

ST. ALBANS CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting Monday, February 14, 2011 City Hall, Council Chambers

A regular meeting of the St. Albans City Council was held on Monday, February 14, 2011, in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Council Present: Mayor Martin Manahan, Aldermen: Scott Corrigan, Joseph Luneau, David Peirce, Richard Peters, Chad Spooner; Student Representative, Joseph Handy.

Staff Present: Dominic Cloud, City Manager; Peg Strait, Director of Finance and Administration; Sarah Duffy, City Accountant; Susan Krupp, City Clerk/Treasurer; Jane Kiser, Community Development Manager; Allen Robtoy, Public Works Director.

Visitors: see attached sign-in sheet.

OPEN SESSION

Mayor Manahan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and amended the agenda to begin the meeting with item 2 on the agenda—the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Welcome of Joseph Handy, Student Representative. Mayor Manahan introduced Joseph Handy, the newly appointed student representative to the City Council. Susan Krupp, City Clerk, swore him in.
2. Public Comments. Loli Berard, representative from the Franklin Central Supervisory Union, thanked the Council, City Manager, and Mayor Manahan for supporting the student representative project that Alderman Spooner and she had worked on for over a year. Mayor Manahan reiterated that it was the collaboration between Alderman Spooner and Ms. Berard that made this project happen.
3. City Council Comments. Alderman Peirce commented that the streets look great, especially with all the snow that has piled up, and thanked the Public Works Department for doing such a great job keeping up with it. Mayor Manahan agreed with Alderman Peirce's comments. He also said that he received a phone call and a

note from a resident on Brown Avenue thanking the P.W. Department for an issue that was resolved, which Mayor Manahan will later share with Mr. Robtoy.

4. Presentation of FY 10 Audit, Kittell, Branagan, and Sargent. Robin Barnett, representative from Kittell, Branagan, and Sargent gave an overview of the audit (see attached). She highlighted different aspects of the audit and explained the accounting methods that were used. She stated that, overall, the City's financial condition is healthy at this time and should continue to prosper according to their findings.
5. St. Albans City Housing Authority Appointment (D&V).
 - a. Nancy Dobiski-Vaisey—due to the fact that Ms. Dobiski-Vaisey was not able to attend the meeting, this item was tabled until the next regularly scheduled Council meeting in March.
6. Water & Wastewater Allocation Request — Remy Vallee (D&V).
 - a. Ruggiano Engineering
Mr. Ruggiano, representative from Ruggiano Engineering, gave an overview of the project. Remy Vallee, a dentist currently located on Catherine Street in the City of St. Albans is relocating his practice to a proposed new office building located behind Vermont Federal Credit Union off Route 7 (the old Seymour Farm) in the Town of St. Albans. The proposed new building will include his practice as well as two apartments above it—one being his and the other used for visiting dentists or a rental in the future. The request is for a sewer allocation of 1,910 gallons/day and a water supply of 2,160 gallons/day. Alderman Peirce asked him whether this is consistent with both the Town's master and regional plan, inquiring whether this project is part of their growth center. Mr. Ruggiano replied in the affirmative. Mr. Cloud asked whether a commercial project of this magnitude could be done without municipal water and wastewater. Mr. Ruggiano replied, "no". **A motion was made by Alderman Peirce; seconded by Alderman Luneau, that the City Council approves the request for 2,160 gallons/day water supply and 1,910 gallons/day of wastewater supply to meet all standards. Vote was unanimous.**
7. Request to Extend Wastewater Bonding Authority by \$150,000 (D&V).
 - a. Brad Aldrich and Dominic Cloud
Mayor Manahan gave a brief overview and historical background of this item stating that this item was recently discussed at the December 13th Council meeting. Mr. Aldrich further explained that there are 25 RBC units total, ten were replaced under the original contract; two others were done by change orders.

The application is requesting additional funds of \$150,000, thus increasing the two bonds by \$75,000 each. Alderman Luneau asked whether the Council was being asked to approve the expenditure without voter approval. Mr. Cloud responded in the affirmative and explained that state statute gives the Council authority to request more funds up to a certain amount before going back to voters. Alderman Luneau stated that he could not support this request without voter approval. **A motion was made by Alderman Peirce; seconded by Alderman Corrigan to extend the wastewater bonding authority by \$150,000. A motion was made by Alderman Peirce; seconded by Alderman Corrigan to amend the motion to indicate \$75,000 for each bond. Alderman Luneau stated he would have to vote in the negative. Alderman Peirce understands his concern. The vote was 5-1, with Alderman Luneau opposed.**

8. Public Hearing on Proposed Changes to Land Development Regulation and Zoning Map.

a. Representative from Planning Commission or City Manager

Chris Dermody, representing the Planning Commission, gave an overview of the proposed changes that were unanimously approved by the Planning Commission at their January 24, 2011 regular meeting. (Please see attached cover memorandum from James Tischler highlighting the amendments as well as a copy of a draft of the amendments to the ordinance). Discussion ensued about the changes.

9. Downtown Transportation Fund Resolution (D&V).

- a. Jane Kiser, Community Development Manager, presented the Council with a request to authorize the submission of an application to the Downtown Transportation Fund in the amount of \$75,000. She stated that it is a one-to-one match in which the City will be applying for a grant with a total project cost of \$150,000 to purchase streetlights, poles, pedestrian scale and overheads that would have LED fixtures. \$50,000 of the match will come from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant from the Department of Public Service which the City has already received. She stated that there is also \$125,000 from the Vermont Community Development Program for the Streetscape Project. She stated that \$25,000 will come from that source for the remainder of the match. She stated that the Downtown Transportation Grant will be utilized to complete the purchase and installation of the ornamental historically correct lights for the section of the Main Street project (Phase I). Mayor Manahan asked if this is going to do all that we need it to do. Ms. Kiser replied that she thinks it will. She stated that the engineers working on this project are working on both the

configuration and the illumination needed. She stated that this application is due March 7. Alderman Luneau asked what the timeframe is for notification of the grant award. She replied that the Downtown Transportation Board meets on March 28 and we should find out that day. She stated she estimated that the cost for the project will be about \$175,000, but a better estimate will be forthcoming after it goes out to bid. **A motion was made by Alderman Corrigan; seconded by Alderman Peirce to adopt the resolution for the Downtown Transportation Grant in the amount of \$75,000. Vote was unanimous.**

10. Downtown Development Board Notice and Waiver (D&V).

- a. Jane Kiser explained the Conflict of Interest Waiver that was part of the submittal for the Downtown Transportation Fund Resolution application. **A motion was made to approve the Downtown Development Board Notice and Waiver by Alderman Corrigan; seconded by Alderman Luneau. Vote was unanimous.**

11. Update on City Revolving Loan Funds.

- a. Jane Kiser

Jane Kiser stated that the current balance in the fund as of today is \$19,524.32; the CD from the Cioffi payoff has a value of \$94,000; one loan outstanding with the Vermont Housing Foundation, Inc. for \$125.53/month with a balance of \$9,300 with payment in full by December 2017; North Country Linen owes \$100,000. The City Attorney is working towards getting the payment from North Country. Total available for re-use is \$113,500. Ms. Kiser stated that MPIC Façade Committee is preparing all information necessary for Façade Improvement Program which will be presented to Council for review when complete. Ms. Kiser also stated that whenever the VCDP application is submitted, they would like to see some investment from the municipality. Ms. Kiser is requesting all available RLF funds be set aside to capitalize the Façade Improvement Plan because it is a vital component to the revitalization of the Downtown. Alderman Peirce commented that this information from Ms. Kiser was useful but he would like to see it in writing. He stated that the Council used to receive and would like to go back to that practice. He suggested quarterly updates.

12. Liquor Control Board (see attached agenda). **A motion was made by Alderman Luneau; seconded by Alderman Corrigan to recess as City Council and convene as Liquor Control Board. Vote was unanimous.**

A motion was made by Alderman Peters; seconded by Alderman Corrigan to reconvene as City Council. Vote was unanimous.

13. Financial Report (Peg Strait).

a. Staff comments on FY 10 audit

Ms. Strait gave a detailed breakdown of the different components of the audit. She called attention to the section of the Management Discussion and Analysis depicting the growth of the equity section in all three funds over the past three years. In essence, all three funds have shown steady growth in equity, especially the general and water funds. She went on to say that management is committed to maintaining this trend through prudent fiscal management and maximization of non-property tax revenue sources. *Please refer to the City's audit for year ended June 30, 2010, attached.*

Ms. Strait gave the overview of the financial status of the general fund for the month of January; Ms. Duffy provided an overview of the water and wastewater funds. *Please refer to the reports attached.*

Mayor Manahan amended the agenda to address item 17 at this time.

17. Introduction and Overview of Murray Drive Drainage.

a. Allen Robtoy and Peter Cross

Peter Cross, from Cross Consulting Engineers, gave the historical background of the drainage problems on Murray Drive. He stated that the problems are fairly significant and that there is no easy fix. He stated that it basically goes back to the design and construction of the development. He said that the residents have not seen any relief from this problem for about 12-14 years. He said that it is at the point where the City needs to figure out how it is going to address this problem. He stated that significant problems can be fixed by reconstructing the entire drainage system with an estimated cost of \$150,000. He further explained that he was asked by the City Manager to prepare a proposal to complete the design and perform bid phase construction administration services in connection with the reconstruction of the storm drain system on Murray Drive. He said the problem needs to be fixed but he's not sure whose responsibility it is or who would pay for it. Discussion ensued about where the funds would come from to pay for this project and whether the City wants to take full responsibility for fixing the problem. Referring to his memo, Mr. Cloud stated that he feels there is

more work to be done regarding whose liability this is. Mr. Cloud highlighted the other questions he posed in his memo:

1. *Should the City get involved in trying to fix this situation?*
2. *Should the cost of the improvements be borne by all City taxpayers, or just the residents of Murray Drive through a special assessment?*
3. *Should the City as a whole and the residents of Murray Drive cost share, perhaps through a special assessment?*
4. *How does this compare with some of our other priority public works projects, such as the combined sewer overflow on Lower Welden?*

Alderman Peirce stated that he is supportive of the idea of the City paying for fixing this problem. He stated that these people have suffered long enough and their homes have depreciated in value. Mr. Robtoy said that he would caution the Council that if the City decides to fix the drainage problem in this development, it will also need to look at other areas of the City with similar issues. Mr. Cloud said that he put it on the agenda to get the Council's pulse is on this issue. Alderman Peirce stated that it would be a good idea to conduct an analysis of the entire area. Mr. Robtoy replied that Forcier & Aldrich are in the midst of doing this. Mayor Manahan directed Mr. Cloud to work with Mr. Cross to come up with a cost estimate on fixing this problem and present it to the Council.

14. Review of Police Department 2010 Statistics.

- a. Chief Taylor—due to the fact that Chief Taylor was not present at the meeting due to illness, this item was tabled until the next regularly scheduled Council meeting in March.

15. Water System Specifications (First Reading).

- a. Allen Robtoy, Public Works Director, explained that these are revisions to the original specifications adopted in 2004 by the Council, and explained that they were prompted due to changes in regulations at the state level.

16. Wastewater System Specifications (First Reading).

- a. Allen Robtoy gave an overview of the Specifications and explained that these are new. He said that one of the driving forces for both the Water & Sewer specifications is the fact that the City is approached from time to time to assume ownership of new water & sewer infrastructure which will require the installations to follow the City's specifications. Mayor Manahan asked how these specifications would affect infrastructure that is currently sub-standard. Mr.

Robtoy explained that it would help the situation because once the specifications are in place then they would use them as their guide. Alderman Luneau asked if these specifications would hinder the sale of a home if the infrastructure was sub-standard. Mr. Robtoy replied that these specifications are only for the City's portion of the infrastructure. **A motion was made by Alderman Luneau; seconded by Alderman Corrigan to approve the first reading of the Water and Wastewater System Specifications. Vote was unanimous.**

17. Warrants (D&V):

- a. Payroll—12/16, 12/23, 12/30, 1/6, 1/13, 1/20, 1/27, 2/3

A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Peirce to approve the payroll warrants for 12/16, 12/23, 12/30, 1/6, 1/13, 1/20, 1/27, 2/3. Vote was unanimous.

- b. Accounts Payable—1/6, 1/20, 2/10

A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Luneau to approve the accounts payable warrants for 1/6, 1/20, 2/10. Vote was unanimous.

18. Minutes (D&V):

- a. 11/8

A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Luneau to approve the minutes of 11/8 with the following correction: on page 3, paragraph 4, change "to diligence" to "for diligence". Vote was unanimous.

- b. 12/13

A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Peirce to approve the minutes of 12/13, as presented. Vote was unanimous.

19. Other Business.

City Clerk & Treasurer, Susan Krupp updated the Council with the preparations her office has been doing to gear up for the upcoming Annual City Meeting and voting. She also mentioned that there will be a rabies clinic held in March.

Being that this is Alderman Corrigan's last meeting, Mayor Manahan thanked Alderman Corrigan on behalf of the City for his time served on the Council as well as his contributions to the City-Town Joint Fire and Fiber Optic Committees.

Submitted by,
Sarah Longley, Admin. Coordinator