

**MEETING OF THE ST. ALBANS CITY DOWNTOWN BOARD &
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ST. ALBANS FOR THE FUTURE
6:00 PM, TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2018
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NO. MAIN ST.**

Approved April 17, 2018

Board Members present: Chair Katy Collin, Vice-Chair Erik Johnson, Laz Scangas, Emily Richards, Donna Howard, Mike Blouin, Maureen Brown, Rachael Sink, and Amanda Liese

Board Members Absent: Sharon Holcomb

Staff Members Present: Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning & Development; Marty Manahan, Director of Operations and Business Development; Wendy Coy, Minute Taker

1. Call to Order – Chair Collin called meeting to order at 6:00

a. Additions or Deletions – None

2. SAFF Financial Report – Mr. Sawyer presented the financial report. There was a discussion of moving all but \$10,000 of Festival of Trees funds (which would be approx. \$3,700) to the Arts Cmte. Chair Collin asked when that decision was made. Member Howard stated that was the understanding when the FOT was brought into SAFF. Chair Collin stated that she wasn't sure that should continue. Mr. Sawyer stated that the set up is the same way as the Chair Affair. Whoever is the leadership of the fundraiser gets the extra funds. Member Blouin suggested that the excess gets distributed - FOT gets to keep \$10,000 for the next festival, a specific amount gets donated to a charity, a percentage goes to SACA for administrative costs and the balance goes to unencumbered funds. Mr. Sawyer stated that we need to make sure that we don't alienate anyone with the final decision. Member Brown stated that of all the committees the SACA committee is the one most likely to generate funds for the organization. Mr. Manahan asked if the FOT decides who gets the money with no oversight. Member Scangas suggested that there be a written agreement between the Downtown Board and FOT as members can come and go and there needs to be a record of the agreement. Member Howard stated that the reason FOT stayed separate from other SAFF funds is due to the fact that, if SAFF no longer wants to do FOT, FOT would find a new fiscal agent. Mr. Sawyer stated that members of the SACA Board need to understand that if they vote on the movement of the money, it still needs to be approved by the Downtown Board. Chair Collin asked who is on the FOT Committee. Member Howard stated that there are four committee chairs at the moment. Member Richards asked for clarification as to the question that is being presented. SACA has made a request to move \$3,700 from FOT to SACA. Member Richards stated that she didn't understand why we are having this discussion; that the Board would not have this type of discussion if the merchants wanted to move money to the Chair Affair. Mr. Manahan stated that there needs to be a written policy stating how the money is going to be handled. Vice-Chair Johnson stated that there needs to be a percentage going into the unencumbered funds. Mr. Sawyer stated that they are about to create a City Hall Improvements line once the City receives the grant check. Mr. Sawyer stated that the Board needs to be aware of the feelings of the members who are working on these events but that the committees need to know that this Board is the final decision maker for

the allocation of funds. Mr. Manahan asked if this Board needs to vote on the approval of transfer. **Vice Chair Johnson made a motion to move \$3,794.64 of FOT funds to the SACA committee. Member Scangas seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.**

3. Project Updates

- a. **City Hall Auditorium Improvement grant** – Mr. Sawyer stated that the City of Saint Albans received a \$15,000 grant for downtown improvements. Member Scangas asked if the City has ever applied for the Cultural Facilities grant that is in May. Mr. Sawyer stated that they hadn't but they could. Vice Chair Johnson stated that Mike McCarthy would like to volunteer to help with fundraising. The question before the City is what is grant money going to be spent on. Vice Chair Johnson suggested that they break down what needs to be done first. Mr. Manahan stated that whatever the funds are being spent on, it needs to go to the City Council for approval. Member Scangas mentioned that one of the early designs during the renovation was to extend the stage and the Council was not amenable to extending it. Mr. Sawyer stated that if anyone asks about this grant money that we should state that there is a list of things that the City is looking at what to start but that fundraising still needs to be done.
- b. **2018 Events** – Merchants have been discussing a number of different events. Summer Concert series is looking at food trucks. 14th Star Brewery is looking at hosting First Night activities. This year is the 100th anniversary of the Co-op. Museum is going to have a new exhibit of agriculture in the county to coincide with the 100th anniversary. Vice Chair Johnson suggested a vendor for one of the food trucks.
- c. **Around Our Town calendar** – Vice Chair Johnson updated the Board on how the Regional meeting went last Wednesday. He stated that there is no specific way to pay for the calendar in the first year. Moderation costs are another item that will need to be paid for. There was a suggestion that the moderation rotate every two months to help cut costs. The idea is that each town contribute \$2,000-\$6,000 depending on the size of the town and the number of events that go on the calendar for each community. Mr. Sawyer stated that it would be cheaper to have a regional calendar than to have an individual calendar for the City. April 10th is when Mr. Sawyer and Vice Chair Johnson goes before the Chamber Board to decide if they want to be involved.
- d. **Social Media** – Member Sink gave an update on the likes and shares on the Facebook. WOW, 101 Small ways to improve your city, Hands of Spring, Burnished Fox were the top hits. Chair Collin asked if there were set times that the posts were scheduled. Member Sink set the schedule of curated posts to post in the morning. The site traffic peaks at noon, falls and then peaks again at 8:00 p.m. 50 posts were deleted in the last 28 days – 30 of them were hidden Mr. Sawyer asked what kind of posts were being hidden. Member Sink stated that there was no consistent post that was hidden. Mr. Sawyer asked if when something is added to the Downtown Events calendar does it get added to our page. Member Richards responded that they do get shared twice. Member Sink suggested that we change the button of Call to Action to Message Us or another button. Vice -Chair Johnson suggested that we have a balance between curated posts and event posts. Member Sink suggested that we only do one curated post a week and continue to share events. She is doing one blog post a month. Next blog will be on SACA to help promote it for new members and

share the new grant news. Member Sink stated that we need to have people engage with the community; we shouldn't just push things out at them.

- e. **OPEN flag project** – Eight are installed with another one going up tomorrow. There were twelve originally ordered. Vice-Chair Johnson stated that he had spoken to some merchants as well as people and that there was some confusion over welcome versus open. Mr. Manahan stated that the decision had been made by the merchants committee.
- f. **Main Street Paving** – No update.
- g. **Downtown Wi-Fi** – Mr. Sawyer stated that Symquest is going to be our IT company and that they would put together a proposal for downtown wi-fi.
- h. **Storefront Accessibility survey** – Too cold.
- i. **Brochure** – Michele Bessett has been the person who has had responsibility for this. She is retiring and is starting to train someone else to do it. They are trying to make sure that the brochure focuses on Downtown businesses but also covers a larger area. The plan is to have the merchants pay for it. Vice-Chair Johnson has casual meetings with five merchants next week. They are looking at a 12 to 18 month turnover depending on the number of businesses that change. They are also setting aside a budget to put brochures on the Interstate rest stops. There are two steps of advertising dollars. \$95.00 and \$120.00 depending on the amount of ad that each business wants. It will be a quad fold with a map on the front and the merchants ads on the back. Mr. Sawyer asked if there would be an online presence for this calendar. Vice Chair Johnson stated that there wouldn't be. Chair Collin suggested that we continue this discussion when there is a mock-up of the brochure in front of the Board.

4. **Committee Reports**

- a. **Community Arts / Festival of Trees** – No update
- b. **Merchants / Promotion** – Meeting the first Wednesday of the month. No updates
- c. **Organization** –
 - **Reminder of April 17, 2018 Organizational meeting.**

5. **Other Business**

- a. **Approval of Minutes** – **Member Richards made a motion to approve the minutes of February 20, 2018. Member Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- b. **Other** -

6. **Public Comment** – None

7. **Adjourn** – **Member Blouin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 PM. Member Howard seconded it. It passed unanimously.**