

**Town of St. Albans
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 6th, 2023
5:30 p.m.**

On Monday, February 6th, 2023 at 5:30 p.m., the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met at Town Hall.

Officials and Staff: Chair Jonathan Giroux, Vice Chair Bryan DesLauriers, Brendan Deso, Jack Brigham, Jeff Sanders, Town Manager Carrie Johnson, and Interim Director of Operations Al Voegele. Also in attendance were Corey Parent and Alex Brigham.

J. Giroux called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The purpose for the early start to the Selectboard meeting was to hold an executive session to discuss a personnel matter regarding the Town Manager search.

Executive Session

MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to go into executive session at 5:30 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, Interim Director of Operations Al Voegele, consultants Corey Parent and Alex Brigham. Seconded by J. Sanders. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

The meeting was recessed until 6:30 p.m.

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

Staff Participation via Zoom: Director of Community Development Megan Sherlund and Executive Assistant Jenn Gray.

Public in Attendance: Interim Director Dr. Harry Chen and Director of Policy and Planning Geoffrey Pippenger of the Department for Children and Families (DCF), Mitch Montagne, Stan Dukas, Representatives Lynn Dickinson and Casey Toof, and David Bray.

Public Participation via Zoom: Amanda Giroux

J. Giroux reconvened the Selectboard meeting at 6:30 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

General Warrant

MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to approve the general warrant dated February 6th, 2023 in the amount of \$21,610.56. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Impact Fee Warrant

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Impact Fee warrant dated February 6th, 2023 in the amount of \$906.28. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Fire Department Reserve

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Fire Department Reserve warrant dated February 6th, 2023 in the amount of \$12,001.78. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Infrastructure Development Warrant

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Infrastructure Development warrant dated February 6th, 2023 in the amount of \$380.00. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Stormwater Utility Warrant

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Stormwater Utility warrant dated February 6th, 2023 in the amount of \$8,576.23. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Payroll

MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to approve the payroll warrants dated January 20th, 2023 in the amount of \$23,010.27 and January 27th, 2023 in the amount of \$41,054.91. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Minutes

MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes from Wednesday, January 18th, 2023, the continued meeting from Monday, January 23rd, 2023, and the special joint meeting with the City of St. Albans Council on Thursday, January 26th, 2023. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Warrants & Minutes = 6 mins.

Public Comment

Stan Dukas came before the Board to discuss the \$900,000 increase in taxes in the Town's fiscal year 2024 budget and shared his opinion that this increase was driven by the new restructuring. Mr. Dukas went on to say that he went back and looked at prior meetings and didn't find anything regarding restructuring. He continued by saying he didn't know what was going on, but advised the Selectboard to hold these discussions in public open session, prior to elections. Mr. Dukas said The \$900,000 increase is unheard of. B. Deso asked if the Town had already scheduled the required public meeting to discuss the budget.

Public Comment = 1 min.

Certificate of Highway Mileage

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Certificate of Highway Mileage for 2022. Seconded by J. Sanders. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Cert. = 1 min.

Town Manager's Report

Vermont Department for Children & Families (DCF) – Temporary Short Term Secure Stabilization – Interim Director Dr. Harry Chen & Director of Policy and Planning Geoffrey Pippenger

Dr. Harry Chen and Director of Policy and Planning Geoffrey Pippenger of the Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF) came before the Board to discuss a DCF short term juvenile crisis project. Dr. Chen explained that some of the issues addressed within this division are child abuse, child neglect, juvenile cases, and child custody cases among others. Dr. Chen is proposing safe housing on the Northwestern Correctional Facility property for these children. Dr. Chen continued to explain to the Board the services this DCF division provides and what their steps are in securing the site at the prison. He also reviewed the site plan which would include temporary modular units for housing until something more permanent is built, 5-8 years from now.

Some of the Board's concerns were that the proposed site is too close to the road and too close to the prison yard. They did not agree with the lack of fencing around the site. Dr. Chen agreed to forward the Board's concerns regarding the fencing.

Town resident Mitch Montagne addressed the Board. He explained that the Town has always had battles with the prison since the late 1960's. They've expanded several times over the years. He went on to say that Governor Scott is putting the Town in a bad spot.

Representative Lynn Dickinson asked whether the land is in a trust and if it's held in perpetuity.

A. Voegelé suggested possibly using lots at the industrial park that won't be developed in the near future. B. Deso suggested putting this on the Town owned Brigham Road property, near the railroad.

Dr. Chen stated that he'll need to have some discussions and do some research and get back to the Board at a later date.

DCF = 40 mins.

IDEAL Town Application – Al Voegele

C. Johnson explained that Interim Director of Operations Al Voegele is working on the IDEAL Vermont (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Action, and Leadership) application. IDEAL Vermont is a coalition of municipalities in Vermont dedicated to advancing racial and other forms of equity across the state through shared learning and action. The application is for the Town to join this coalition and A. Voegele wanted consensus from the Board before moving forward.

C. Johnson explained that this is a policy decision and the Board needs to decide if we want to be a part of this and if so, we will continue with the application. However, we don't want to drop out of it in six months for lack of support.

The Board had concerns with being able to staff another committee. They agreed that they needed to review again the document that was provided to them in their packets called "Tools for Municipal Engagement for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) that was created by former Selectboard member Erin Creley in February, 2022.

J. Sanders stated that we need to summarize the things we can work on, try to get some done, and not try to solve all the problems all at once. B. Deso agreed. A. Voegele will contact the State to let them know the Town will not be applying at this time. The Board agreed to address the "Tools" list again and discuss at another Selectboard meeting in the future.

IDEAL = 37 mins.

Town Hall Open House

C. Johnson explained that the open house will take place on February 27th at 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. with a ribbon cutting at 5:30 p.m.

TH Open House = 1 min.

Act 250 Notice

City of St. Albans Playground

Informational only. No action required.

Act 250 = 1 min.

Schedule

The next regular Selectboard meetings are Monday, February 27th and Monday, March 6th at 6:30 p.m. The public informational hearing on the FY 2024 budget and ballot questions will be held on Monday, March 6th, at 6:30 p.m.

Schedule = 1 min.

Other Business

None.

Executive Session

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to go into executive session at 8:05 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: B. Deso made a motion to come out of executive session at 8:56 p.m. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

There were no motions made coming out of executive session.

Adjournment

MOTION: J. Sanders made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 8:58 p.m. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenn Gray Executive Assistant