

**MEETING OF THE ST. ALBANS CITY DOWNTOWN BOARD &
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ST. ALBANS FOR THE FUTURE
6:00 PM, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2017
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NO. MAIN ST.**

Approved December 19, 2017

Board Members present: Chair Katy Collin, Emily Richards, Vice-Chair Erik Johnson, Sharon Holcomb, Rachel Sink, Donna Howard, Maureen Brown

Board Members Absent: Jes Stumpf, Jeff Young, Mike Blouin, Laz Scangas

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

Public Present: Donna Howard, Amanda Viens Liese

Call to Order – Chair Collin called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

a. **Additions or deletions** - None

1. Call to Order Chair Collin called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

2. Organization Committee Portion

a. **Board Candidate Interviews** – The Board is conducting interviews for the four open positions on the Downtown Board

- **Maureen Brown** – She has a vested interest in downtown. Her hotel has only been open for a couple of months but has had an impact on Downtown and she would like to have a personal impact as well. Chair Collin stated that they will recommend for a 2-year term.
- **Amanda Viens Liese** – Vice-Chair Johnson asked what her top two issues were? She would like to further the interest that visitors have in Downtown. She would like to see the City have more of a presence Downtown. She wants people to feel like they have to stop here when they drive through. Vice-Chair Johnson asked what skills and expertise would she bring to the position? She worked at Burton for 8 years. She worked at every facet of opening a store and promotions and keeping it open. She knows how things can be implemented correctly. She was the WPA chair when she was at Burton. She helped organize and implement the promotions to raise money for their non-profit. She grew up with parents who struggled with a downtown storefront and knows the issues. She understands how important community involvement is along with business involvement. She is interested in promotions and design.
- **Donna Howard** – Vice-Chair Johnson asked what keeps you wanting to be involved? Ms. Howard stated that she has been involved for a very long time and she would like to see the committee keep evolving and keep going forward. She believes that as much as has been done more can be done. She would like to keep the forward momentum and make St. Albans better. She would be interested in stepping up and

becoming the chair of the Community Arts committee. The Board needs continue creative arts events and needs a county wide resource of local artists to help people find out what resources are available.

- **Laz Scangas** – Mr. Scangas filled out questionnaire to be a member of the Downtown Board as he could not attend in person.

b. Recommendation to City Council –

Vice-Chair Johnson made a motion that the three candidates in attendance get recommended to the City Council for 3-year terms; Laz Scangas will be recommended for a two year term; Member Richards seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- 3. SAFF Financial Report** – Mr. Sawyer stated that \$1500 went out for Chair Affair and that the balance is about \$4300. Vice-Chair Johnson asked Ms. Howard What Messenger Print Design was? Ms. Howard stated that it was for posters, tickets and inserts. Mr. Sawyer reported that Festival of Trees (FOT) is still in the black due to donations. It has an \$11,000 balance; Arts has been spending money on Burrow Rent and had a large donation from FOT; There is still \$4300 unencumbered. \$5300 is for the store accessibility survey; \$313 for Around Our Town; All total there is \$35,000 but may need the Board may need to balance funds between committees; Vice-Chair Johnson asked if each committee prepared a fiscal budget each year to better plan for the estimated expenses? Mr. Sawyer stated that each committee is independently fund raises so there really hasn't been a need but now there are items that are across the committees so there might be more of a reason for it now.
- 4. Training on storefront accessibility inventory and next steps** – Postponed until Laz Scangas is in attendance.
- 5. Around Our Town calendar update** – Vice-Chair Johnson brought the logo to the City Council and got approval. At the December meeting he will lay out the marketing components. He would like to do a soft launch and get SACA on there and see how it goes. He would like to do the official launch in March depending on how much buy in the concept gets will set the frame for sponsors and users. Mr. Sawyer asked if the price would still be \$650 per fund? He has found that there is a lot of interest regionally; Enosburg, Swanton, Chamber of Commerce are willing to work next to it. It has not gotten to the point that anybody is willing to contribute to going forward. Vice-Chair Johnson stated that it would be \$200 per year for hosting; \$20 per year for domain and \$468 for ongoing maintenance. Mr. Sawyer asked when does the Board have to make the choice to continue with the program? Vice-Chair Johnson stated that they are anticipating that the end of the year would be a good goal. Once they get it up and running would be a better time to judge the viability of the program. Once you get to a certain number of users they will need to move the domain. Hopefully within the first six months of the year they will have sponsors. They would like to have pictures of all the major venues that can host and a description of the history so that potential renters have a better idea of what venues are available. Around the Town can use help.
- 6. Consider proposal for social media marketing services** - The Board discussed the proposal put forward by Board member Rachel Sink for a marketing services campaign. Rachel presented her proposal. Vice-Chair Johnson wanted to know what the annual average cost would be based on- 4-12 hours per month at \$70.00 per hour? He asked if the Board should set an annual amount to be

spent as the marketing campaign may not be evenly distributed between committees. There will be different needs based on the time of year and the activity going on. If one month it is mostly merchants, would most of the money come out of that budget that month. Chair Collin stated that it wasn't a bad idea to have separate committees pay for the time spent on each committee's events but it might be more of a headache than it is worth. Chair Collin suggested that the Board award a six-month contract and see how it goes? During the six months, Member Sink could keep track of what time was spent on each committee's events. Vice-Chair Johnson stated that Katie Tran, a marketing services professional, would like to volunteer her time to help with the marketing campaign.

- a. **Consider award of marketing services to a Board member, that the material facts of the transaction are known, and that the transaction is fair to the Corporation. –Member Richards made a motion to hire Rachael Sink for social media and website services, that the material facts of the transaction are known, that the transaction is fair to the Corporation, and that the term of performance would be 6-months with a reassessment at that point. Member Holcomb seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with an abstention by Member Sink.**

7. **Discuss National Life Main Street Grant Application** – The application is due on December 31st. A proposal could be put together about adding more equipment to the City Hall auditorium for events or adding free wi-fi on downtown Main street. The City will put together a letter of support to be presented at the Board meeting in December.

8. **Project Updates** – Sidewalks and curbs projects have been completed for this year and they have started looking at the projects for next year. Next week signs will go in and pavement will be lined. The paving job will be reassessed in the spring. Streetlight Banners are being redone after being hit by trucks. Parks Commission will be meeting in December to discuss the feedback on the updated City Park plan. There is a study being done of the Northern Route 7 walkability access. The City will continue to mention the Rail Trail.

9. **Committee Reports**

- a. **Community Arts** - Donna Howard updated the Board. Kevin will continue doing the dances on Fridays and the Committee will try to tie it into the parks concerts next year. There are three events coming up. They are going to have a reorganizational meeting. They would like to improve the City Hall auditorium so that it is more event friendly. They have started getting quotes. The Committee is discussing a possible New Years Event downtown. Looking ahead, they would like to start a First Night. When is the next meeting? Second Tuesday of the month in the City Hall. FOT under control. The tree lighting is Saturday December 3rd. The Committee lost some key members that would make up platters etc so there will be more costs this year. Amanda volunteered some of her time. The Board discussed changing the bank account number in Event Bright so that the money will be deposited directly in the SACS Peoples trust account.
- b. **Design – No Updates**
- c. **Economic Restructuring – No Updates**

- d. **Merchants / Promotion** – Holiday raffle is starting. The Committee is doing a generic ad for all of Downtown for the holidays on WCAX. They are in the process of working on new flags. They have twelve ordered so far. The Committee will pay for brackets and poles but each business will pay for their own flag. Small business Saturday this weekend.
- e. **Organization – No Updates**

10. Other Business

- a. **Approval of Minutes** – Vice-Chair Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of October 17, 2017, as presented. Member Brown seconded. There were no abstentions and the motion passed unanimously.
- b. **Other** – Chair Collin started a discussion about getting free Wi-Fi downtown. The merchants get a lot of requests for it. Ms. Viens-Liese also mentioned that getting music downtown and in City Hall park would make people want to spend more time there. Mr. Sawyer stated that he would look into what options are available.

11. Public Comment - None

- 12. Adjourn** – Chair Collin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30. Member Richards seconded it. It passed unanimously.