

**Town of St. Albans  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
Monday, December 14, 2015  
6:30 p.m.**

On Monday, December 14, 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, Town Manager, Carrie Johnson and Town Clerk, Anna Bourdon. Absent was Chair, Brent Palmer.

**General Public:** St. Albans Messenger, Elaine Ezerins. Please see the attached meeting attendance sheet for a complete list of meeting attendees.

**The Pledge of Allegiance.**

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

**Payroll Warrant**

**MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the payroll warrant dated December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in the amount of \$25,619.94. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the payroll warrant dated December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in the amount of \$14,430.49. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the payroll warrant dated November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in the amount of \$24,589.41. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**General Warrant**

**MOTION: S. Smith made a motion to approve the general warrant for November 24<sup>th</sup> through December 14<sup>th</sup>, in the amount of \$230,304.92. 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 \$1,980. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Minutes**

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes for Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the Selectboard 'special' meeting minutes for Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the Selectboard meeting continued from Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Public Hearing - Bylaws**

**MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to open the public hearing on the Bylaws for the Town of St. Albans. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

S. Dukas read the opening for the bylaws public hearing. C. Johnson went over the Selectboard Rules of Procedure for the audience.

Planner, Nat Neider came before the Board to give an overview of the bylaw rewrite. S. Smith commended Zoning Administrator, Becky Perron on all the hard work she has put into the draft of the bylaws.

S. Dukas read an email from Al Voegelé giving his support for comments received by the Selectboard from Catherine Dimitruk of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission.

Town resident, David Schofield came before the Board. He complimented the Planning Commission on the bylaw rewrite. He went on to say that sidewalk infrastructure for developers should be required, not suggested. He encouraged the Board to use the Sidewalk Master Plan from 2003. He pointed out that connectivity between developments is extremely important.

Town resident, Dave Southwick and Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce came before the Board to give his support about connectivity with sidewalks and make it more the Town's responsibility, not just the developer. He stated that sidewalks will help the overall health and well-being of the community.

Town resident, Dory Demers agrees with both Mr. Schofield and Mr. Southwick. She explained there isn't a safe way for the children in her neighborhood to walk over to the neighborhood above them. If there was connectivity between neighborhoods, this would increase children's' exercise and outdoor activities.

Town resident, John Thorn explained he supports the three previous speakers stating that connectivity between neighborhoods is important. He stated it's very important to have sidewalks. He suggested something similar to what is on Fairfield Street. He also said he supports sidewalks at the northern part of town.

Planner, Nat Neider responded saying the Town and City of St. Albans are working on a joint grant through the Strong Communities, Better Connections (SCBC) Grant Program, aimed at supporting vibrant community centers and increasing town and regional transportation options. The grant is funded through the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD).

Town resident, Heather Blackburn, a mother of 3, finds it difficult crossing roads in town and would like to see more sidewalks. She is a pediatric nurse and has seen families struggle with kids with disabilities. Having more sidewalks would make it easier on these families. B. Cheeseman explained to Ms. Blackburn that the Town has received a permit to construct a crosswalk in the Bay.

Town resident, Jessica Frost came before the Board to encourage more sidewalks in town. She sees great momentum with the work being done in the Town Forest with the trails. Franklin County has a lot of beautiful aspects and she thinks if we can create a biking/walking network, it would be more appealing to people wanting to move to the area. She pointed out that Act 250 may begin to require more connectivity. She mentioned a trail network in Travers City, Michigan. It began as one trail and grew into a 25 mile network. N. Neider did state he is familiar with that path.

S. Smith explained we will be revisiting the Sidewalk Master Plan from 2003. We would like to connect the two communities and the schools to Collins Perley and Hard'Ack. The Town has been reluctant to build and maintain sidewalks, hence, not encouraging developers to install them. He recommended to the Board that we add incentives for developers to construct sidewalks. He went on to explain that because the Town doesn't have the equipment to maintain sidewalks and the City does, they are working together.

N. Neider explained in a dense city, the costs are less than in a spread out municipality like the Town. The financing is higher. This must be taken into consideration no matter who builds the sidewalks.

S. Smith explained that the path for Collins Perley could start out as a 3 season and then eventually move to a 4 season path. This would lessen the initial costs.

B. Cheeseman explained that the City has been very responsive to working with the Town on sidewalks.

Town resident, Paul Lerner came before the Board to discuss that all new construction should build sidewalks, not the Town. The sidewalk would be built on the new owner's property. The owner is responsible for the sidewalk. This should be started in the bylaws. Mr. Thoren supports Paul's thoughts.

S. Dukas asked S. Smith how long it would take for recommendations, comments, changes and suggestions to be reviewed by the Planning Commission, and then brought back to the Selectboard. S. Smith stated 30 days, in January.

Catherine Dimitruk with the Northwest Regional Planning Commission came before the Board to address any questions about her recommendations she had sent to the Board prior to the meeting. S. Dukas explained that the email from Al Voegelé suggested we go with Ms. Dimitruk's suggestions. S. Smith stated he wanted to have the Planning Commission meet with Ms. Dimitruk to discuss the recommendations and comments. Ms. Dimitruk agreed.

Mr. Schofield wants it mandated that developers building sidewalks, and not have them set land aside for the Town to build the sidewalks in the future. If that happens, sidewalks may not get built. S. Smith explained it was a mandate previously and was changed. It can be discussed again.

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to close the public hearing on the bylaws at 7:20 p.m. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

#### **Police Chief Gary Taylor**

Chief Taylor stated that he would speak affirmatively to more sidewalks and safe pedestrian areas, especially in the north end of Town.

Chief Taylor stated that law enforcement wise, things are going well. However, recently, a suspect was found to have committed 209 frauds, 208 being felonies.

#### **St. Albans Police Department Life Saving Award**

Chief Taylor explained that on December 2nd, 2015, at 4:40 p.m., a 60 year old employee at Price Chopper collapsed. Karen Camp, a shopper in another isle and a registered nurse rendered aid. She provided CPR until AmCare EMT's arrived and continued to assist until the patient was transported. The patient was stabilized, and then transported to University Vermont Medical Center. Patient had a pulmonary embolism. Ms. Camp stated that she has seen the patient and that she was doing very well.

Chief Taylor went on to explain there have been a lot of complaints about crowding traffic lights at the highway access road and Route 104. Officers wrote 10 tickets in 44 minutes. On Routes 36 and 104 there have been a high number of accidents, several of those with injuries. He also explained that there are motion sensors on the traffic lights, not cameras.

D. McWilliams asked the Chief if there were any issues at Walmart during Black Friday. Chief Taylor explained there weren't. He went on to say that he offered extra patrol and assistance to Walmart but, they didn't want to spend the money.

Peter Blouin asked Chief Taylor, if sidewalks are installed and people chose not to use them, is there anything that can be done to punish them. Chief Taylor stated that it is considered mischievous behavior but, that he doesn't have the resources to go after such petty infractions.

D. Schofield asked Chief Taylor if cyclists are ticketed for riding against traffic. Chief Taylor stated no there is no support for prosecuting there types of incidents.

P. Larner asked the Chief if we are going to wait until a cyclist is killed or are we going to dissuade that behavior. Chief Taylor explained that unless there was support for enforcing bicycle laws, they aren't doing so.

#### **Errors & Omissions – Lister's Office**

Lister, Tadd Redman came before the Board to explain and get approval for Errors and Omissions.

**MOTION: B. Cheeseman made a motion to approve the Errors and Omissions as presented. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

#### **Town Manager's Report Budget FY '17**

C. Johnson had provided draft two of the fiscal year 2017 budget. She explained there will be a few more budget work sessions after the holidays.

#### **Act 248**

##### **Green Mountain Power - Biodigester**

David Dunn and Josh Castonguay, Director of Generation and Renewable Innovation with Green Mountain Power (GMP), came before the Board to give an overview of the biodigester being proposed for the Dunsmore Road. He first stated that there are 17 projects on Vermont farms. This project would involve three farms; the Bessette Farm, where the biodigester will be installed, the Magnan Farm and Paul Bourbeau's farm. The manure would be piped in from both the Bessette and Bourbeau farms and would be trucked over from the Magnan farm. It is expected to process about 65,000 to 67,000 tons of manure annually from all three farms, and 2 to 2,500 tons of potential food waste.

Mr. Castonguay went on to explain how the biodigester removes the gas and solids from the manure. Some of the finished product that will go back to the farms for application will have a 70 – 80% reduction of phosphorus. The EPA has said that we need to reduce the amount of agricultural phosphorous runoff for the Bay by 3 tons. This biodigester process will reduce phosphorous by 1 ton.

D. McWilliams asked with there being moderate truck traffic to the Magnan farm, would GMP take care of any road damage that may occur. Mr. Castonguay stated that GMP would take care of road repairs if the project caused damage.

Town resident, Steve Coon asked if manure from elsewhere would be trucked to the digester. Mr. Castonguay said no, the manure is limited to the three farms participating in the program. Mr. Coon asked what the downsides were. Mr. Dunn said working with three different dairy farmers. Paul Bourbeau, one of the farmers, stated that is a factor.

Mr. Dunn stated that there will be testing on all manure and food waste (cheese whey and ice cream waste) that comes into the digester.

In closing, S. Dukas explained that the lake needs a lot of help. The state is going to mandate we help clean up this lake. GMP is here to help with that process with the biodigester project. We need to take advantage of this project.

S. Smith suggested discussing a letter of support, possibly ask for some conditions.

B. Cheeseman stated he is not going to say no to any help that is going to help clean up the lake. He is in favor of a letter of support.

D. McWilliams explained that GMP presented all the facts.

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to send a letter of support to the Public Service Board for the Green Mountain Power biodigester on the Dunsmore Road. It was further moved that Green Mountain Power will decrease the phosphorus load and work with the Town to maintain the road conditions on the Dunsmore Road. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

#### **BrightSky Solar 1, LLC (Harbor View/Clyde Allen Drive)**

The Board agreed to send a letter of support but, if they find that the natural screening isn't enough, other screening must be installed.

**MOITN: S. Smith made a motion to send a letter of support with the request that screening is added if it's not already native to the areas, especially in the winter. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

#### **Solarsense VT VII, LLC – Rewes Drive**

The Board may send comments 21 days after application. S. Smith stated you can't see this project from the road. When the Planning Commission looked at this project, they didn't find screening was necessary.

**MOTION: S. Smith made a motion to send a letter of support for the Solarsense. Project on Rewes Drive. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

#### **Suncommon – West Shore Road**

B. Cheeseman is not in support of sending a letter of support because of the lack of information on this project presented to the Board. The Board agreed to wait for more information.

#### **Public Comment**

Peter Blouin came before the Board to ask if the Town was fined for burning a house on Orchard Street. C. Johnson explained a house located on Parsons Avenue was used for training purposes. The state fined us for not having the pre-testing (asbestos) done. The fine was \$1,000.

#### **Schedule**

Next Selectboard meetings are December 28<sup>th</sup> and January 4<sup>th</sup>. Starting in January, our meetings will be the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays. Next budget work session is scheduled for January 11<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Other Business**

None.

**Executive Session**

**MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to go into executive session at 8:45 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 and Fire Chief Bob Cross. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

Fire Chief Cross left the meeting at 9:40 p.m.

**MOTION: D. McWilliams made a motion to come out of executive session at 10:00 p.m. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.**

**Adjournment**

**MOTION: S. Smith made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 10:00 p.m. All in favor, none opposed, motion carries.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Gray