

1 **ST. ALBANS CITY COUNCIL**

2
3 **Minutes of Regular Meeting**
4 **Monday, January 10, 2011**
5 **City Hall, Council Chambers**
6
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8 A regular meeting of the St. Albans City Council was held on Monday, January 10, 2011, in
9 the Council Chambers at City Hall at 5:00 p.m.

10
11 **Council Present:** Mayor Martin Manahan, Aldermen: Scott Corrigan, Tim Hawkins, Joe
12 Luneau, David Peirce, Richard Peters, Chad Spooner.

13
14 **Others Present:** Dominic Cloud, City Manager; Gary Taylor, Police Chief; Peg Strait,
15 Director of Finance and Administration; Susan Krupp, City Clerk/Treasurer, Jim Tischler,
16 Director of Community Development, Allen Robtoy, Director of Public Works, Kelly Viens,
17 Recreation Director, Sarah Duffy, City Accountant, Josh Cox, Fire Marshal, Mark Wennberg,
18 Community Justice Center Director.

19
20 **Visitors:** see attached sign-in sheet.

21
22 **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

23
24 **A motion was made by Alderman Peirce; seconded by Alderman Corrigan to enter into**
25 **executive session at 5:00 p.m. to discuss civil matters, contracts, and personnel where**
26 **premature disclosure would clearly place the City or person involved at substantial**
27 **disadvantage. Vote was 6-0.**

28
29 **Alderman Spooner entered at 5:10 p.m.**

30
31 **A motion was made by Alderman Corrigan; seconded by Alderman Spooner to exit**
32 **executive session. Vote was 7-0.**

33
34 **OPEN SESSION**

- 35
36 1. Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Manahan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and began
37 the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.
38
39 2. Public Comment. There was no public comment.
40

41 The agenda was amended to address the Winter Maintenance Protocol.

- 42
43 3. Winter Maintenance Protocol (D&V). Allen Robtoy, Public Works Director, explained
44 that this document, which is the first draft, was prompted by recent questions as to what
45 the process is of removing snow within the City. **A motion was made by Alderman**

1 **Peirce; seconded by Alderman Spooner that the City Council accepts the Director?**
2 **of Public Works' protocol for plowing. Vote was unanimous.**

3 4. Municipal Plan Update.

4 Chris Dermody, representing the Planning Commission, read a letter dated January 10,
5 2011, addressed to the Mayor and Council, announcing that the Planning Commission has
6 started revision of its Municipal Plan for the purpose of guiding future planning and
7 development activities for a five year period. It also outlines the process and timeline of
8 the project. Discussion ensued about what some of the more considerable changes might
9 be. Alderman Peirce stated the City is currently overstocked on rental buildings. He
10 would like the Planning Commission in their deliberations to explore incentives for
11 converting rentals back to single family homes. Mr. Dermody stated that back in October,
12 2010, he requested that Council place a moratorium on converting single family homes to
13 multi-unit dwellings. Mr. Dermody said he will follow up on that. Mr. Tischler,
14 Community Development Director, stated that the Planning Commission has been
15 working on language for amending the Regulations to provide conditions on conversions
16 of single family structures to multi-family units. Mr. Tischler also gave an overview of
17 potential areas within the City for further community development. He said "the
18 answers are not all here tonight." Mayor Manahan asked Mr. Dermody if the Council
19 should meet with the Planning Commission. Mr. Dermody responded in the affirmative.
20 Mayor Manahan asked the Council what their thoughts were on the moratorium.
21 Alderman Luneau said ~~that~~ he feels that there are not a lot of multi-family units in the
22 LDR district and that a moratorium would not have much impact. Discussion ensued
23 amongst the Council regarding the moratorium. Alderman Peirce said that he supports a
24 moratorium. Mayor Manahan supports finalizing this plan and moving forward with a
25 more complete plan that addresses multiple units in our community. He stated that he
26 would like to see a moratorium City wide, not just in the LDR district. Alderman Luneau
27 felt that it was a little late in coming. Discussion ensued about the case for a moratorium.
28 Alderman Hawkins asked if it was a major rewrite. Mr. Dermody replied in the
29 affirmative. Mayor Manahan asked when the Council could meet with the Planning
30 Commission. Tischler suggested a work session before an actual presentation and vote.

31
32 5. FY 12 Proposed Budget.

33 Mr. Cloud outlined the process of how he would be presenting each of the department
34 budgets by stating that he would offer a brief summary of the highlights and then if there
35 is anything that staff wanted to draw out of that summary, they could. Mr. Cloud stated
36 that Council could then drill down to individual line items if they had any questions. He
37 stated that the idea was not to go line by line unless someone wants to go there. He said
38 that the Operating budget would be first and then the CIP budget.

39
40 a. Fire Department

41
42 **Revenues**—Building Inspection Program; budgeting \$50,000 for FY12. Delayed in
43 collecting those revenues in FY11 as we've been setting up a new program that
44 interfaces with the Assessor's office, the Accounting office, and Josh's records. Mr.
45 Cloud states that he's pretty confident with that number even though the figures are
46 much lower to date. Mr. Cox stated that as of January 4, the figure is \$18,000. Mr.

1 Cloud explained that this program was a little late getting out of the gate due to software
2 issues. Mr. Cox stated that he and Sarah Duffy from the Finance Office are working
3 with NEMRC representatives on designing this software. Overall, Mr. Cox stated that
4 the inspections have been going well. To date, there have been 207 rental registry
5 inspections conducted, 785 fire code violations identified, 64 rental housing code
6 violations identified. These are number of units not buildings. He reviewed the process
7 with the council. He explained that he is working on analyzing the data. Most of the
8 things he's seen thus far are common statewide—lack of smoke and carbon monoxide
9 detectors and inadequate exiting requirements. He explained that the City has been
10 divided into four quadrants with roughly 1,800 to 2,000 buildings in the City and only
11 one of them. He stated that he is currently inspecting the buildings in Quadrant 1 which is
12 located north of Bank Street and east of Main Street. Quadrant 2 will be next which is
13 located west of South Main Street and south of Lake Street. Mayor Manahan asked if
14 the process included consideration for someone who might own 40 units that all 40 units
15 wouldn't be inspected in the same year. Mr. Cox replied that the process does include
16 accommodations for someone who owns multiple units.

17
18 **Expenditures**—Mr. Cloud stated that we are seeing some significant returns on our
19 efforts to deliver fire services differently. On the macro level, expenditures are down
20 \$144,000 from last year. He stated that includes a birds-eye view of expenditures. He
21 summarized highlights of the expenditures and gave an explanation for each. Alderman
22 Peirce asked if the buyback was still a liability as it has been in the past. Mr. Cloud
23 stated that it still is a liability but nowhere near what it was. Mr. Cloud answered
24 questions from Council members on specific line items that they wanted clarification on.

25
26 **CIP**—Mr. Cloud reviewed the debt service which included the fire truck and quint. He
27 also addressed the project sheet and explained that it is for future apparatus. Alderman
28 Spooner asked if there is anything in the reserve. Ms. Strait responded that there is
29 currently \$20,000 in the reserve. Mr. Hawkins asked how the \$420,000 figure by the
30 year 2020 was arrived at. Mr. Cloud explained that this is a general reserve and not
31 allocated for anything specific. He explained that this grew out of the original fire
32 agreement in which it states that the City would create a capital reserve. Mayor
33 Manahan commented that it's determined by future Councils what that money will be
34 spent on. Alderman Peirce stated that based on the discussion earlier, he felt that putting
35 it on hold for a year was okay but beyond that would not be good practice. Alderman
36 Hawkins questioned the methodology of the reserve fund. He asked, "what if we
37 estimate the future price of a fire truck, put the money away for five years but in five
38 years the truck we currently have is still good?" Mayor Manahan responded by saying
39 that even though the money is being put into the reserve fund over a designated period of
40 time, if you don't need it when that time period is reached, then it can remain in the
41 reserve until you do need to spend it. Alderman Corrigan reminded the Council that this
42 reserve fund was required as part of the City-Town Fire Agreement because the City's
43 fire equipment was considered substandard at the time. The \$50,000 amount was the
44 agreed upon figure between all parties involved. In regards to firefighter clothing, Mr.
45 Cox explained that he is aggressively pursuing grants.

1
2 b. Public Works Department
3

4 **Revenue**—Mr. Cloud explained the plans for the sidewalk project. Mayor Manahan
5 noted that excavation permits are down from last year. Mr. Robtoy explained that this
6 figure is difficult to predict. Alderman Peirce asked whether the at-grade study for the
7 City’s infrastructure is going to be completed before this summer’s sidewalk project.
8 Mr. Cloud said “possibly.” Alderman Peirce recommended to sticking with the
9 current practice of linking the sidewalks in the network.

10
11 **Expenditures**—Mr. Cloud highlighted several line items and explained the rationale
12 behind the changes. He explained line item 54, the addition of LED lights for street
13 and parking lots will save in energy costs down the road. Mr. Cloud stated that salt
14 and sand supply bounces around from year to year; proposing to level fund it at
15 \$55,000. Line 60 and 63 the same but different line items. Alderman Peirce asked
16 Mr. Robtoy whether he was exploring different alternatives to salt. Mr. Robtoy
17 stated that he’s in the process of purchasing a 2011 single axel International truck that
18 would have the capability of using alternatives to salt if that opportunity arose.
19 Alderman Spooner said that he knew of some towns that cut their salt budgets in half
20 using alternatives.

21
22 **CIP**—Mr. Cloud explained that the PW-I-1 is the Street Improvement Program. PW-I
23 -2 is the Courthouse Parking Lot Program which is the annual debt service for
24 improvements. The \$18,015 is taken off the amortization schedule. Alderman
25 Hawkins asked if this figure included the payback for the meters. Mr. Cloud
26 responded in the affirmative. PW-E-2 includes the utility trucks. PW-E-3 includes the
27 pickup trucks. PW-E-5 Street Sweeper—Mr. Cloud explained that in FY 2012, money
28 is being saved to purchase a new street sweeper in FY 2017. Discussion ensued
29 about the Street Sweeper and various locations in the City that are problematic. ~~PW-~~
30 ~~E-6 Backhoe~~—Mr. Cloud explained that this is at 0. PW-E-7 Uni-Loader/Skid Steer--
31 \$7000. PW-E-9—Bucket Truck budgeting \$30,000. PW-E-10—Superintendent’s
32 truck. Alderman Luneau asked for clarification on this line item.

33
34 Certification of Highway Mileage

35 Mayor Manahan explained that this document is certifying that the City has 4.281
36 miles of Class 1 highways; 3.770 miles of Class 2 highways; 16.73 of Class 3
37 highways; and .059 miles of State highways for a total of 24.840 miles of highways.

38 **A motion was made by Alderman Corrigan; seconded by Alderman Peirce to**
39 **approve the certification of highway mileage. Vote was unanimous.**

40
41 c. Recreation Department
42

43 **Revenue**—Mr. Cloud stated that there has been some reclassification of some revenue
44 sources. Overall revenues down 7%. Town’s contribution at \$38,900 which is a 3%
45 increase over last year. Alderman Luneau asked why the \$20,000 decrease in
46 revenues from last year. Ms. Viens explained that the 5/6 grade sports have gone back
47 to the elementary school; both in soccer and basketball but she has added the four year

1 old age group. She explained the highest users are the Town residents and the City
2 being second, approximately 60%-40%. Alderman Hawkins asked about the Premier
3 Sponsorships and whether the amount of \$18,000 is realistic based on the fact that at
4 this point in this year's budget only \$5,000 has been received. Ms. Viens explained
5 that the sponsorships were new last year and there are now five committed sponsors
6 with the possibility of three more. The goal is to have ten. She then explained how
7 the process works. Mr. Cloud then highlighted the pool and stated that it needs to
8 break even on an operating basis and the revenues for the pool were adjusted for that
9 reason. He said the numbers are up by \$42,000.

10
11 **Expenditures**—Mr. Cloud highlighted that a portion of administrative salaries are
12 embedded in this budget which in previous years has not been. Alderman Peters asked
13 why so much of the salary budget has already been used. Ms. Viens answered that her
14 summer help is the bulk of that line item and it was used to pay for the summer 2010
15 employees. Basically, it's frontloaded. Alderman Luneau asked about the senior van.
16 Ms. Viens replied that it's on its way to be shared between the seniors and recreation
17 and insured by the City. Ms. Viens also explained how the payment of program
18 instructors has been reworked. Alderman Luneau asked about the figures for the pool.
19 Ms. Viens replied that they have youth programming which now includes the swim
20 team which is a good source of revenue. She also stated that they are expanding
21 programs, the winter swim, the Calcutta fundraiser, and swim camp. She stated that
22 she is utilizing every minute available at the pool. She stated that she has also
23 scheduled swim lessons more effectively with swim instructors' schedules to save
24 money.

25
26 **CIP**—Mr. Cloud explained that that there is only one item which will go before the
27 voters at Town Meeting authorizing the City to borrow \$40,000 to be augmented by
28 \$10,000 by private fundraising for a \$50,000 rehabilitation project at the Houghton
29 Street tennis courts. Mayor Manahan asked what happens to the courts at Barlow
30 Street. Mr. Cloud replied, in the short-term, nothing. Discussion ensued about
31 Barlow Street and the future plans of the building and park. There was also discussion
32 regarding the tennis courts at Barlow St. vs. Houghton St. Ms. Viens gave an
33 overview of the proposed upgrades to Houghton Park. Alderman Peirce mentioned
34 the United States Tennis Association and pursuing ~~developing~~ a relationship with it.
35 Discussion ensued about the philosophy of why the different wards would want to
36 support tennis courts in other wards. Alderman Luneau supported more fund raising
37 for items such as this. Alderman Peirce said that it reflects back to the issue of quality
38 of life and attracting middle class people who would look for something like that in a
39 community. Ms. Viens stated that recreation is a necessity for a community—things
40 like this attract good people to the community. Alderman Spooner said that he sees it
41 as an investment in the young lives of the community.

42
43 d. Community Justice Center

44
45 Marc Wennberg, Director of the Community Justice Centre, gave an overview of the
46 Center and what they have accomplished in the past year. He also highlighted the
47 differences between this year versus last year. He explained that the center has

1 received two grants for the re-entry program since July. He also explained that the
2 Challenges for Change grant is not a secured revenue source yet. Mr. Wennberg
3 summarized the criteria for this grant from the state. He stated that he feels confident that
4 they will secure this grant.

5
6 8:50 Warrants:

7 a. Payroll—11/18, 11/24, 12/2, 12/9.

8 **A motion was made by Alderman Peters; seconded by Alderman Peirce to**
9 **approve the payroll warrants. Vote: 7-0.**

10
11 b. Accounts Payable—12/10

12 **A motion was made by Alderman Peirce; seconded by Alderman Corrigan to**
13 **approve the payroll warrants. Vote: 7-0.**

14
15 Other Business.

16
17 Sue Krupp, City Clerk/Treasurer reminded the Council that the deadline for petitions is
18 January 24. A motion was made by Alderman Luneau; seconded by Martin Manahan to
19 move the meeting to Tuesday.

20
21 **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

22
23 **A motion was made by Alderman Peirce; seconded by Alderman Spooner to enter**
24 **executive session to discuss civil matters, contracts, and personnel where premature**
25 **disclosure would clearly place the City or person involved at substantial disadvantage.**
26 **Vote was 7-0.**

27
28 **A motion was made by Alderman Peirce; seconded by Alderman Corrigan to exit**
29 **executive session. Vote was 7-0.**

30
31 **A motion was made by Alderman Corrigan; seconded by Alderman Spooner to adjourn**
32 **the meeting. Vote was 7-0.**

33
34 Respectfully submitted,

35
36 Sarah Longley, Admin. Coordinator