

**Town of St. Albans
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 6th, 2022
6:30 p.m.**

On Monday, June 6th, 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, Brendan Deso, Jack Brigham, Director of Public Works Alan Mashtare, Facilities Manager John Montagne, Director of Operations Corey Parent, and Town Manager Carrie Johnson. Absent was Jeff Sanders.

Public in Attendance: Scott Mallory and Allyson Brown with VELCO, St. Albans Messenger reporter Josh Ellerbrock, J. David Bray, Liza Bray, Stan Dukas, Amy Brewer, and Mitch Craib.

Staff participating via Zoom: Stormwater Coordinator Emmalee Cherington, Town Clerk Anna Bourdon, and Executive Assistant Jenn Gray.

Public Participation via Zoom: Nathaniel Jamison-Root with Peterson Consulting, Shana Louiselle with VELCO, and Amanda Giroux.

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

Amendment to Agenda

MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to add the Purchasing Policy and Liquor Control Board to the agenda. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

General Warrant

MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to approve the general warrant dated June 6th, 2022 in the amount of \$50,178.75. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Payroll

MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to approve the payroll warrants dated May 20th, 2022 in the amount of \$22,620.44, May 27th, 2022 in the amount of \$40,292.73, and June 3rd, 2022 in the amount of \$24,040.76. Seconded by B. Deso. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Infrastructure Development Warrant

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Infrastructure Development warrant dated June 6th, 2022 in the amount of \$16,715.40. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Stormwater Utility Warrant

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Stormwater Utility warrant dated June 6th, 2022 in the amount of \$106.80. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Stone House Warrant

A. Mashtare explained the recent electrical upgrades at the Stone House. This will help when vendors and bands are at the park. The temporary power that was being used last year was moved to the pump house. There is more LED lighting to light up the park to better deter vandals. Recently, vandals kicked open doors at the Stone House.

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Stone House warrant dated June 6th, 2022 in the amount of \$10,125.62. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Minutes

MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes of Monday, May 16th, 2022 as presented. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Warrants & Minutes = 9 mins.

Public Comment

David Bray, a retired business man and resident of the Town for 33 years came before the Board to share his opinion on the personnel hearing held for Alan Mashtare. He read from a multi-page document expressing his concerns regarding the decisions and future actions of the Selectboard. After he was finished, Mr. Bray asked the Board to address his concerns. J. Giroux had no comment. B. DesLauriers stated that to discuss this further would need to be in executive session. C. Johnson explained it was the employee's decision to have the hearing in public and she has been advised not to comment further on this publicly.

Bay Park Stairs

Amanda Giroux notified the Board that the steps leading into the lake at the Bay Park crumbled underneath her feet during her last visit. C. Johnson suggested roping off the area until Historical Preservation is contacted to approve the repairs.

Public Comment = 16 mins.

Liquor Control Board

MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to recess the Selectboard and convene as the Liquor Control Board. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

A. Bourdon explained that this was a new application for Mill River Brewing to open a tap room. Approving this would allow the State to begin an investigation, not approve a license. She requested 3 Board members to come in and sign the application after tonight's meeting.

MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to approve the Mill River Tap Room Liquor License application as presented. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to adjourn the Liquor Control Board and reconvene as the Selectboard. Seconded by J. Brigham. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Liquor = 2 mins.

Town Manager's Report

New Town Hall Water Update

C. Johnson briefly went over the options for water at the new Town Hall. Option 4 would be to haul water or Option 5 would be to share a neighboring well. She explained that the most recent option, Option 6 was to plug the existing well and hydro frack, bringing the depth of the well from 620 to closer to 500 or 450. After this is completed, the water will be tested. Should there still be salt in the water, we can move forward with Option 5, to share a neighboring well.

E. Cherington explained to the Board that the cost would be \$6,000 to cap and frack. Start with fracking at a shallower depth. Chevalier, the company who would do the work is available this Friday to begin. If Chevalier finds water, he will seal it and run a test to make sure we are not in salt. E. Cherington continued by explained that she was in touch with 4 homes on Wharf Street and none of their wells have salt, but do have sulfur or hardness. One well has sulfur, but no hardness. If we find water at a shallower depth, we could get fresh water. Most wells in that area are at 450 deep and our currently dug well is at 620 feet.

C. Johnson and E. Cherington proposed to the Board to go with Option 6. If the water test comes back with salt in the water still, then we can move forward with Option 5. The Board agreed.

MOTION: J. Brigham made a motion to move forward with Option 6 with Option 5 as a contingency. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

TH Water = 13 mins.

VELCO – Shana Louiselle, Scott Mallory, and Allyson Brown – real estate and easements.

Shana Louiselle, Communications, Scott Mallory, Project Manager, and Allyson Brown, Real Estate and Easements, all with VELCO came before the Board to discuss the Franklin County K42 Line Project. Ms. Brown will be the liaison to all the towns the line goes through. Mr. Mallory went through a PowerPoint presentation explaining the background and details of the project. There are 4 towns the line runs through; Georgia, St. Albans, Swanton, and Highgate. Construction cost quotes expected in August, 2022, permitting process in 2023, and construction and removal of old line in 2024 – 2025. The complete presentation is available in the Town Manager's Office.

VELCO = 21 mins.

Personnel Policy Review

C. Johnson explained that this policy was last reviewed in 2018. She requested the Board review the whole policy, specifically Section 12 regarding employees using Town equipment or property for personal use. Currently, the policy states it is prohibited. C. Parent stated that when he worked in the insurance industry, it strongly discouraged employees using Town equipment or property for personal use.

B. Deso expressed his concerns. He stated that if an employee uses Town property or equipment, it's usually after business hours and they are more than likely to be alone. If an accident should occur, there would be no one around to help them. It's a huge liability.

J. Giroux suggested the Board send any edits to C. Johnson. He also suggested that VLCT and Town employees both review the policy. This policy will be brought back to the Board at their next meeting on Wednesday, June 22nd if the internal and VLCT reviews have been completed.

Policy = 12 mins.

Capital Improvement Projects List

C. Johnson explained that previous items on this list were the Department of Public Works (DPW) garage construction on the Brigham Road, the new construction of the Town Hall on Georgia Shore Road, and the creation of the Stormwater Utility. Items to consider moving forward now would be sidewalks and bike and pedestrian infrastructure.

B. Deso stated he would like to have recommendation from department heads. C. Johnson explained that she would like to know from the Board if there was anything in the next 6-12 months we should be working on. B. DesLauriers suggested looking into the future of the former DPW site and the current Town Hall site after the move. Maybe also the Route 207 loop road. J. Giroux asked if we could request that department heads provide their recommended projects. C. Johnson explained she can discuss this at the monthly Department Head meeting and cautioned that "staff" was limited right now and so is their ability to get extra projects done.

Amy Brewer, who is part of a walk/bike group in the community came before the Board to provide them with a copy of the Route 7 Livability Study and to remind them to make sure that bike/pedestrian access from the City is included in the Town's future capital projects. The Route 7 Livability Connection Study has sought to build a stronger connection between the downtown of the City of St. Albans and the growing commercial district of the Town of St. Albans, by way of infrastructure and land use recommendations. Route 7 is the only continuous roadway between the two areas, which rely on each other for housing, jobs, shopping, and recreation. However, the corridor does not fully support the safe and comfortable movement of people walking, taking the bus, or bicycling along it. Despite of these conditions, many people do walk, take transit, and bicycle along the corridor, and there is demand for improved infrastructure for those currently using these modes as well as those who would if such improvements were made.

C. Johnson explained that she has the Route 7 study and will share it with the Board.

CIP List = 24 mins.

Discover Northwest Vermont Guide Marketing Discussion

C. Johnson explained that the Board previously expressed not wanting to spend a lot of money on marketing. B. Deso asked if we had used this service before. C. Johnson stated that we had previously, a few times. After some discussion, the Board agree to have C. Johnson move forward with what she feels is the appropriate marketing strategy based on the advertising budget.

Discover = 11 mins.

Purchasing Policy Approval

MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to approve the Purchasing Policy as presented. Seconded by B. DesLauriers. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Purchasing = 1 mins.

Act 250 Notice

Peter Morse – 6 Franklin Park West Drive

Informational only, no action required.

City or St. Albans 179 – 181 Congress St. - Pool

Informational only, no action required.

Tanglewood

Informational only, no action required.

Act 250 = 1 min.

Schedule

The next regular Selectboard meetings are Wed., June 22nd and Wed., July 6th at 6:30 p.m. Special meeting on Wed., July 6th at 5:30 p.m. – 579 Lake Road (Old Town hall) Community Discussion.

Schedule = 1 min.

Other Business

B. Deso explained that cell phone service is pretty poor in several parts of Town and need to be addressed. C. Johnson suggested adding this to the CIP list.

B. DesLauriers explained that last year, someone approached us regarding a Juneteenth celebration. This year, there will be a celebration on June 20th. C. Johnson stated the logo on our Facebook page will be changed to reflect the Juneteenth holiday.

Other = 5 mins.

Executive Session

MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to go into executive session at 8:31 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 personnel issues under the provisions of Title 1, section 313(a)(1) of Vermont Statutes and to invite in Town Manager Carrie Johnson and Director of Operations Corey Parent. Seconded by B. Deso. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: B. DesLauriers made a motion to come out of executive session at 9:29 p.m. Seconded by B. Deso. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,
Jenn Gray Executive Assistant