

**St. Albans City Council
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, April 10, 2017
City Hall, Council Chambers**

A regular meeting of the St. Albans City Council was held on Monday, April 10, 2017, at 6:30 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Council Present: Mayor Elizabeth Gamache; Aldermen: Tim Hawkins, Michael McCarthy, Chad Spooner & Jim Pelkey and Alderwomen Marie Bessette and Kate Laddison.

Council Absent: None absent.

Staff Present: Dominic Cloud, City Manager; Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning & Development; Marty Manahan, Director of Business Development; Thomas Leitz, Director of Administration and Sue Krupp, City Clerk & Treasurer.

Visitors: See attached sign-in sheet.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance.
Mayor Gamache called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and led the pledge of allegiance.
2. Public Comment.
No public comment was made.
3. Consider Reappointment of Charlie Sargent as Deputy Town Health Officer (D&V).
 - a. Introduction and welcome of new Councilors and committee assignments.
A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Pelkey to reappoint Charlie Sargent as Deputy Town Health Officer. Vote was unanimous, 7-0.
4. Consider extra-territorial allocation application for BayMark Health Services, Cross Consulting (D&V).
Mr. Cross explained that BayMark Health Services is requesting 358 gallons of water and 318 gallons of wastewater allocation. The property located on South Main Street was the former Knights of Columbus and purchased by BayMark to open an opiate clinic which is greatly needed in this community. Mr. Cloud asked Mr. Cross what the tax status of BayMark is. Mr. Cross responded that he believes they are a for profit organization and pay property taxes. Mr. Hawkins asked if the motion should be premised that it is taxed as a regular entity. Mr. Cloud responded affirmatively.
A motion was made by Alderman Hawkins; seconded by Alderman Pelkey to approve extra-territorial allocation for BayMark Health Services and predispose that it is a for profit entity and affiliation fees will apply. Vote was unanimous, 7-0.
Mr. Spooner stated that this agenda item took him by surprise because someone called him about it after reading it in the paper and he knew nothing about it. He agreed that an opiate clinic is needed and asked if he could be made aware in the future of businesses coming into his ward. Mr. Cloud understood and responded to Mr. Spooner that he has on the quasi-judicial hat reviewing the extra-territorial allocation application, focusing on the criteria in the ordinance and the broader City Council hat where there is a lot more discretion. He stated that staff tends to focus on the former instead of the latter. Mr. Cloud stated that this has been an absolute moving target and is the sixth site that's been in contention for the project. Mr. Manahan stated that they did have a public hearing at City Hall in December when they were looking at another location but doesn't believe a public hearing was held after that.

5. Consider appointment of Tom Leitz to Northwest Solid Waste District (D&V).
A motion was made by Alderman Pelkey; seconded by Alderman Spooner to approve appointment of Tom Leitz to Northwest Solid Waste District. Vote was unanimous, 7-0.
6. Consider approval of meeting minutes: 3/13/17 regular meeting (D&V).
A motion was made by Alderman Hawkins; seconded by Alderwoman Bessette to approve 3/13/17 regular meeting minutes. Vote was unanimous, 7-0.
7. Consider approval of warrants: 3/27/17 & 4/7/17 (D&V).
A motion was made by Alderman Hawkins; seconded by Alderman Spooner to approve 3/27/17 warrants. Vote was unanimous, 7-0.
A motion was made by Alderman Pelkey; seconded by Alderwoman Laddison to approve 4/7/17 warrants. Mr. Spooner stated that he reviewed warrants for March and found no mistakes. He commended the Finance staff for the great job that they do. **Vote was unanimous, 7-0.**
Agenda items # 12, # 11 and # 9 were discussed prior to recessing for Liquor Control.
8. Recess for Liquor Control (see separate agenda).
A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Pelkey to recess for liquor control at 6:59 pm. Vote was unanimous, 7-0.
9. Interviews for appointment to Design Advisory Board: Evan Champagne and Stephen Poston.
 Mayor Gamache thanked the candidates for applying and explained that she would be asking some background questions. Mr. Sawyer stated that he made staff recommendations in the council packet memo with suggested term limits. There will be 2 empty full seats and one empty alternate seat at the end of this month.
 - What has motivated you to apply and serve on this board?
 - What experiences in your background have influenced your desire to serve on this board?
 - What contributions will you make to the board and with your experience thus far, what are the qualities of a successful board of this type?
 - What is your vision for this board?
 - a. Evan Champagne
 1. Evan explained that he originally applied because there there was a lot of momentum and a nice vibe in the City and wanted to use his own experience to volunteer and keep the culture going. He added that he believes the architecture and historic fabric in the City is critical to that.
 2. He is an architect. Part of his job is to present projects to Design Review and Design Advisory Boards and can offer that perspective to applicants whom aren't as familiar with zoning regulations and help them understand why they exist while making the process as painless as possible.
 3. He explained that there is a nice mix of folks on the board with a diverse range of perspectives which he believes is one of the board's strengths.
 4. He would expect the board to continue to work more seamlessly and efficiently together.
 - b. Stephen Poston
 1. Stephen has been a resident of the City since 2003 and has seen steady improvements especially in the downtown. He noted the thriving group of businesses and the effort that has been put forth and explained that it seemed like a very small sacrifice of time to be involved.

2. He is an architect and would bring some experience and novice to the table that could be helpful. He has a knowledge of historic buildings, zoning regulations and codes which would be helpful in making sound recommendations.
3. He believes there is a nice dynamic on the board and is a great group of people that works very well together and appreciates each other's perspectives.
4. He believes the board works very well together as is and doesn't see the need for any drastic changes. He would expect a continued diverse group of people that respect each other each other's perspectives and expertise to keep working together to help applicants accomplish their projects in the City.

Mayor Gamache commented that she has been happy to hear from board members and members of the public that have commented on the board and how much they have appreciated the energy and the respect of them working together.

10. Consider appointments to Design Advisory Board (D&V).

A motion was made by Alderman Pelkey; seconded by Alderman Spooner to appoint Evan Champagne and Stephen Poston to the Design Advisory Board with a term ending 4/30/20. Vote was unanimous, 7-0.

Mayor Gamache thanked Jack Tremblay for his participation on the board and stated that there is now an open alternate seat on the board. Mr. Sawyer stated that he will begin advertising the open seat.

11. Update on City Plan, Chip Sawyer.

Mr. Sawyer explained that he wanted to take this opportunity to introduce the City Council to the City Plan which is the municipal development plan proposed by the Planning Commission. The plan is required for communities in Vermont if they want to have Land Development Regulations or Subdivision Regulations. Having a City Plan and including projects in the City Plan can make things eligible for State grants or other programs and can bolster Federal grant applications. Mr. Sawyer added that in general, the process is a good exercise for a community to go through. The Planning Commission and staff have approached this as an enabling document, not as a prioritizing document. Mr. Sawyer explained that a lot of what's in the plan comes from the City's current 2012 plan and includes updates that have been done to the City over the past 5 years, public input and council's list of priorities. It is a non-binding document and will be very broad when it is finished. Mr. Sawyer added that zoning regulations have to have some measure of consistency and compatibility with what's in the City Plan but not suggesting any major game changers. The only other regulatory use of the plan would be if there were a contentious Act 250 application. Mr. Sawyer recapped that tonight he has introduced the meat of the plan; the planning goals, objectives, policies, programs and activities.

The warning period for a City Plan is 30 days and the Planning Commission won't hold their first hearing on the Plan until May. Council's first public hearing will be July. There will be a lot of time to digest the information and make time for input. Mr. Sawyer stated that he wanted to take this as an opportunity for council to begin becoming familiar with it. Mayor Gamache asked how long the Planning Commission has been working on this. Mr. Sawyer responded that they've been discussing it since November, 2015 but working on it in earnest since the beginning of this year. He added that there will be a web page set up on the City's website at the end of the week with the first hearing draft of the plan and all of its appendices.

12. Consider authorizations for sale of City property (D&V).

a. 14 Stebbins (D&V).

Mayor Gamache recused herself from 14 Stebbins Street.

Mr. Manahan explained that there were 3 responses to the RFP for 14 Stebbins and staff zeroed in on the response that was most appealing based on the redevelopment of the property. Staff negotiated the Purchase & Sales agreement for the property and will be ready to close by May 15th. Mr. Cloud added that the City has \$80,000 into the property. Mr. Manahan stated that the buyer's plan is to remove the two newer sections of the building, rehab the original building on the west side, replace all of the windows and have a dance studio on the bottom floor with a tenant renting out a portion of the bottom floor and the second floor.

Mr. Spooner noted that the building has been an eyesore in the community for quite some time and is hopeful that the project jump starts some improvements on the street. Ms. Bessette asked Mr. Manahan if that property was the old Fonda plant. Mr. Manahan responded affirmatively and explained that it was then purchased by Champlain Housing Trust and has since been owned by two or three other parties, none of whom improved the property.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Bessette; seconded by Alderwoman Laddison to authorize City Manager to sell 14 Stebbins Street for \$80,000. Vote was unanimous, 6-0 with Mayor Gamache abstaining.

b. 36 Diamond (D&V).

Mr. Hawkins recused himself from 36 Diamond Street because he represents the buyer.

Mr. Manahan explained that the 36 Diamond Street property was released to the City by Wells Fargo. The home was demolished and the City entered an agreement with the Northwest Tech Center through the Building Trades program to build a single family home with the help of architect, Laz Scangas. Mr. Manahan noted that this has been a great learning experience for the Building Trades program. The property received an offer after only one week on the market. Mr. Manahan stated that he is trying to find another one rehab project for Building trades in the fall. Mayor Gamache noted that it is a great collaboration.

A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Pelkey to authorize City Manager to sell 36 Diamond Street. Mr. Spooner asked how much money the City has invested in the property. Mr. Manahan responded that staff is still working on budgets but the City will show a profit and roll it into the next project. Mr. Spooner asked if Building Trades got anything out of this besides the experience. Mr. Manahan responded that the City is going to donate \$3,000 to the Building Trades program which will help fund a trip to New York City. **Vote was unanimous, 6-0 with Mr. Hawkins abstaining.**

13. Other Business.

Mr. Pelkey stated that he has been distressed to see that the Franklin County Humane Society is temporarily closing and that their board didn't make the communities aware that they were struggling. He understands they are trying to raise \$70,000 and hopes that they stay in the City. Mr. Pelkey expressed that he would like the City to make a contribution if possible to help keep them open. Mr. Hawkins asked Mr. Pelkey how much he is proposing. Mr. Pelkey responded that he was thinking \$5,000. Mr. Hawkins asked Ms. Krupp how much the City has already contributed. Ms. Krupp responded that the City gave them \$5,000. Mr. Cloud stated that the \$5,000 was for contracted service which the humane society is not really interested in continuing to provide from what he understands. He believes they have an evolving mission that places more emphasis on adoption and less emphasis on the pound type of work for municipalities. The City has contracted with an organization in Colchester named Lucky Dog that takes both dogs and cats. He added that there are a lot of other municipalities that use their services. Mr. Pelkey asked Mr. Cloud if it is a pound. Mr. Cloud responded that it is a temporary transitional housing type facility.

Mr. Spooner thanked the Police Department and Public Works who secured the upstairs window of the apartment building on Edward Street. He asked Mr. Cloud if the sidewalk bid cost came in close to budget. Mr. Cloud responded that it came in under budget.

Mr. Hawkins asked how staff is doing with the Maple Festival preparations. Mr. Manahan responded that the MOU is all set, rides will be behind the courthouse and staff discussed the raid run logistics this morning. Mr. Hawkins asked if the park will be ready. Mr. Manahan responded affirmatively. Mr. Sawyer added that there will be a City welcome banner at the front of the parade and encouraged participation for anyone that would like to march in the parade.

Ms. Laddison asked if there was any update on relocation of Martha's Kitchen. Mr. Manahan responded that they have a site in mind and are working with a local church. Mr. Pelkey asked if it would remain in the City. Mr. Manahan responded affirmatively.

Mr. Hawkins apologized that he can't attend the Green Up Day. Mr. McCarthy acknowledged Brad Jenkins of the Boy Scout Troop does an excellent job organizing the event. Mayor Gamache noted that it is on May 6th. Mr. Sawyer noted that there is an event on the City Facebook page with more information including breakout areas and meeting locations.

14. Executive Session Re: Fire Agreement with St. Albans Town and Hard'ack & Town Water/Wastewater Litigation.
 - a. Consider motion that premature general public knowledge of above matters would clearly place the City at a substantial disadvantage (D&V).
A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Pelkey to find that premature general public knowledge of above matters would clearly place the City at a substantial disadvantage. Vote was unanimous, 7-0.
 - b. Consider motion to enter Executive Session to discuss contracts and litigation (D&V).
A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Pelkey to enter executive session at 7:12 pm with City Manager and Chief Gary Taylor to discuss contracts and litigation. Vote was unanimous, 7-0.
15. Consider any motions made following Executive Session (D&V).
No motions made.
16. Adjourn.
A motion was made by Alderman Spooner; seconded by Alderman Pelkey to adjourn meeting at 7:52 pm. Vote was unanimous, 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Smith
Community Relations Coordinator