

MINUTES
ST. ALBANS JOINT POLICE BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT, 142 SOUTH MAIN STREET
7:00 PM TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2023

In attendance: Bob Farrar, Sarah Macy, Dominic Cloud, Al Voegele, Maurice Lamothe, Paul Talley, Bryan DesLauriers, Sean Adkins, Jack Brigham, Timothy Hawkins, Trudy Cioffi, Katie Haseltine (minute-taker), two members of the public

Absent: none

- 1. T. Hawkins calls the meeting to order at 7:02 PM**
- 2. Amendments to agenda**
 - None
- 3. Public Comment on non-agenda items**
 - Two minutes per speaker on topics within JPB purview
 - D. Cloud forgot to attach minutes from last time, so will address that at the next meeting.
- 4. Responses to Questions Posed, Cloud / Macy**
 - Q1: Outsourcing Dispatching Service
 - i. D. Cloud shares the short answer is no. Dispatch is highly linked to the operation of the police department. Outsourcing. Essex spends \$500K/year and could pursue that, but the department is just too big. D. Cloud shares that two Vermont regional dispatch initiatives have failed. The most successful regional dispatch is the Franklin County Model.
 - ii. There is discussion around the dispatch line item in the financials. S. Macy provides clarity on the revenues and expenses for dispatch.
 - iii. B. DesLauriers asks how many other towns are combined like St. Albans. M. Lamothe shares there are 6, but they aren't quite the same. M. Lamothe doesn't believe any areas are comparable to the volume our dispatch has, noting that Lamoille would be the only one.
 - Q2: Dispatch budget increase by triple what the town currently pays
 - iv. J. Brigham asks if we can increase the rate of surrounding towns, he believes a 5% increase is coming. D. Cloud confirms that. D. Cloud shares that new inquiries have been sent out. S. Adkins asks at what point do more contracts mean more need for staff. D. Cloud shares that we currently have capacity to take on a little more. D. Cloud shares that adding a police department is a larger undertaking than a fire or rescue department. However, the dispatch center can take on a little more.
 - v. A member of the public asks if fees are portioned equitably to each town. D. Cloud says no. All non police dispatch eventually pay the same rate, though some get a discount in year one. The City and the Town would pay the most as they have the highest population, tax base, and use the most police dispatch services.
 - vi. T. Cioffi asks about the approximate 10% increase each year to the healthcare premium. She also asks about the salary increase. D. Cloud shares that the police

department and dispatch are the only city staff that the health benefits are fully paid by the city and those premiums always increase each year.

- Q3: Lease agreement and utility invoices
 - vii. That paperwork has been shared with all.
- Q4: Property, liability, worker's compensation, unemployment policies/5 year loss runs
 - viii. S. Macy shares that she has reached out to VLCT to provide five years of loss runs for each policy but as of tonight, she has not received that.
- Q5: Street crimes unit (SCU)
 - ix. A member of the public asks if inflation was ignored would the cost decrease in the next year. S. Macy shares that it would not really decrease.
- Further discussion on questions posed
 - x. J. Brigham reflects that the budget is a hard pill to swallow, but is confident the combination of departments is a necessary and collaborative action. Jack believes the street crimes unit coming back is definitely a big seller in the budget. D. Cloud does believe there is potential for the curve to bend in the right way, but also in the wrong way. Missisquoi rescue is always looking for a quote. Swanton has in the past, but they are with the state right now and don't pay anything. Jack asks what the likelihood is of being fully staffed. M. Lamothe believes that isn't out of reach.
 - xi. T. Cioffi asks if M. Lamothe limits overtime. P. Talley manages a lot of the hours of staff and shares that they do limit as much as they can. Sometimes it is needed, but the top priority is to prevent burnout. T. Cioffi asks if there is any opportunity to spread the expenses to surrounding towns. D. Cloud shares that they increase as much as they think the market can bear.
 - xii. B. Farrar asks about Shelburne and the islands they have secured. D. Cloud shares that Shelburne has all of the islands (North Hero, South Hero, etc.).
 - xiii. J. Brigham asks what is stopping everyone from going to the state since it is free. D. Cloud shares that the state is slowly ending that and pushing departments out.
 - xiv. P. Talley shares that officers have a choice between the AM and PM shifts. T. Cioffi asks if the PM shift is paid a higher rate. P. Talley says yes.
 - xv. J. Brigham asks about restorative justice and if that program is included in the budget. D. Cloud says that it is and that it is underfunded by the state so the City contributes to help offset that since it is highly valued and utilized.

5. Committee Discussion

- B. DesLauriers asks about the optional piece of Street Crimes Unit and if the vote doesn't pass is there opportunity to re-visit just that piece in the budget. D. Cloud shares that if it passes, it is on the communities to sell it to their citizens. J. Brigham continues to remind folks that bringing the communities together provides water and sewer and that is a huge selling point.

6. Public Comment

- T. Hawkins moves to public comment. There is none.

7. Consider a motion expressing the sentiment of the Board

- S. Adkins believes it is trending in the right direction but needs to go to the selectboard meeting one more time and meet as a JPB one more time.
- T. Hawkins is looking at first week of December. B. DesLauriers mentions the 6th. T.

Hawkins proposes a tentative meeting on December 6th at 7 PM, and all are in favor.

8. Approval of minutes
 - This will wait until the next meeting since they weren't included in the packet tonight
9. Adjourn. B. DesLauriers motions to end meeting. J. Brigham seconds. Motion passes with all in favor. Meeting adjourns at 8:00 PM.