

**Town of St. Albans
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 21st, 2021
6:00 p.m.
Via Zoom Teleconferencing**

On Monday, June 21st, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met at Town Hall.

Official and staff: Chair Brendan Deso, Vice Chair Jessica Frost, Erin Creley, Jonathan Giroux, Bryan DesLauriers, and Town Manager Carrie Johnson.

Public in attendance: Sheriff Roger Langevin and Captain John Grismore of the Franklin County Sheriff's Office.

Chair B. Deso called the Selectboard meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Selectboard started their meeting with an executive session to discuss a contractual matter.

Executive Session

MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to go into executive session at 6:02 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. It was 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, and Franklin County Sheriff Roger Langevin, and Deputy John Grismore. Seconded by J. Frost. 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 B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Regular Meeting – 6:34 p.m.

Officials and Staff: Chair Brendan Deso, Vice Chair Jessica Frost, Erin Creley, Jonathan Giroux, Bryan DesLauriers, Director of Operations Corey Parent, Stormwater Coordinator Emmalee Cherington, Fire Chief and Public Safety Administrator Bob Cross, Zoning Administrator Megan Sherlund, Town Manager Carrie Johnson, Town Clerk Anna Bourdon, and Polymorphic Creator and Consultant Parth Shah.

Staff participating via Zoom: Facilities Manager John Montagne and Recording Secretary Jenn Gray.

Public Participation via Zoom Teleconferencing: Mike Hoeflich.

B. Deso called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

General Warrant

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to approve the general warrant dated June 21st, 2021 in the amount of \$81,878.40. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Payroll

MOTION: E. Creley made a motion to approve the payroll warrants dated June 11th, 2021 in the amount of \$23,316.74 and June 18th, 2021 in the amount of \$23,670.22. Seconded by J. Giroux. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Impact Fee Warrant

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to approve the Impact Fee warrant dated June 21st, 2021 in the amount of \$1,000. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Industrial Park Warrant

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to approve the Industrial Park warrant dated June 21st, 2021 in the amount of \$503.47. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Infrastructure Development Warrant

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to approve the Infrastructure Development warrant dated June 21st, 2021 in the amount of \$8,660.37. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Minutes

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes from Monday, June 7th, 2021 and the special meeting minutes from Thursday, June 17th, 2021 as presented. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Public Comment

None.

Franklin County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) – Roger Langevin & John Grismore Transition Report

Sheriff Langevin and Captain Grismore of the Franklin County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) came before the Board to explain their transition plans to take over the law enforcement contract for the Town of St. Albans effective July 1st, 2021.

Sheriff Langevin explained that FCSO has been in contact with St Albans Police concerning police response to specific locations that border the City and the Town. The start time for the transfer is July 1st, 2021 at 12:00 midnight. The City will leave St Albans Town and Sheriff Deputies will start patrolling the Town. Chief Lamothe and Sheriff Langevin are working out a possible (picture) press release.

Sheriff Langevin explained that FCSO currently has 15 deputies that are certified to perform patrol duties including 4 Command Staff Members that will be available. FCSO has one Deputy in the Level II Academy now and will be patrol ready by mid-July and one Level II deputy that will assume full-time duties in late August. Additionally, FCSO has one full-time candidate and two part-time candidates that they expect to enroll in the next Level II Academy in September.

New St. Albans Town purchased cruisers on order have not arrived as of this report. There are additional cruisers on hand at the FCSO in the event additional cruisers are needed. The FCSO's K9 is slotted to attend the Vermont Police Canine Academy in July.

Captain Grismore explained that the FCSO is in the early phases of developing a 3-part Mental Health Program that they hope to have in place towards the end of the year at the latest:

- a) One part will be to develop a Crisis Response Unit (CRU) that would be designed much like a SWAT team to have specialized training in crisis response, mental health issues intervention, victim services, advocacy, de-escalation, negotiation, and threat-mitigation, to name a few. This CRU would then be available to mobilize as needed to respond to personnel in need. The idea being that this unit would be activated before it was necessary to take more assertive actions to resolve a particular issue related to persons in crisis.
- b) One part will be designed to develop a continuous education program that will elevate the FCSO's police services to be better at identifying persons in crisis, persons with mental/cognitive differences, cultural awareness, racial matters, sociological matters, psychology, victim advocacy, de-escalation techniques (recently Lt. Paul Morits was certified as a de-escalation trainer), and the like, so that FCSO will be better prepared to recognize people in need and adjust their police services response accordingly.
- c) The last part will be targeted at providing mental, physical and emotional health of the FCSO's Deputies. They recognize that improvements are needed to ensure that Deputies are of sound mind and body and that there are proper services that limit stigma and ensure that they're properly taking care our ourselves. - The "Oxygen Mask Theory" in practice.

FCSO has sent a few Deputies to specialized schools in Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) and drug interdiction to ensure they're able to identify the increase in drug related impaired driving and drug related issues.

FCSO communicated previously that they have 3 members of the FCSO that are Team 2 trainers. Team 2 is a coordinated effort between police, dispatchers, mental health professionals, designed to provide education to first responders to better address the needs of people needing mental health services.

Sheriff Langevin and Captain Grismore both expressed their enthusiasm for assuming the law enforcement duties for the Town of St. Albans.

B. DesLauriers asked if a citizen sees someone speeding, who should they address come July 1st?

C. Johnson stated complaints and concerns should come to her first, unless it's an emergency. All emergency calls should go to 9-1-1. If she's not available, Corey Parent would field the call.

Town Manager's Report
Staff Quarterly Reports
Fire Department

Fire Chief and Public Safety Administrator Bob Cross came before the Board to go over his quarterly report. He stated that he became the St. Albans Town Fire Chief in 1994 and has been on with the fire department since 1976. B. Cross explained that call volume is up 50 more calls this year from this time last year. He went on to say that it takes three or four days to get equipment back to appropriate running order after use at a fire or other emergencies. He is working a lot with the City of St. Albans Fire Department and it's working out very well. He explained the fire department is researching a new rescue pumper, with all-wheel drive to better access incidents in such areas such as Fairfield Hill Road where a four-wheel vehicle is necessary.

Town Clerk/Treasurer

A. Bourdon came before the Board to give a synopsis of the last six months in the Clerk's office. She explained that she wants to digitize records and implement the pay online feature on the new website. Grievances and abatements hearings are next week. From January to June, 2021 there were over 1,198 in office appointments along with numerous emails and telephone inquiries for deeds, tax bills, and current tax status. Now, the office isn't as busy because of the tight housing market. People are refinancing instead and that generates a lot of recording.

Stormwater Coordinator

E. Cherington came before the Board to provide her first quarterly report. She was hired at the end of April and in the first month, she worked on determining calculations for the stormwater utility budget. Then, shifted to education and outreach. She explained that most people understand the need for the Stormwater Utility. Some of the questions are coming from folks with empty lots who don't have impervious surface and still have to pay the fee. She suggested going through the zoning bylaws and address how we want to deal with stormwater in the future.

Director of Operations

C. Parent came before the Board to provide his quarterly report. One of the items he is currently working on is the Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) tool. He explained that most private sector entities, health care organizations (EHRs), etc., have a way to track activity and customer/constituent complaints. C. Parent had discussions with various other municipal and state IT specialists to see what they used; there wasn't an option available or one that would work for the Town. He went on to say that Polymorphic, a new company that he reached out to has agreed to use the Town of St. Albans as a pilot program to implement their product. In doing so, they've agreed to spend a few weeks with the Town in June and July to implement their product and make customizations to maximize our workflows.

Consultant and Polymorphic creator Parth Shah explained that his software will allow Town employees to build profiles for residents who reach out to the Town with problems, questions, and concerns. Employees will see who has been in touch with a resident and what progress has been made on their problem, question, or concern. The Town is the first municipality to use this software. Security will be similar to the Department of Justice. It is embedded within the software and the Town will not need to contract that out separately.

Zoning Administrator

M. Sherlund came before the Board to go over her quarterly report. She explained that she is currently electronically recording the last three years of permitting to enable an analysis information. She is also mapping these permits. Regarding revenues, we have already surpassed the last three years. Due to the pandemic there have been a lot of permits for additions, renovations, and sales. Legally she has 30 days to approve a permit, but she's getting permits approved within a week. Going forward she would like to request everything be submitted to the Zoning Office electronically. M. Sherlund went on to say that Town parcels will be updated on the state website. There were over 100 parcels that did not have any information. She's gotten that list down to 3, she stated that she had gotten a lot of from the Assessor's office.

Assessor

B. Hinman came before the Board to explain his background and work he's done in the Assessor's office. He's been assessing for 35 years with 21 years in the Town of Williston. He stated that transparency is a major part of the Assessor's office. Currently, the market is unstable, we are seeing an unprecedented increase in market values. Close to a 40% increase. Annually, this increase is usually 10% – 15%. He explained that he drafted some legislature to have the Common Level of Assessment dropped from 85% to 80%. It didn't go anywhere. When the Town hits 85%, it triggers a town-wide reappraisal. The State recommends every ten years, but this is not in statute.

Town Hall Update

C. Johnson explained bids went out and we are still planning a ground breaking for July. There is a Relocation meeting Wednesday, June 23rd to discuss the bids.

Salt Shed

All paving is done. The Town is finally getting the punch list items done.

Notice of Initial Act 250 Application Filing – 2 Franklin Park West, LLC

Informational only, no action required.

Land use Permit Amendment – Barry Callebaut USA, LLC

Informational only, no action required.

Schedule

The next regular Selectboard meetings are Monday, July 12th, and Monday, July 19th at 6:30 p.m. Bay Day is Saturday, July 3rd.

Chair's Report

None.

Other Business

None.

Executive Session

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to go into executive session at 8:06 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. It was 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 B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to come out of executive session at 9:02 p.m. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Adjournment

MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 9:03 p.m. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenn Gray, Recording Secretary