial cost is \$8,400 and their annual on-going fee is \$1,900. They will also redesign our website without additional cost every 4 years, should we stay with them. Currently, this firm does the websites for both South Burlington and Weathersfield.

E. Creley stated that we do need a new website and asked if C. Parent contacted the other municipalities who use this firm. C. Parent stated yes and that they told him their websites are more user friendly now. He also stated that the firm will train anyone who is authorized to make changes to the website.

E. Creley asked C. Parent about the security of personal information, what part of the RFP includes data security? C. Parent stated that the website developer handles that.

J. Frost stated that she too would like to see a new website and asked if there will be a way for people to contact the Town with questions? C. Parent stated that there will be a FAQ page just for that.

B. Deso stated the second part of this is the rebrand portion with a new logo. For an expediency he would like himself, C. Parent, and C. Johnson to decide on three logos and then present to the rest of the staff for their comments and suggestions.

E. Creley stated that she would like to see a list of the costs of changing over logos on everything. When will they get changed around Town and on our equipment? B. Deso stated we'll start with the new Town Hall and then move to places like parks or forest. We could do this over 1-3 years or within 10 years to do every piece of equipment we own.

E. Creley asked how the Town will pay for the new website design and the rebranding? C. Johnson explained that we have an Administrative Impact Fee Account we can use for this purpose. The account currently has between \$100,000 and \$150,000.

S. Dukas explained that when Al Voegele filled in for Carrie a couple of years ago, he asked Mr. Voegele what he observed at Town Hall. Mr. Voegele had explained to S. Dukas that the website really needed to be updated. S. Dukas went on to say that he's all for spending the funds on a new website, it's time to do so.

**MOTION: E. Creley made a motion to authorize moving forward with the proposed rebranding and website redesign and to pay for both with funds from the Administrative Impact Fee Account. Seconded by S. Dukas. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

### **COVID-19 Update**

C. Johnson explained Town Hall continues to be open by appointment only.

### **Schedule**

The next regular Selectboard meetings are Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, and Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. Town Hall will be closing at noon on both Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Town Hall will be closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

### **Chair's Report**

None.

### **Other Business**

#### **Scoping Grant – Route 7 North**

J. Frost explained to the Board that back in 2018, the Town partnered with the City of St. Albans on the Better Connections grant for the Route 7 North Corridor. We received a report in July, 2019 that made lots of suggestions as far as what we could do; such as sidewalks on both sides, a recreational path, and striping. She went on to say that she reached out to VTrans. They will be repaving that portion of the road in 2024. It's not that far away when it comes to planning. It would be in our best interested to be ready to make some changes when VTrans is doing the paving.

J. Frost explained there still is on a committee that has been meeting monthly since 2018. Members are from both the City and the Town. She went on to say that the State of Vermont comes out with a scoping grant, usually around July and there is a 20% match from the Town to move forward with that grant. Chip Sawyer sits on this committee and he estimated that to do the scoping would cost about \$35,000 and the City is willing to be a co-applicant on the grant application. J. Frost went on to explain that the scoping grant will evaluated all the options that were laid out in the first report so that we can the move forward with some engineering, and then eventually move forward with the construction.

J. Frost was seeking approval from the Selectboard to go forward with applying for the scoping grant. E. Creley asked if the 20% match would be split between the City and Town? J. Frost stated that we would have to figure out how to break that down. A bulk of Route 7 North is in the Town with a small portion in the City. However, the City is interested in making that connection to the Rail Trail. The Town should be interested in making that small connection.

C. Johnson asked J. Frost to remind her what the first study accomplished. J. Frost explained that it was to do an evaluation. It gave us several options; some were lower costs and some were higher costs. C. Johnson stated that some are construction grants and some are planning grants. Is this still a planning grant? J. Frost stated that it is not an engineering grant, but it looks at the options and it helps us narrow down our selection. If we knew what the best option was, we could potentially skip that step and go straight to engineering.

C. Parent stated that the this new grant will help us figure out what Right-of-Ways we would need to acquire, etc. It maps out what the whole project potentially looks like. The grant is not due until about the June timeframe, so we have some time. He and J. Frost will be meeting in January to discuss this more and start prepping the application. B. Deso stated he could write a letter of support himself or

co-author one with the Mayor of St. Albans. J. Frost stated that she had spoken to business owners and people shopping in that area and there is general enthusiasm for doing it. There is also a need. There was a fair amount of people she talked to who have to walk or bike that thruway to get to work or to shop for groceries. It's more than recreation, there is a true need in our community. B. Deso stated that he thought we were good on operating on consent on moving forward.

### **Rebranding**

B. Deso explained that he has spoken to both the City Manager and Mayor about monopolizing the brand "St. Albans". In one of his conversations with the City, he suggested branding St. Albans as "The City of" and "The Town of. They told B. Deso that they've invested a lot in their brand and they want to remain on their own and that they were going to become "City of", there were going to start investing their energies into marketing themselves as the "City of". B. Deso stated that he hasn't seen that happen with any of their new advertising. If things don't change, he suggested getting support from the Selectboard in the future to address the issues.

### **Adjournment**

**MOTION: E. Creley made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 7:47 p.m. Seconded by J. Giroux. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jenn Gray, Recording Secretary