

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, AUGUST 22, 2023

APPROVED

Members of the Board Present: Maureen Brown, Chair; Erik Johnson, Treasurer; Donna Howard; Ashley Cleare; Sharon Holcomb; MaryPat Larrabee; Valdemar Garibay; Debra Morton; Jackie Hawkins

Members of the Board Absent: Emily Richards, Jeremy Read, Jackie Hawkins, Shannon Smith, David Glidden, Jeremy Perez

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: Nicole & Jennifer

1. Begin Recording and Call to Order – **M. Brown called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM**
 - a. Attendance and introductions - Katie Haseltine, minute taker
 - b. Public Comment on items not on the agenda - None
 - c. Additions or Deletions to Agenda - None
2. SAFF Financial Report - A. Young
 - The Summer Concert is approaching the last two shows this week and next. The series is looking low, due to the payment from Ben & Jerry's being made out to the City instead of SAFF, once that is transferred back that line item should go right side up again.
 - The Chair Affair has a line item right now, that will go away once everything is settled out. Right now, with silent auction and cash donations, \$1,142 is what is in there.
 - S. Holcomb asks if any money will be kept in the SAFF account. A. Young said that was never decided but can be discussed as a group. E. Johnson asked about an established fee and A. Young confirms SAFF is getting the 10% fee.
3. State Designated Downtown Funding Update
 - a. Ideas? Contract Media Group?
 - A. Young explains that the state is going to be giving the designated downtown programs \$25,000, that comes with some caveats and things that will need to be done. A. Young waiting on guidance for the required pieces.
 - b. Required Business and Building Inventory - will have specific guidance on how that should be done, the state hasn't provided further information yet.
 - c. Required Survey - will also have specific guidance on how that should be done, the state hasn't provided further information yet.
 - d. Other ideas:
 - A. Young/C. Sawyer had thought about hiring a media group to help with updating our collateral for promotion and pictures that are outdated.
 - A. Cleare wonders if proposed Wayfinding signs could be a way to use that funding.

- S. Holcomb suggests signs from the alley way/parking garage as another funding use.
- D. Howard would like to see another area for posters and businesses to put up flyers. E. Johnson would also like to see that and thinks something that is in the park to display live music dates, farmers market, etc. would be great. A. Young shares concern of those boards getting flooded with flyers, citing Burlington boards as an example. E. Johnson mentions it could be a lockable display that would allow for control over what is posted inside.
- A. Young that the city would like the Downtown Board to consider sharing the burden of the cost for Fireworks and the Light Show.

4. Discuss events/programs/committees

a. Events - Upcoming

i. Tattoo Convention (10/14-10/15), Spooky Saturday (10/28), Downtown Holiday Raffle (start November 24), FOT (11/25-12/3), etc.

- Tattoo Convention - A. Young, 30 tattoo artists, think it will be a cool event.
- Spooky Saturday - A. Young kicked out to the merchants' groups. The photo contest will be in the park in the gazebo rather than in City Hall. Nightmare at City Hall will still happen. St. Paul's will still do Trunk or Treat. D. Morton shares that the girls scouts are happy to help with things so to keep that in mind.
- Holiday Raffle, nothing right now, but need to start thinking about that. Once E. Richards' son is off to school, she will have more time to focus and dial in on that.

ii. Chair Affair debrief.

- A. Young, went well, abundance of dessert, was able to donate a lot of it to Martha's Kitchen. Event raised \$6,121. There was a snafu with the GiveButter online fundraising site and the time zone was off so sales shut off early, but not a huge concern, this will be fixed for next year.
- E. Johnson was happy to see the social media engagement and pop-up posts of different chairs. Jennifer shared that engagement on one post hit 2,000 people in just over 2 days which was exciting to see.

iii. Eclipse 2024-the planning continues.

- A. Young, not a ton to report, but think we should start drilling down what we want to do. A. Young had an idea of a classic street festival with Fire Breathers, people on stilts, clowns. D. Howard asked if school will be in session, unsure right now what the decision is. E. Johnson wondering about small groups setting up snack stands (girl scouts, boy scouts). E. Johnson also asked about City Hall being open and available for vendors to set up and create some buzz.
- A. Cleare mentions that the park grounds could get pretty beaten up if it is wet. D. Howard explains straw can be put down to help. M. Larabee asks about what the plan is with stores along main street in the case of rain. D. Howard wonders about food trucks. A. Young says food trucks can be tricky depending on the weather.
- D. Howard shares someone asked her about closing off Church and Main Street. A. Young explained there have been some meetings with the sheriff, PD, etc. on those logistics, so it is being discussed.
- E. Johnson wonders if a brochure and online schedule could be posted so visitors know what is going on. M. Brown also mentions the opportunity to do something over the weekend leading up to the Eclipse.

- Programs
 - Merchant Safety meeting with Lt. Jason Wetherby Sept. 7th
 - A. Young making sure all saw that Lisa Marie had coordinated a Merchant Safety Meeting at 9am on September 7th. There is a link to register, reach out to A. Young if you are interested.
 - E. Johnson briefly mentions a company that has a system for security and is willing to do a demo. The company serves towns with 2 cameras up to 18 cameras.
- b. Fundraising/Appeals
 - i. Fountain T-Shirt Update
 - A. Young said to share with your friends and get them to buy a shirt. A. Cleare has started selling at her shop and doesn't have much to report on sales yet. E. Johnson asks if anyone has thought about doing an artist spotlight highlighting the woman who designed the t-shirt. A. Young will investigate.
- c. Marketing
 - i. East Coast Traveler
 - M. Brown explains this reporter works out of Montreal and typically writes articles to market and encourage Canadiens to visit New England. A. Young explains that the city plans to do a page on Downtown St. Albans and hopes it is successful in bringing some more visitors to town.
 - M. Brown asks E. Johnson about maps/pamphlets since the reporter was looking for some of those. E. Johnson will coordinate with M. Brown on that.
- d. Arts
 - N. Cunningham, sent out an introduction email and survey to start gauging excitement in the involvement of the arts. A. Young asked if the survey could be shared on the Downtown Facebook page. Jennifer confirms that is their plan and should be posted within the next couple days.
 - N. Cunningham mentions efforts towards making a more publicly accessible list of artists for the city to have as a resource.
 - J. Kostuck mentions that they have been active in working on partnerships with area towns. The St. Albans Sunday markets are working to highlight artists and the hope is to have a SACA (St. Albans Community Arts) table set-up each week to highlight the initiatives SACA is doing to bring that community back to life.
- e. Social Media/Website
 - E. Johnson gives a quick update, the events calendar is a little more robust than it was. There is a "click here" option that brings visitors to the Facebook page, and then a section on upcoming events that shares what is being discussed or in the works for future events.
- f. Organization
 - A. Young informed that Nicole has submitted her application to take over Jeremy Perez's seat on the Downtown Board. City council vote for approval at their next meeting.
 - D. Howard mentions that the city may want to consider having more St. Albans city guides printed for the influx of visitors expected during the Eclipse.
 - E. Johnson reflects that will be during the time that then current one is phasing out and the new guide for 2024 will be rolling out. The committee can continue to discuss this.
- g. Other - None.

5. Other Business

a. Approval of Minutes

- S. Holcomb motions to approve. E. Johnson seconds. Motion passes with all in favor.

b. Next Meeting September 26, 2023, 6PM

c. Other. None.

6. Adjourn

- Meeting adjourns at 6:58 PM.