

**St. Albans City Council  
Minutes of Meeting  
Monday, August 10, 2020  
City Hall, Council Chambers**

A regular meeting of the St. Albans City Council was held on Monday, August 10, 2020, at 6:30 pm in City Hall and via remote teleconference.

**Council Present:** Mayor Tim Smith; Aldermen: Michael McCarthy, Chad Spooner and Tim Hawkins & Alderwomen: Marie Bessette and Kate Laddison.

**Council Absent:** Alderman Jim Pelkey.

**Staff Present:** Dominic Cloud, City Manager; Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning & Development; Curry Galloway, City Clerk; Tom Leitz, Director of Administration; Maurice Lamothe, Interim Police Chief and Marty Manahan, Director of Public Works, Operations & Business Development.

**Visitors:** Bruce Wilson, Angie Sturm, Marianne Hunkin, Mike Hoeflich, Reese Kelly, Reier Erickson, Zach Scheffler, Michelle Monroe, Erika Hamlin, Kate Larose, Tanner McCuin, Maressa Miles and John Holzscheiter.

1. Executive Session re: civil litigation, contracts and personnel.
  - a. The Council finds that premature disclosure would compromise the City or person involved (D&V).  
**A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Hawkins to find that premature disclosure of the above matters would compromise the City or person involved. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**
  - b. The Council moves to enter Executive Session for purposes of discussing civil litigation, contracts and personnel matters where premature disclosure could compromise the City or person involved (D&V).  
**A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Hawkins to enter Executive Session for purposes of discussing civil litigation, contracts and personnel matters where premature disclosure could compromise the City or person involved. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**  
**A motion was made by Alderman Hawkins; seconded by Alderman Spooner to exit Executive Session. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**
2. Convene Open Session with Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and led the pledge of allegiance.
3. Public comment on matters not on the agenda.

Bruce Wilson, Executive Director of Arts So Wonderful, introduced himself. He thanked Mr. Sawyer and the City Council for allowing him to place electrical panels in Taylor Park and on Lake Street and is hoping to hold more events with local artists and residents in the community. He is working with Mr. Sawyer to plan a free event for community members in the City. Mayor Smith thanked Mr. Wilson. He noted that the art work that was done was beautiful and will continue to look for locations to be able to utilize his organization again moving forward.

Mr. Spooner noted two metal doors in Houghton Park that are beginning to rust and suggested having Mr. Wilson paint them since he's an expert at painting on metal. Mr. Wilson responded that he would love the opportunity to paint the doors. Mayor Smith asked him to connect with Mr. Sawyer.

Zach Scheffler of Lake Street introduced himself. He noted the Police Department's complaint system and believes there should be some increased transparency of that system. He believes independent local involvement is a critical part of improving that system. He noted the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement and their FAQ page, specifically. It includes a tremendous amount of resources, plans and models for effective deployment of local involvement in oversight or complaint systems. Some of the benefits were reducing public concern over high profile instances, identifying areas of concern, offering options to improve policies and policing and the community reassurance that discipline is being imposed when appropriate. Mr. Scheffler stated that Brattleboro used these resources to form the Citizen Police Communication Committee.

Reese Kelly introduced herself. He noted the larger community conversation surrounding SRO's in schools and is curious what the positive impacts of having them in the schools are and how it's being measured. He is concerned about the impacts with the children of color in the community and how they're being treated as well as students with disabilities. He confounded as to why they are in the school system and what role they're playing other than to govern positive feelings toward the police force which doesn't seem like a positive impact on the students.

Angie Sturm of Ward 4 introduced herself. She stated that her thoughts are on Institutional nature of racism in everyday life. It matters because it reflects racial inequity and is something different from an individual holding racist beliefs. It is rarely established intentionally. She asked if we as a community can truly welcome black voices into public discourse. She urged fellow community members to resist the false narrative that St. Albans is a bubble where institutional racism does not exist.

4. Recess for Liquor Control.

**A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderwoman Bessette to recess for liquor control. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**

5. Consider Adoption of Police Road Map, City Manager (D&V).

a. Staff Presentation, Board Discussion, Public Comment.

Mr. Cloud explained that this is a continuation of the work and sentiments that were reflected at the last meeting with an emphasis on diversity, racial equity and inclusion. To that end, three additions were prepared to amend the original document. Mr. Cloud proceeded to read the additions aloud. (See Attached Police Road Map). Mr. Cloud reinforced that this is a fluid document that is able to be changed as needed. Mr. McCarthy thanked the City Manager for taking the public comment from the last meeting into consideration and including the Police Advisory Committee piece into the road map.

Reier Erickson asked how racial and economic diversity will be created within the St. Albans Police Department and asked how the issues of equity and race will be dealt with overall. Mr. Cloud responded that there will be a later discussion this evening regarding the hiring policy and how it guides the decision making process for recruitment and officer hiring. He would also look to the input and participation of the Police Advisory Board to help guide some of the decisions in hiring and recruitment. Mr. Cloud stated that he doesn't believe many of us have looked through the lens for equity and inclusion as a reflection of economic diversity and focused more on the traditional application of race, gender, religion, etc. He reiterated that staff is in the middle of developing a strategy for how all the departments will participate in the implicit bias training.

Kate Larose, City resident, introduced herself. She recalled the preamble statement and asked what budget would be available for national experts and throughout this process beyond the scope of just MRI. Mr. Cloud responded that there isn't any money budgeted for any of this but there are times when there is the need to invest and find the money which is what was done with the MRI efforts. Some of these efforts go beyond the Police Department and is more of a City effort both within the

organization and the community as a whole. He stated that he has not had any funding conversations with City Council but it's possible that there could be additional appropriations for broader topics. He noted that from a staff perspective, the time for that is likely FY 22.

Marianne Hunkin stated that she would like to bring everyone back to Ms. Sturm's call for action to deal with racism and equity in St. Albans. She believes the Police Advisory Board is a place to begin to rectify the inaction of St. Albans over time. She asked that the vote be delayed on forming a Police Advisory Board tonight and stated that if accountability is truly the goal, the language in the document does not achieve that goal. She expressed her appreciation for the collaboration by the City Council but does not believe the proposal as it stands is sufficient. She is requesting that the number of board members on the Police Advisory Board be increased to seven, that the Chief does not sit on the board, that there are no conflicts of interest amongst board members and that the majority of the board members are represented by marginalized communities, that there be more specific language around antiracism and that the members are not prohibited in discussing policy issues provided that they are not revealing personal information.

Mr. McCarthy stated that he assumes that if this roadmap is adopted, it will lay out some values and principles and can be adjusted, added to and changed at any time and points the council in the direction of the efforts being identified. He assumed that there would be further conversations surrounding the makeup of the Police Advisory Board and that getting this started tonight does not preclude us from doing that. Mr. Cloud responded that that is absolutely correct and this road map reflects the areas of consensus, the art of the possible and allows for a starting point. Ms. Laddison echoed that sentiment and agreed that these are improvements that will be made over a long period of time.

**A motion was made by Alderman McCarthy; seconded by Alderman Spooner to adopt the Police Road Map. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**

6. Consider Adoption of Police Advisory Board (D&V).

a. Staff Presentation, Board Discussion, Public Comment.

Mr. Cloud explained that this document creates a Police Advisory Board with the following mission. To offer advice to the St. Albans Police Department for the successful implementation of 21<sup>st</sup> century policing strategies and assist the Police Department in following the established road map as amended by the City Council. Mr. Cloud stated that that advice is primarily given to the Police Department through the Chief of Police and this is a fairly narrow charge. Mr. Cloud stated that this isn't the Community Transformation Counsel and it's not the Counsel on Racial Equity, Inclusion and Diversity. This is focusing narrowly on the Police Department and helping them appreciate the perspective of others, of marginalized communities and involves trust building through experience sharing. By its very nature, it reflects diverse voices learning from each other by listening to one another and establishing consensus on a way to move forward. That's the vision behind this group. Mr. Cloud stated that the board may accomplish this mission through the following activities; providing advice, insight and recommendations to the Chief for strengthening the department's relationship with the community, with special emphasis on marginalized and minority communities. Mr. Cloud proceeded to read aloud the remainder of the proposed Police Advisory Board mission. (See Attached Police Advisory Board Proposal).

Mr. Cloud explained that a policy on investigations and complaints will be seen at a future meeting. In that policy, it talks about who does the investigation, it talks about transparency disclosure for inspiring confidence in the community. Mr. Cloud provided the example of excessive use of force complaints over 12 months. This board can take that data and decide to look into it further and will

be in the position to sound the alarm. What they don't do is negate a decision made after an investigation which is the job of the City Council and City Manager.

Mr. Cloud explained that the next document is to assist the Police Department in recruitment practices and retention, particularly as we transition to a guardian-based culture while seeking to diversify the department and to serve as a sounding board for new ideas and initiatives that will enhance community engagement.

Mr. Cloud stated that the proposed Police Advisory Board talks about 5 members but doesn't have any chafe in increasing it to 7 members. He further stated that he doesn't see how there can be a board formed to offer advice to the Police Department without the Chief of Police participating in those conversations. Mr. Cloud stated that it's hard for him to see the mission of this board accomplished with just marginalized groups on it.

Ms. Laddison asked if the Chief would vote if he was not a member of the board. Mr. Cloud responded negatively. Mr. Cloud stated that many of our boards have staff members that provide support and receive direction for them and provided the example of the Planning Director in the context of the Planning Commission and the Permitting Administrator in the context of the Development Review Board.

Mr. Spooner stated that he would like to see the board increased to 7 members and suggested staggering terms. He asked who conducted the use of force investigations in the past. Mr. Cloud responded that most departments of our size until very recently have conducted their own internal investigations where they don't involve possible criminal matters. He stated that that practice is changing drastically. Mr. Spooner asked if this board would be similar to other boards where a Chair is elected and the Chair will be responsible to run the meetings and create the agenda. Mr. Cloud responded that the Chair will certainly run the meeting and the Council may decide to appoint the Chair. Mr. Spooner asked if it would be ok for the Police Chief to attend these meetings in civilian clothing, unarmed if it's an evening meeting. Chief Lamothe responded that if he is attending the meeting as the Chief, he would be in uniform. Mr. Spooner expressed that he wants to make sure that it's a comfortable setting for everyone involved. Chief Lamothe stated that he is open to wearing civilian clothing but would like to carry a concealed weapon.

Mr. Hawkins asked how often the board would meet and what types of things outside the bullet items will be discussed. He acknowledged that this will be a very important board for the City and if someone were to serve a two to three year term, he'd like to make sure that they have some level of training on how to be on a board. Mr. Hawkins expressed that he wants to make sure this advisory board doesn't meet so often that they start looking into the minutia of the department. He also agreed that the board should have 7 members.

Ms. Laddison asked what the relationship will be between this board and the City Council and asked if this board would report to the City Council on a regular basis which is unlike other boards. She added that she believes there should be some type of reporting structure for the board. Mr. Cloud responded that any board has an obligation to champion their interests and lobby for them to staff and to the City Council. The City Council tends to deal with the action items before them and less reporting which happens at the staff level. That could be built in and the onus is on the board. Mr. Cloud stated that the Council can bring them in as little or as much as desired. Mr. Spooner suggested discussing that further at the next meeting. Ms. Laddison commented that she would want every board to feel like they could come to the City Council at any time with a regular mechanism in place so they don't feel like their work is in vain. Mr. Spooner suggested seeing each board quarterly or a few times per year.

Reese Kelly commented that he feels it's completely inappropriate that Chief Lamothe would want to carry a weapon in a meeting that's about community advocacy. He stated believes that there is a grave opportunity lost on the recent discussion. There are a group of individuals that are deeply committed to the community and the things that are being asked for are outright being ignored. If one of the goals is to recruit officers of color to this region, one way to start is by small decisions like listening to people in the community and taking their thoughts into consideration.

Reier Erickson stated that he is a black human being and moved to St. Albans from Bristol. He was warned before moving to St. Albans that it's a racist community and the police officers are violent. In 6 months of living in the community, he has been called the "N" word three times in public while walking through Taylor Park. He stated that there is a history of racism in St. Albans and he would not feel comfortable sitting on the board if the Chief of Police were on it. The other day, a police officer was in his back yard for several minutes because his neighbors get the police called on them frequently. He explained that the officer never came to his door and when he went outside, the officer questioned him more than the residents of the house who were committing the crime the police were called for. He explained that this isn't a Citizen Oversight Committee, it's just an advisory board allowing for a formal discussion place for community members who are appointed by City Council to have a discussion with the Chief of Police. He commented that he didn't appreciate the comment by Councilor Hawkins that people wouldn't be ready to engage in that. Mr. Cloud asked Mr. Erickson how he felt about having a committee that wasn't involved with the Police Department but rather a committee made of up seven members of community members for safer neighborhoods with a charge to create something and the opportunity to meet and give the City Council information they think they need to hear. Mr. Erickson responded that he would personally prefer sitting on a board like that than the one being presented tonight. He is not opposed to a Police Advisory Board but wouldn't personally feel comfortable being a part of it. Mr. Cloud asked Mr. Erickson how a committee for safer neighborhoods differs from the neighborhood group he's currently apart of which can meet as much as they'd like and provide feedback. Mr. Erickson responded that he's felt chastised as a member of that group for speaking out publicly on various topics which is not ok.

Marianne Hunkin agreed with Mr. Erickson that they are going to continue to meet and show up but they would like to have actual accountability of the police in the City. The Police Advisory Board as its being presented currently does not do that. She asked the City Council if they have reviewed the examples from Barre, Vergennes, Rutland and Plattsburg. She stated that it is absolutely necessary to have representation by marginalized communities because she as an educated white woman will never understand what it is like to live as a black person in this community or in low income housing in this community and to have higher instances of interaction with police.

Kate Larose recalled that one of the intents of the Police Advisory Board is to provide advice, insight and recommendations to the Chief for strengthening the department's relationship with the community, with special emphasis on marginalized and minority communities. Given this, it makes sense that the majority of the members represent marginalized communities and those that are known to received disproportionate contact or harm from law enforcement. At first glance, this might seem a barrier for recruitment but Statewide Councils are routinely doing this. Advice, recommendation and insight from outside the community is already being provided by way of contracts. She is asking that this board explicitly focus on community voices and be represented by people who have lived through these experiences. In reference to the request for training to be provided for board members, Ms. Larose stated that she would hope this training would be provided to all boards and all members.

Mr. Scheffler stated that he hopes the inclusion of strategies for a commitment to exploring how to help police draw down in their service to the community, specifically in their involvement of low level offenses. This has been part of the outline that the ACLU of Vermont has delivered. He stated that he is specifically thinking of ways to explore community partners. He recalled the conversation from a previous meeting where Chief Lamothe spoke about having a social worker on staff and provided that opportunity as a positive example. He reiterated that representation on the board is very important and feels strongly that conflict of interests should be avoided.

Mr. McCarthy stated that he hears the need for more representation and believes that can be accomplished by creating this advisory board and making sure the City Council holds themselves accountable in ensuring the makeup of this board is a good one. He agreed with avoiding conflicts of interest, however, wouldn't want to exclude anyone from ever having any policing experience from being on this advisory board because they might have a great perspective to offer. Mr. McCarthy stressed that he really hears what's being asked for by members of Neighbors for a Safer St. Albans and after much discussion, he agrees that this Police Advisory Board is not sufficient in solving all of the problems that have been raised tonight. He stated that this, however, is one small piece that is important toward creating a space for members of the community that are interested in taking a deeper dive than the City Council can in talking about the issues of policing and to have the communication with the Police Chief and the City Council about what they are seeing on the streets and what can be done to do better. Mr. McCarthy stated that he would like to see the proposal for a Police Advisory Board move forward tonight and can continue to work on fine tuning it. He also agreed that the board should have 7 members with an emphasis -of marginalized and minority communities.

Mayor Smith agreed that all of the details aren't finalized and his expectation is to work on them as they arise.

**A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman McCarthy to adopt the Police Advisory Board with 7 members and with the understanding that it is a fluid document.** Mr. Hawkins mentioned the public comment about the documents that show what other towns are doing and asked if that was something he received. Mr. McCarthy stated that he's read a number of charges of different committees across the State and what's presented tonight has way more power, a much bigger scope and more access to the police than most of the other communities have. Mr. Cloud commented that at the staff level, they looked at Barre, Winooski and Brattleboro.

**Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**

**Alderman McCarthy left the meeting briefly at 7:56 pm and returned shortly thereafter.**

7. Police Report, Interim Chief Lamothe.

a. Update and Overview of Recent Activity.

Chief Lamothe stated that he wanted to address the earlier comment about wearing a uniform to an advisory board meeting. He explained that the uniform is a symbol of professionalism but is highly adaptable and prides himself in getting along with everyone. He is open to adapting to whatever the request of the advisory board is.

Chief Lamothe explained that much of his time during the past month has been spent on policy making and reestablishing communications within the community groups and support entities in Franklin County such as NUSI (Northwest Unit for Special Investigations), NCSS and Restorative Justice. He had a long conversation with the RJC Executive Director, Nina Curtiss, about their teamwork and collaboration. The opioid grant is up for renewal. The department will also start meeting for COM-STAT meetings to learn what is happening in Franklin County and to go over data.

Chief Lamothe explained that Ms. Curtiss has extended training that her staff uses to the Police Department and officers will be attending a Cognitive Behavioral Therapy training.

Chief Lamothe stated that NUSI specializes in sexual assault in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties and are currently looking for detectives to join their unit. Currently, St. Albans does not have any detectives in that unit. Next year, he is hopeful to add a detective to that unit which will be dependent on staffing and grants. He added that the majority of all sexual assault calls come from St. Albans City.

Chief Lamothe stated that NCSS has 600 employees, serving Franklin Grand Isle Counties. The department has learned a tremendous amount through their Crisis Intervention Specialist and is aware that they could use more support. He stated that 45% of the people that the Vermont State Police and St. Albans Police Department come in contact with are referred to NCSS for follow up.

A Shift Report is now required by the Sargent on duty at the end of each 12 hour shift. Chief Lamothe explained that it's a great tool to allow the next shift to know what happened on the shift prior and so they know what they need to follow up on. In looking at those reports, there are at least two to four mental health calls on every single shift.

In July, a Corporal on the department was praised by AmCare for the way he handled a suicide attempt. Later in the month, the same Corporal also helped a second person attempting suicide to seek help. Corporal Koch responded to a call with a baby that wasn't breathing and performed life saving measures before AmCare arrived. She will be honored with a Life Saving Award. Chief Lamothe stated that the department also participated in a retirement party at NCSS, birthday parties and a drive-thru funeral.

b. Review of Monthly Data.

Chief Lamothe explained that he broke down the top 10 calls for the month of July. The most frequent call was for Traffic Stops with 201 cases. He added that 79% of those stops were issued warnings. Directive Patrols included 89 cases followed by Foot Patrols with 60 cases. Public Assist was the next highest call and covers everything from parades to civil complaints, trespassing and lost and found items. Motor Vehicle Complaints followed and includes high speed and erratic operation or any general motor vehicle complaint. Disturbances had 45 cases followed by Suspicious Calls, Alarms and Agency Assist. A total of 99 charges and 43 arrests occurred in July. Of those arrests, 41 were Caucasian. Chief Lamothe stressed that their job is to educate people and to promote safety vs. just handing out tickets.

Mr. Spooner asked Chief Lamothe who the prior St. Albans officer was that worked with NUSI. Chief Lamothe responded that Corporal Bourgeois is attached the State's Attorney office but there hasn't been a St. Albans officer working with NUSI for years. Mr. Spooner asked if Chief Lamothe believes the shift reports will help to catch patterns and offer more referrals quicker. Chief Lamothe responded that one of the hurdles with mental health is that once you reach adult age, you can't force them to seek help. Mr. Spooner asked if officers are provided with first aid training. Chief Lamothe responded that every officer is required to undergo annual First Aid and CPR training. Mr. Spooner asked what happens with the revenue from tickets and asked if that money could be used for example, to provide someone with a car seat who is stopped for having a child in the vehicle without one. Mr. Cloud responded that ticket revenue flows into the General Fund and is appropriated by the City Council. Mr. Spooner asked Mr. McCarthy to please lobby at the State level to get rid of front license plates. Mr. McCarthy responded that legislatures have heard from law enforcement that they appreciate having front and rear plates. Chief Lamothe added that for safety reasons, front plates are absolutely necessary and have solved numerous crimes with the aid of the front plate.

c. Consider Adoption of Policy on Police Officer Selection (D&V).

Chief Lamothe explained that this is a draft policy on police officer selection and believes it is well written and thorough. He stated that the policy includes nine steps and all of the criteria other agencies are using. The piece that is not done by many other agencies is the inclusion of a hiring panel made of community members. Chief Lamothe explained that they used this draft policy and hiring panel last week for an interview and received positive feedback by both the panel and candidate. He believes having community engagement will be extremely beneficial to this process, allowing for different perspectives. The final piece to the policy includes an extensive background check with no stone unturned. Chief Lamothe stated that every policy the department produces, including this one, is a COLEA-based standard policy. Chief Lamothe proceeded to list the other COLEA-based standard policies that the department is working on.

Mr. Spooner asked how the two citizens who sat on the panel were selected and asked how they would be selected in the future. Chief Lamothe responded that in speaking to other Chiefs who have used this method, it is recommended that the citizens who sit on the panel be different every time. He explained that when the interview took place last week, he didn't have a lot of time to prepare and chose someone from the Restorative Justice Program and a second person who he'd never met before and recently graduated from college. Mr. Spooner suggested using the Police Advisory Board to select the citizens who sit on the interview panel. Mr. Spooner asked if a probationary employment period is part of the process. Chief Lamothe responded that a full-time officer will have a one year probationary period after they complete the Academy.

Ms. Laddison asked if the policy covers who is responsible to administer the polygraph. Chief Lamothe responded that there are not many companies in Vermont that administer them the department uses a company from Chittenden County. Ms. Laddison stated that she appreciates the commitment to diversity that is mentioned in the policy. Chief Lamothe explained that in his former position, they had success with recruiting a diverse pool of candidates from CCV. He expressed that overall, it is very challenging.

**A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderwoman Laddison to approve the policy on police officer selection. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**

8. Hard'ack Concert Request, John Holzscheiter (D&V).

Mr. Holzscheiter presented a documentary on the After Glow concert that took place at Hard'ack last year to honor his late son, AJ Holzscheiter, and to provide education and support for suicide awareness and prevention. Mr. Holzscheiter explained that he would like to hold another concert in 2020 while following the State guidelines for Covid. He was provided with safety guidelines from his friend Michael Schirling who is the Commissioner of Vermont Public Safety. The concert would be limited to a maximum of 150 people in what he envisions as drive-in quadrants. Last year, they received approval from the Vermont DLC to allow open containers of alcohol and double fenced in the entire hill. Mr. Holzscheiter explained that with covid, they are envisioning the location to be moved to the fields that border the interstate and away from Eastview. This location will also eliminate the sound issue for the neighbors. There are two local bands that have offered to play at no charge and envisions a 3 pm start time with the event ending by 8 pm. Mr. Holzscheiter stated that there were no issues last year with traffic and would not include food and drink vendors this year. He explained that the idea is to just hold the event given the circumstances so they don't have to miss a year and start over again with their efforts. The cost to attend will be \$20 per person and all proceeds will go toward the fight against suicide. He added that the majority of those funds will go to NCSS. Last year, they raised \$15,000 for NCSS, \$10,000 for the St. Albans City Recreation Department and \$2,000 to a Learn To Ski & Ride Program to help purchase helmets for children.

Mayor Smith asked how enforcement will take place to make sure attendees are following social distancing guidelines. Mr. Holzscheiter responded that they had 50 volunteers last year that helped with the event as well as 10 people working security. All have offered to come back and help out at a future event.

Mr. Spooner thanked Mr. Holzscheiter and requested that he be safe. He noted that the fields can also be muddy at times in the spring. Mr. Holzscheiter responded that the concert would take place on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Laddison commended Mr. Holzscheiter for his work. She asked if he is planning for the vehicles to have enough room in each quadrant for the occupants to be able to get out their vehicle and sit in a lawn chair. Mr. Holzscheiter responded that vehicles would be spaced at least 6 feet apart to allow people to sit in chairs in front of their vehicle and watch the show. Ms. Laddison stated that a crowd of 1,000 people will be a lot to maintain and wants to ensure there is safe distancing. Mr. Holzscheiter stressed that they had between 1,200 and 1,400 people in attendance last year and not one problem.

**A motion was made by Alderman Spooner to approve the concert request by Mr. Holzscheiter to be held on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Motion was seconded by Alderman McCarthy to approve the concert request with the caveat that Mr. Holzscheiter to continue to work with Mr. Schirling and delve into all of the operational aspects to make sure they conform to the latest public health and safety guidelines.** Mr. Holzscheiter stated that he has been in communication with Mr. Schirling on a weekly basis for the last 5 weeks and has been a great supporter of the event and cause. Kate Larose from the public commented that this is a great cause but urged the City Council not to approve this and finds it to be completely irresponsible to hold an event with up to 1,000 people while children can't even go to school 5 days a week. **Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**

9. Final Public Hearing for Almond Blossoms VCDP Planning Grant, Chip Sawyer (D&V).

Mr. Cloud explained that this is a final public hearing for the Almond Blossoms VCDP Planning Grant. The City was previously awarded more than \$50,000 by VCDP. The VCDP funds have been used to accomplish the following activities: Architectural and engineering services, environmental and historic reviews, and other studies associated with planning, permitting, designs and construction documents toward the future objectives of property acquisition, renovations and construction and the establishment of a pre-school and childcare facility at 233-235 Lake Street in St. Albans.

Mayor Smith asked what the funding will be used for. Mr. Sawyer responded that the funding was used for the plans and specifications to expand and renovate the building and get the environmental releases.

10. Consider Adoption of Almond Blossoms Resolution, Chip Sawyer (D&V).

**A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderwoman Laddison to adopt the Almond Blossoms Resolution as presented. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**

Mr. Sawyer stated that the great news is that the City was awarded the \$500,000 to do the expansion and this is a required resolution which City Council just passed to assign the Planning Commission a special role in the grant administration and program management.

11. Consider Appointments to Planning Commission and DRB, Mayor Smith (D&V).

Mr. Hawkins asked which councilor's met with the Planning Commission. Mayor Smith responded that he, Mr. Spooner and Ms. Laddison met on a Zoom call and interviewed Zachary Nuse for the Planning Commission and also spoke with Matthew Preedom who expressed interest in the DRB Alternate position. Mayor Smith stated that from his perspective, both were excellent conversations and both individuals were excited to participate in City government and brought a lot to the table relative to how

they thought they might be able to assist on those specific committees. Mr. Spooner and Ms. Laddison agreed with Mayor Smith.

**A motion was made by Alderman Hawkins; seconded by Alderman Spooner to appoint Zachary Nuse to the Planning Commission and Matthew Preedom to the DRB as Alternate with terms expiring 12/31/22. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**

12. Consider Authorizing the City Manager to Sign the Operating Agreement and Cell Tower Sublease Agreement for the Emergency Communications Tower on Georgia Mountain (D&V).

Mr. Cloud explained that the Council packet includes an Operating Agreement and a Cell Tower Sublease Agreement that allows the City develop an emergency communications cell tower on Georgia Mountain. This is the implementation of the Letter of Intent that was discussed previously. Mr. Hawkins asked if there were any substantial changes from the Letter of Intent. Mr. Cloud responded negatively.

**A motion was made by Alderman Hawkins; seconded by Alderwoman Laddison to authorize the City Manager to sign the Operating Agreement and Cell Tower Sublease Agreement for the emergency communications tower on Georgia Mountain. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**

13. Mayor's Report.

Mayor Smith stated that he connected a local college graduate of Stonehill College who did her thesis on how improper police training leads to racism with Chief Lamothe and with Robert Langevin of the Sherriff's Department. She conducted a 2 hour presentation to Sherriff Langevin who said it was a great training opportunity. He and the City Manager also had some conversations with concerned citizens about the anti-sematic posters that have been seen around the City and had a discussion on how to move forward in terms of getting a tolerance message out to the public. Mr. Cloud is working on a campaign with the Messenger and will be shared at a later time. Mayor Smith stated that he also had a discussion with the Farmer's Market about expanding to include an International Market with the two operating in conjunction with one another.

14. Councilor Reports.

Ms. Laddison suggested discussing a goal setting meeting offline.

Mr. Hawkins asked Mr. Manahan if he had an update on the shopping center. Mr. Manahan responded that he sent an email to Mr. Pomerleau after the last meeting and has not heard back. He will try to connect with him again this week. Mr. Hawkins also asked for an update on One Federal. Mr. Manahan responded that the current owners are doing an interior renovation and some work on the exterior. When the owners were doing some exterior work last week, they found more rot than anticipated. Mr. Manahan stated that he will be meeting with the owners to discuss a possible façade grant.

15. Other Business.

No other business was discussed.

16. Consider approval of meeting minutes: Regular Mtg. 7/13/20 & Special Mtg. 7/17/20 (D&V).

**A motion was made by Alderman Hawkins; seconded by Alderman Spooner to approve 7/13/20 regular meeting minutes. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**

**A motion was made by Alderman Hawkins; seconded by Alderman Spooner to approve 7/17/20 special meeting minutes with corrections.** Mr. McCarthy stated that there is one parenthetical reference to a comment he made about the presentation language and said it was problematic. He stated that he doesn't believe he made a reference to pronouns but may have and would like to turn that parenthetical into a statement that the language of the presenters was problematic. **Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**

17. Consider approval of warrant: 7/31/20 (D&V).  
**A motion was made by Alderman Hawkins; seconded by Alderman Spooner to approve 7/31/20 warrant. Vote was unanimous, 6-0.**
18. Adjourn  
**A motion was made by Alderman McCarthy; seconded by Alderman Spooner to adjourn meeting at 9:15 pm.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Smith

Community Relations Coordinator

Approved