

**Town of St. Albans
Selectboard 'Special' Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 12th, 2020
5:30 p.m.**

On Monday, October 12th, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., at Town Hall the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met.

Officials and staff present: Chair Brendan Deso, Vice Chair Jessica Frost, Stan Dukas, Erin Creley, Jonathan Giroux, Town Manager Carrie Johnson, Director of Public Works Alan Mashtare, Town Clerk Anna Bourdon, and Public Safety Administrator and Fire Chief Bob Cross, and Facilities Manager John Montagne.

Public participation available via Zoom: A. Voegele

Chair B. Deso opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The purpose of the special meeting was to begin work on the fiscal year 2022 budget.

**Budget Work Session
Fire Department Budget**

To start the discussion on the fire department budget, the Board talked about the \$125,000 that was voted on by the voters for the current fiscal year for a reserve fund. It was confirmed that this ballot question did not have an end date and that we will not have to go back to the voters to ask the question again. The \$125,000 will continue to be included in future budgets.

C. Johnson explained to the Board that the fire department this fiscal year (2021) had gone from being paid stipends to hourly pay. There was a little bit of an increase, but it is staying within the current budget based on two quarters we had already paid. B. Cross explained that he and C. Johnson had discussed hiring a part time person to be filled from within the fire department ranks and have the hours be based on a 24-30 hour week. A schedule to be set one month at a time.

C. Johnson stated that at this time, the only unknown is the dispatch number, but we have estimated it to be \$22,000, a 3% increase.

B. Cross explained to the Board that there was a fire department interested in purchasing our older air packs. They offered \$30,000 for ten air packs and some replacement bottles. B. Cross went on to explain that he'd like to use the money from the sale of the air packs to repower the rescue boat that was purchased last year. A. Bourdon pointed out that those funds from the sale will go into the fire department reserve funds. The Board was in agreement.

Resident, Al Voegele asked B. Cross how many people had been rescued by the marine unit this year? B. Cross stated he didn't have specific numbers in front of him, but he knows that the department went out at least 10 times. A lot of the folks rescued were from out of state.

B. Cross explained to the Board that the fire department likes to replace their equipment while the equipment is still worth good trade in money. He has reached out to one dealership asking whether he could trade municipal vehicles on a municipal contract. The dealership said that they can. The price quote he received to replace the current one ton truck was \$61,000, with the municipal contract it would cost \$49,000, and the trade is estimated at \$25,000 - \$28,000. It's cost to us is about \$25,000 for a brand new vehicle.

In summary, we are not going to be asking to purchase any large equipment or apparatus on the Town Meeting Day ballot.

Parks & Recreation Budgets

J. Montagne and A. Mashtare came before the Board to discuss the Parks and Recreation budget. A. Mashtare explained that the Town will now be taking over the Great Race and it will again take place the same day as Bay Day. A. Mashtare explained that he did cut \$10,000 of the Park Infrastructure line. There were no questions from the Board.

Department of Public Works

B. Deso stated that the Department of Public Works (DPW) budget is down. A. Mashtare stated that there was quite a bit cut out. B. Deso explained that we zeroed out

the Stormwater and MS4 Permit line. Those expenses will go to the Stormwater Utility expense budget. The DPW AOT Structure Grant line was cut \$20,000. B. Deso stated that the Salaries line is up. C. Johnson stated that it's not because we are adding an employee. Part of it is for raises, but some of it is filling in what we approved last year.

Stormwater & MS4

S. Dukas asked that funds have been pulled from the Stormwater/MS4 line in the DPW budget, how are we going to fund it? Shouldn't Alan be planning a stormwater budget? B. Deso explained the (Stormwater) utility is going to pay for all of it. We are not taking a nickel out of the general fund anymore to cover stormwater expenses. B. Deso and E. Creley stated that there is a draft budget already in the ordinance. C. Johnson said that she and Alan will work on that together.

B. Deso explained that the goal is to fill the Zoning Administrator position this week. The Director of Operations position posting ends this Friday. After those two positions are filled, we should be seeing some action on the Stormwater Utility person as well as working on the previously discussed credit system.

Al Voegele suggested that the Town loan the Stormwater Utility a certain amount of dollars, so they can continue their work and once the utility is up and running, the bills our, and the revenue starts coming in, then you can pay back the Town. B. Deso stated that's what we decided to do with the one staffer. The only start up money we are going to need is for one full time employee to figure out the billing. A. Voegele asked if there was any work that needed to get done immediately by DPW or the new Stormwater Utility employee? C. Johnson explained that he (Alan Mashtare) is doing the work right now. We do have to wait 60 days (for the appeal process). We certainly could loan the utility money. The utility is going to be run as an enterprise fund. We plan to clarify what our expectations are going forward. B. Deso stated we just haven't formalized anything yet.

DPW Reserve Fund

S. Dukas stated that the fire department has an equipment replacement fund in the amount of \$126,000 annually. He didn't believe that the DPW had any such fund. A. Bourdon explained that we do have a little bit. We are down to \$35,730. C. Johnson explained that she and A. Mashtare talked about roughly \$38,000 - \$40,000 for an annual equipment replacement fund. This would fund the truck replacement every seven years for the smaller trucks and every ten years for the larger trucks. S. Dukas stated we need to do something. A. Bourdon confirmed this would be an article on the ballot. C. Johnson stated that she didn't propose the fund tonight because we hadn't finalized a number yet.

Black Bridge

A. Mashtare brought up creating a replacement funding for Black Bridge. C. Johnson explained that we would hire an engineer to estimate how much what work would need to be done in the next few years and what the replacement schedule would be.

Town Clerk

A. Bourdon stated that some line items have gone up a little bit. VMERS did increase on July 1st of this year, but there will be no increase in 2022. The Ballot/Town Report line has been cut due to Maplerun School District doing their own ballots and town reports.

The Board discussed every department, then passed on to the non-profits.

Local/Regional/State Organizations

C. Johnson explained that at this time, all non-profits have been level funded except for Northwest Regional Planning which we have not received their request yet. A. Voegele will check to see if the Veterans Valet would like to request funding this year. We did not fund them last year. The year prior we only funded a request for \$2,000 to help pay off the cart. The Board agreed to discuss the rest of the non-profits at their next budget meeting if not before.

Adjournment

MOTION: E. Creley made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 6:43 p.m. Seconded by J. Giroux. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Carrie Johnson, Town Manager