

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE ST. ALBANS CITY DOWNTOWN BOARD
& BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ST. ALBANS FOR THE FUTURE
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
6:00 PM, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH, 2023

APPROVED

Members of the Board Present: IN PERSON: Maureen Brown, Chair; Emily Richard, Vice-Chair; Donna Howard; S. Smith; Sharon Holcomb; Jackie Hawkins; Nicole Cunningham; VIA ZOOM: Erik Johnson, Treasurer

Members of the Board Absent: Ashley Cleare; Jeremy Read; Valdemar Garibay; David Glidden; MaryPat Larabee; Debra Morton

Members of the SACA Committee Present: Nicole Cunningham, Jennifer Kostuck

Members of City Staff Present: Arleigh Young, Coordinator of Planning & Development; Katie Haseltine, Minute Taker.

Members of the Public Present: Vicki LaRose

1. Begin Recording and Call to Order. M. Brown calls meeting to order at 6:03 PM.
 - a. Attendance and introductions.
 - i.* Vicki LaRose
 - b. Public Comment on items not on the agenda.
 - c. Additions or Deletions to Agenda.
2. SAFF Financial Report
 - a. S. Smith asks how t-shirt sales have been going. A. Young says they are good and mentions it will be touched on later, but they've been getting some feedback on the color. A. Young would like to give the sales a little more time before making any changes.
 - b. A. Young shares that some of the unencumbered funds will be used on the Laser Light show. The chair affair has some funds in it, but that was because someone came in and paid later after everything had been calculated out. The City will be disbursing funds to the Downtown Board for the concert series.
3. State Designated Downtown Funding Update
 - a. Approve spending plan - E. Richards joins the meeting at 6:07 PM.
 - A. Young states the Downtown Program is going to focus on events and promotion. The hope is that we will get this grant each year in July. So, for the first year of funding we have a shortened period to spend down the funding (September to July).
 - i.* Fund half of Laser Light Show
 - ii.* Fund half of Last Night Fireworks
 - iii.* Hire media group for one year to create promotional materials, photographs, and video collateral.
 - iv.* Create social media campaign
 - v.* Annual local media advertising budget
 - i.* E. Johnson asks about the funding and disbursement schedule. A. Young explains that funds are released in July, but this year is slightly delayed. Next July should allow for a full year to utilize the funds, rather than a shortened timeline like there is for this year.

- ii. J. Kostuck asks about the process of choosing a media group. A. Young states they would like a group that is the full package (being able to do video, photography, editing, etc.) E. Johnson shares that in our geographic area, a lot of those people are very good in their niche areas (photography or videography), funding a full package group may require looking in the Burlington/Chittenden area. M. Brown recalls using London Middlebury and wonders about them. A. Young would really like to use someone local that can capture the culture and lifestyle of St. Albans, but that also highlights our diversity.
 - iii. E. Johnson suggests getting someone to do some photography this fall so that we have it to use for next year. J. Kostuck mentions that SACA can work on that with the e-mail list they have. A. Young asks her to send pricing information when they hear back.
 - D. Howard asks if we can make sure to look at generic ads for last minute use when trying to push marketing out quickly.
 - i. A. Young states that is definitely something to keep in mind.
 - D. Howard motions to approve spending plan. S. Smith seconds. Motion passes with all in favor.
 - A. Young asks for approval on spending \$4,150 on the laser light show. E. Richards motions to approve. D. Howard seconds. Motion passes with all in favor.
 - b. Required Business and Consumer Survey
 - A. Young reminds of certain requirements that come with the funding.
 - i. E. Johnson mentions that the board should consider some advertising on streaming platforms that residents use.
 - ii. E. Richards has some access to specific contacts to get pricing on that.
 - iii. E. Johnson asks why it looks like the signs for downtown have been taken off the list. A. Young said they really plan to focus the funding on events and promotion this year, but that the signs can be re-considered in the next round of funding.
4. Discuss events/programs/committees
 - a. Events – Upcoming.
 - i. Spooky Saturday (10/28), Downtown Holiday Raffle (start November 24), FOT (11/25-12/3), Last Night (12/31) etc.
 - Spooky Saturday - A. Young says they have gotten some good responses from High Schoolers and Girl Scouts. The Witches Dance will be in Taylor Park from 12:30 to 1:30 performing. Nightmare in City Hall will still be going on. The costume contest will be located in the gazebo in Taylor Park.
 - 1. D.Howard mentions the costume contest categories have been updated. She will reach out to get a updated list of categories.
 - Downtown Holiday Raffle (start November 24). E. Richards leads that project, J. Hawkins helped last year and is happy to help again. She has the survey results from last year and will bring in those results to the next meeting to discuss. S. Smith reflects that restaurants are not conducive to the raffle and might want to consider leaving them out. E. Johnson asks how much the QR code was used last year. E. Richards states no one used it, but it was an option. E. Richards wondering if using only a QR code would push folks to use it that way. J. Kostuck mentions as a consumer, she always forgets to bring her card with her. S. Holcomb reflects that the event has been going on for a while and that most people know how that works. E. Johnson shares that in Vermont, promotions have to state, “No Purchase Necessary”, he is wondering if that is applicable to the Downtown Board. A. Young will double check on that. D.Howard mentions another holiday promotion around

a wrapped book in businesses with a letter and customers can collect the letters to spell out a word and submit their card when they've figured it out.

- FOT (11/25-12/3). A. Young planning continues, laser light show is booked.
- Last Night (12/31). A. Young stating fireworks will be held again.

ii. Eclipse 2024- We have a band! A. Young shares that they've hired the Ryan Sweeney Band

- Sweatshirt/hat sales
 - A. Young thought it would be fun to have some options for merchandise to sell at this event. All agree and would like A. Young to look further into this. A. Young mentions that SACA will also be doing something. A. Kostuck shares they plan to do a contest around a sticker.
 - D. Howard proposes using the immigration space for extra parking. She also asks about having covers made up for the lights in town to dim lighting as much as possible for the time of totality. E. Richards wonders why the Department of Transportation can't approve that since it is during the day and lights would be back on prior to nighttime.
 - E. Johnson shares that he received notification from a superintendent meeting that they plan to do a half day on April 8th.

b. Programs

i. Merchant Safety Meeting recap

1. A. Young asks those who went how they felt it went. D. Howard said she really appreciated the information. Lieutenant Wetherby is happy to have additional meetings as requested by people.

ii. Newcomer Meet & Greet – non-profit involvement.

1. A. Young mentions that something came up at a recent Downtown Retreat she went to. Someone else at the retreat shared something their town does involving folks new to the area and recently purchased homes, having a mixer style volunteer community event to invite new people to connect and how to get involved. S. Holcomb asks if the Chamber sends something out to new residence. D. Howard believes that new residents can request a packet, but the Chamber doesn't automatically send them.

c. Fundraising/Appeals

i. Fountain T-Shirt Update- New Color?

1. A. Young shares people don't love shirt color. E. Richards asks how many have been sold, A. Young believes 30 online, but is unsure what A. Cleare has sold at Rail City Market. E. Richards suggests that we look at the historical trend of sales and location of sales before making any decisions on changing it up.

d. Marketing - None

e. Arts

i. SACA Update- Nichole & Jennifer

1. N. Cunningham shares what she and J. Kostuck have been.
2. They have teamed up with Northwest Nightmares put on by Northwest Access TV. They reached out to 181 Tattoo to put together a coloring page for kids.
3. J. Kostuck shares that they are connecting directly with people to recruit and promote that SACA is expanding artists. They just got a soap maker on board.
4. N. Cunningham shares the Eclipse sticker idea. S. Holcomb mentions that A. Cleare has ordered some already for Rail City. N. Cunningham will connect with her on that.
5. J. Kostuck mentions they will be doing a table at Martha's Kitchen in November.

f. Social Media/Website

g. Organization

i. Welcome Debra Morton as a full board member and Nichole Cunningham as an alternate

h. Other

i. J. Hawkins shares that the first Young Professionals meeting will be taking place on 9/27 at Jeff's from 5-7 PM.

5. Other Business

1. Approval of Minutes.

1. The board will approve August minutes at the October meeting. A. Young accidentally sent out July minutes for approval, but those have already been approved.

2. Next meeting October 24, 2023, 6PM

3. Other - None.

6. Adjourn. Meeting adjourns at 7:10 pm.