

**Town of St. Albans
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 23rd, 2015
6:30 p.m.**

On Monday, November 23rd, 2015 at 6:30 p.m., at Town Hall the Town of St. Albans Selectboard held a regular meeting.

Officials and staff present: Vice-Chair Stan Dukas, Bruce Cheeseman, David McWilliams, Sam Smith, and Town Manager, Carrie Johnson. Absent was Chair, Brent Palmer.

General Public: Peter Blouin, Jim Hungerford and St. Albans Messenger, Michelle Munroe.

The Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice-Chair Stan Dukas called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to add Shoreline Stabilization to the agenda. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Payroll Warrant

MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the payroll warrant dated November 20th, 2015 in the amount of \$105,031.26. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

In this payroll warrant, the fire department was paid their annual stipend.

MOTION: S. Smith made a motion to approve the payroll warrant dated November 13th, 2015 in the amount of \$14,139.05. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Industrial Park Warrant

MOTION: D. McWilliams made a motion to approve the Industrial Park warrant in the amount of \$719.11. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

General Warrant

MOTION: D. McWilliams made a motion to approve the general warrant for October 27th through November 23rd, 2015, in the amount of \$41,854.38. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Minutes

MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the Selectboard 'special' meeting minutes for Monday, November 2nd, the Selectboard meeting minutes for Monday, November 9th, and the Selectboard 'special' meeting minutes for Wednesday, November 18th, 2015. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Shoreline Stabilization Bids

C. Johnson provided a packet of bid information to the Selectboard with 13 bids received. Peter Cross reviewed all the bids. Hungerford Construction was the low bid. Island Excavating was the next lowest bid. Most bidders didn't give a pure, material breakdown. Both low bidders have good references with Island having more experience.

Originally, the thought was that \$70,000 was for the whole sea wall restoration but, \$70,000 is not enough to do the full wall. We would probably have to go back to the voters for the rest of the funding to finish the wall. The repairs are for 350 feet of sea wall.

S. Smith had not seen the Request for Proposals document yet and would like to review it prior to making a decision to award the bid.

Jim Hungerford of Hungerford Construction came before the Board to answer and questions regarding his business. He shared his previous experience working for Pizzagalli and working on large, civil engineering project. He has experience with shoreline stabilization. He employs 6 employees.

The Board decided to add the bid award item to their special meeting agenda for Monday, November 30th when they begin their work on the 2016 – 2017 budget.

Water/Sewer

S. Dukas explained that the City of St. Albans has approved a new ordinance that would charge an affiliation fee annually to new users in the amount of \$.28 per \$100 of appraised value of a home. This went into effect on November 15th, 2015.

D. McWilliams explained that lots of residents do not understand this ordinance and the City needs to be clearer on what they are asking for.

S. Smith explained this would add another layer of taxes to the Town's current tax rate. New homes and business will have to pay this tax, be subject to site plan review by the City of St. Albans and all activities will be judged against the competition in the City. He also stated that this affiliation is tied to the City's tax rate. It is subject to increase by a vote of the City Council.

B. Cheeseman explained that he doesn't think the affiliation fee program would work. The City does not have any authority to say what can be built in the Town. The City is calling this a fee but, it really feels like a tax.

S. Dukas agrees with the Board. He explained that we have spoken to the Town Attorneys to see what is legal or illegal in this ordinance.

MOTION: s. Dukas made a motion to authorize the Town Attorneys to begin legal action against the City of St. Albans with the Franklin Superior Court with regards to the Affiliation Fee Ordinance. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

S. Dukas explained that at the last Board meeting, S. Smith had reminded the Board of a Town ordinance that was approved in 2006 regarding obtaining water and wastewater allocations. Anyone who would like to hook on to City water and/or wastewater must come to the Town for approval. S. Dukas asked whether the Board would like to approve the allocations or allow the Town Manager to approve them.

The lack of any clear direction to change the existing procedure means the Town Manager will continue approving water and wastewater allocation as done previously.

MOTION: S. Smith made a motion that we suspend issuing Town permits for water and sewer for 6 months to allow the Town to negotiate with the City to come to a settlement agreement. Motion failed with a 3-1 vote against. S. Smith voted in favor.

Charter Update

C. Johnson explained that any charter changes must go through state. If we want to change to having a hired assessor instead of an elected Lister, you'll have to go through the State. She did explain that by doing more research on this, there are other towns that have made changes without doing it through the charter. S. Dukas asked C. Johnson to speak to Vermont Leagues of Cities of Towns to see if there is a new law on the books if it's possible to make this change at Town Meeting instead of going through a charter change.

Traffic Ordinance

D. McWilliams received a complaint from a resident about farmers leaving mud and manure on the roads. It is stated in the Town's Traffic Ordinance that they must clean up within 8 hours of the completion of work. The Board agreed to allow the Department of Public Works to approach complaints about mud and manure in the roads and to continue to follow the existing ordinance.

Town Manager's Report

Crosswalk Update

C. Johnson explained that she has received a permit for Bay crosswalk and a Letter of Intent for the crosswalk at Collins Perley. The State wants an explanation on how the maintenance will be handled prior to granting a permit for this crosswalk. C. Johnson explained that she did ask our engineer for cost estimates for the construction of both crosswalks. She went on to say that she will be scheduling appointments with adjacent landowners regarding maintenance. Then, we would need to determine whether this is a budget item or an article to be voted on at Town Meeting Day. B. Cheeseman stated he would like to see the plans for the crosswalk at Collins Perley. S. Dukas asked C. Johnson to find out how long the permits are valid.

Budget FY'17

The budget kickoff meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 30th, 2015. The County Assistant Judges asked if the Board would like for them to appear before them to answer any questions. The Board agreed to have them come to one of their meetings in December.

Zoning Bylaws Hearing

The Selectboard hearing is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on December 14th, 2015. The Bylaws are online and hard copies are available at Town Hall upon request.

Public Comment

None.

Schedule

A Green Mountain Power Corporation Community Digester meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8th at 2pm. A budget kickoff meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 30th. Next Selectboard meetings are December 14th and December 28th.

In January, 2016, Selectboard meetings will change to the 1st and 3rd Monday's of each month.

Other Business

B. Cheeseman would like to discuss at the next Selectboard meeting giving a percentage of the LOT towards reducing taxes in the Town.

B. Cheeseman stated that he and S. Smith have been working hard on settling the water/wastewater issue with the City of St. Albans.

Town Forest

The Town received an award for the work that has been done on the improvements on the trails in the Town Forest.

Executive Session

MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to go into executive session at 7:50 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, personnel and contractual issues under the provisions of Title 1, section 313(a)(1) of Vermont Statutes and invite in Town Manager, Carrie Johnson. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to come out of executive session at 9:00 p.m. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Adjournment

MOTION: S. Smith made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 9:00 p.m. All in favor, none opposed, motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Gray