

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, JUNE 28, 2022

Approved July 26, 2022

Board Members Present: Maureen Brown, Chair; Emily Richards, Vice Chair; Erik Johnson, Secretary/Treasurer; Valdemar Garibay; MaryPat Larrabee; Donna Howard (arrived at 6:04 PM); Ashley Cleare (arrived at 6:04 PM).

Board Members Absent: Jeremy Read; David Glidden; Keith Longmore; Jeremy Perez.

City Staff Present: Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning and Development; Arleigh Young, Planning and Development Assistant; Angela Bernard, Minute Taker.

Members of the Public Present: Josh Ellerbrock, *St. Albans Messenger* (via Zoom).

1. Call to Order.

M. Brown called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

- a. Attendance and introductions – none needed
- b. Additions or Deletions to Agenda - none

2. SAFF Financial Report.

C. Sawyer delivered the financial report. He reported that there is still some activity with the Downtown Dollars program, thanks in large part to graduation season and some weddings. T-Shirt sales are also still ongoing and going well. A. Cleare said her store is still selling plenty of shirts, averaging around one per day. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the different color options for the T-shirts and the possibility of limiting the number of colors next time around to give fewer choices, or else making all colors available in all sizes.

- a. Consider transfer of Kingman Fest donation and fiscal agency fee.

C. Sawyer said the Kingman Fest folks would like to transfer some of their proceeds to SAFF, in an amount greater than necessary, donating the balance to the downtown fund.

E. Richards made a motion to accept the transfer from Kingman Fest. Second by E. Johnson. Motion passed at 6:11 PM.

D. Howard asked for clarification on some of the line items on the financial report. C. Sawyer offered answers and clarification.

3. Discuss events/programs/committees.

- a. Marketing - A. Young said there are no updates or announcements for marketing. V. Garibay asked how many Facebook followers the City has now. A. Young said the number has

grown in recent months, and the level of engagement (likes and comments on social media posts) has increased and improved as well. E. Johnson asked about the possibility of creating a "welcome package" for new businesses and owners, to welcome them to the community and give them updates for events. V. Garibay said he likes the idea. D. Howard said they had planned on something similar in the past, but it fell by the wayside. E. Johnson said it would be nice to follow through with it.

There was discussion regarding advertising and expanding reach. C. Sawyer mentioned that the City budget this year might mean a cut in planned advertising, creating a gap in available advertising that the Board may want to fill out of their budget. D. Howard mentioned that she would like to see the Downtown advertised in the *Seven Days*. C. Sawyer said the *St. Albans Messenger* is one of the most visited sites in Franklin County. C. Sawyer said a good poll for business owners would be "what would you like to see in a welcome package?" and "where do you advertise?"

E. Johnson consulted the statistics regarding site visits and engagement, telling the Board that *Seven Days* ranks higher in visits than the *St. Albans Messenger*. D. Howard said the *St. Albans Messenger* has discussed adding a calendar of local events.

b. Events and Programs – A. Young presented an update on the Festival of Trees and announced that there is a new volunteer (Andrea Gagner-Murphy) who has stepped up to head the FOT Gala, with proceeds going to the Josh Pallotta Fund / Josh's House. Other events will also be running throughout the community during the Festival. Gagner-Murphy is looking at budgets and possibly changing up the program, with the possibility of adding a live band.

A. Cleare asked about a downtown sidewalk sales event. D. Howard said one store is offering a sidewalk sale the second weekend of July. A. Cleare said she would be happy to step in and help plan a downtown-wide event and asked D. Howard what's involved in the planning and advertising of the event. C. Sawyer said he would send her the files from previous events. A. Cleare asked what the rules are for setting stuff up on the sidewalk. C. Sawyer said there has to be a four-foot clearance on the sidewalk and the things for sale have to be items that are sold in the business. C. Sawyer said the most important rule is to check in with City Hall first to discuss anything they want to do on the sidewalks.

c. Fundraising/Appeals – E. Richards asked if there have been any suggestions or updates on future shirts. A. Young said no one responded or sent in suggestions yet. E. Richards said she likes the idea of featuring the Taylor Park fountain on a shirt. A. Cleare said using the fountain would be great, but with a new interpretation and trendier design. C. Sawyer said maybe they could ask different artists for their interpretation of the fountain. A. Young said if any Board members have a suggestion of artists to consider, to let her know. She suggested creating a roster of around five artists to ask and consider for the job. A. Young said she would like to see the roster kept to only Franklin County artists. A. Cleare said she doesn't think the current T-Shirt design has run its course yet, because the shirts are still selling regularly. E. Richards said they could consider doing a new shirt every two years, instead of just one. A. Cleare said she thinks there's a market to sell both at the same time. C. Sawyer said if it's possible to get new shirts in by Thanksgiving, then there could be a possibility to sell both at the same time. A. Young said she thinks it creates a need, an urgency, where people will want to buy

the shirt because they know it has an end date where it will no longer be available. M. Brown said she thinks they could make a sweatshirt in the winter as well. E. Johnson suggested selling something smaller in between T-shirt events, such as postcards. A. Cleare said she loves the idea of postcards and gets a lot of requests for postcards in her store. There was discussion regarding a good local printer to create the postcards.

M. Brown asked for a deadline to finalize a list of artists to consider for the new T-shirt design. A. Young said by Friday, July, 8, 2022.

i. T-Shirt Update – see above discussion regarding T-shirt sales updates.

d. Arts – D. Howard presented an update on local arts, including a "Make Music in the Park" event that's being planned and a new drama group that's formed locally.

e. Social Media / Website – E. Johnson asked the members of the Board to visit the website and offer feedback on navigation and content when they get a chance.

f. Organization – No updates.

g. Other – D. Howard said her store's "Where's Waldo?" events start the first weekend of July.

4. Other Business.

a. Approval of Minutes – **E. Richards made a motion to approve the minutes of May 24, 2022, as presented. Second by M. Larrabee. Minutes approved with D. Howard abstaining at 6:59 PM.**

b. Next meeting date and format – July 26, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

c. Other – M. Brown asked about T-shirt sales at the weekend Farmer's Market. A. Young gave her an update and asked for more volunteers to take dates working the sales table. She said it's been going well at the Farmer's Market and has so far been smooth with just a table and no tent. V. Garibay asked about scheduling and when he could pop in and if it could be a sporadic stopping in to help out. A. Young said yes he can stop in when he can find time in his schedule.

5. Public Comment.

V. Garibay shared that he is hosting two blood drives at City Hall in July, one on 7/7/ 22 from 9-2:30 PM and the second on 7/22/22, also 9-2:30 PM. He also shared that he is hosting a cigarette butt pickup event on July 20th in front of City Hall from 10-12, in conjunction with the Franklin Grand Isle Tobacco Coalition. V. Garibay also shared that the St. Albans Museum has added nine weeks of children's activities this summer (from 7/2/22 until 8/22/22; every Saturday at 10:30 AM) which will be posted and shared on social media soon.

6. Adjourn.

M. Brown adjourned the meeting at 7:09 PM.