

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 23, 2022

Approved September 27, 2022

Board Members Present: Maureen Brown, Chair; Erik Johnson, Secretary/Treasurer; David Glidden; Donna Howard; Keith Longmore (via Zoom); MaryPat Larrabee; Ashley Cleare (arrived at 6:08 PM).

Board Members Absent: Valdemar Garibay; Jeremy Read; Emily Richards, Vice Chair; Jeremy Perez.

City Staff Present: Chip Sawyer, Director Planning & Development; Angela Bernard, Minute Taker.

Members of the Public Present: LisaMarie Charlesworth (via Zoom).

1. Begin Recording and Call to Order.

M. Brown called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

- a. Attendance and introductions – none needed
- b. Public Comment on items not on the agenda - none
- c. Additions or Deletions to Agenda - none

2. SAFF Financial Report.

C. Sawyer presented the financial report for the month. Money is starting to come in for Festival of Trees. Downtown Dollars is slowly winding down. E. Johnson suggested selling \$10 Downtown Dollars cards at other stores. C. Sawyer suggested remaining focused on postcards and T-shirts for now. D. Howard asked if Downtown Dollars cards could be purchased at the City Clerk's office in addition to the online sales. C. Sawyer said yes, it's something that could be explored, and that in-person sales at City Hall have always been available to anyone who asked. M. Brown suggested selling them alongside T-shirts at events, such as the Farmer's Market.

3. Discuss events/programs/committees.

- a. WELCOME materials for new businesses.

C. Sawyer introduced ideas for a welcome packet for new businesses and prospective businesses. C. Sawyer put together an outline of ideas that came out of the last Merchants' Meeting, including creating a page on the downtown website, with a trifold handout to give new businesses, which directs people back to the webpage. The handout would include information with brief points of things to know, with a note to refer back to the website for more detailed information. C. Sawyer requested that Board members send suggestions.

b. Changing up the monthly merchant meetings.

C. Sawyer said the Merchants' Meetings group would like to change the format from a formal meeting to more of a check-in, or social, for collaborative discussions. Members prefer something informal and congenial. C. Sawyer said one idea is to do a mixer type of meeting every other month in a different place, with some in the mornings with the pastries, and some in the evenings. D. Howard suggested calling it the Downtown Business get together. L. Charlesworth made a suggestion via Zoom and said that if it's going to be less of a formal meeting, it should be packaged as such.

C. Sawyer said it could be both. One month as a formal meeting, business check-in, and then in alternating months it could be a more informal, social event.

i. Integrate a mixer-type element.

L. Charlesworth said the Chamber of Commerce is going to start reimagining their monthly mixers and suggested that they could coordinate one, with downtown businesses mixing with constituents. D. Howard said she would also like to have some events that are hyper-focused locally for downtown businesses, as opposed to a broad, Franklin County wide Chamber mixer event. C. Sawyer said the key to success would be having people put into the event what they want to get out of it. M. Brown said it might get downtown businesses involved that are not also in the Chamber. D. Howard said she likes the idea, but that she would also like to have some smaller, local events for downtown specifically.

C. Sawyer asked how the Board feels about using unencumbered funds for it. Would the Board be ok spending SAFF funds on food or location? M. Brown said she thinks they would have to. D. Glidden suggested that it could also be a good time to raise money. A. Cleare said she feels as if her business is supported but that it would be nice to have a community feeling for downtown businesses.

M. Larrabee suggested keeping the meetings in the mornings for consistency and focus. A. Cleare said the meeting aspect could cover important discussions and topics, with the get togethers having more of a social feel. M. Brown suggested the mixers / socials could also have a presentation/share element that recaps topics covered in the morning meetings.

C. Sawyer asked if the group prefers "mixer" or "social." Members declared a preference for the word social. Chamber events would still be Mixers, joint events would be called Socials.

C. Sawyer asked what the morning meetings should be called. There was discussion around calling it "updates," "coffee chats," etc. Meetings will now be designated "Downtown Business Update." E. Johnson suggested Board members get out and talk to businesses to tell them what's going on with local updates as well.

c. Events and Programs.

i. Raid event, Spooky Saturday, FOT, Kingman Fest, Last Night, etc.

C. Sawyer said there hasn't been any updates regarding a possible Raid commemoration event this fall.

C. Sawyer said the times for Spooky Saturday will be the same as last year, they still need to find out which businesses are participating, and that downtown businesses need to be reminded to get out and buy candy. A. Cleare suggested a handout to give to businesses that has reminders for the event, such as "businesses need to purchase their own candy." C. Sawyer said they need to find people to carve pumpkins for downtown storefronts as well.

C. Sawyer reminded the group that there's a big need for volunteers to help pick up the City Hall haunted house after the event. The Museum will participate in trick or treating but won't be doing their own haunted house.

There was some discussion on Festival of Trees updates and whether to eliminate the fireworks show in favor of a laser light show. Different groups are spearheading different aspects of the event. E. Johnson presented an update on the Gala and Auction.

C. Sawyer said the next Kingman Festival will be May 13th, 2023.

E. Johnson presented an update on Last Night. Comments were turned off for the website because of spam messages. C. Sawyer suggested waiting to make any decisions on what the event would look like until New Year's gets a little closer.

d. Fundraising.

i. T-Shirt and postcard updates.

C. Sawyer said Arleigh Young has a list of artists that have expressed interest in sending in fountain T-shirt ideas for the next round of shirt sales and she has asked the artists for three concepts each.

A. Cleare said stickers are a big hit at her store lately. There was some discussion revolving around creating stickers that are St. Albans specific, such as the downtown skyline or fountain. C. Sawyer asked E. Johnson to look into producing stickers.

D. Howard made a motion that if an acceptable design for a sticker and a postcard is pushed forward, then the board supports paying for it. Second by D. Glidden. Motion passed at 7:02 PM.

e. Downtown business wayfinding idea.

C. Sawyer said local businesses have expressed support for having additional signage added to downtown areas directing people of which way to go to find what they're looking for (such as "ATM," "Takeout Japanese Fare," "Jewelry Store," etc.). M. Brown asked if the signs would be City-funded or funded by SAFF. C. Sawyer said there is some discussion regarding the two groups splitting the cost. D. Glidden said there is concern about creating clutter and that would have to be balanced. D.

Howard said there is a definite need for some kind of sign directing people where to go when they walk out of Hampton Lane and the parking garage. C. Sawyer suggested wayfinding signs around the parking garage, on Kingman Street, and on Lake Street. M. Brown suggested getting a subcommittee together from the Downtown Business Update group to discuss the wayfinding signage program.

f. Marketing.

No updates.

g. Arts.

No updates.

h. Organization.

C. Sawyer said there are some Board members whose terms are expiring and that he will be contacting via email.

i. Other.

D. Howard said her business was tagged with a sticker last week, as well as a few other locations around Center Street. A. Cleare said there has been some graffiti and damage in the alley behind her business as well. C. Sawyer suggested people send him an email that he can then forward to the Police Department.

4. Other Business.

a. Approval of Minutes.

E. Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of July 2022, as presented. Second by A. Cleare. Minutes approved at 7:17 PM.

b. Next meeting date and format – September 27, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

c. Other - none

5. Adjourn.

M. Brown adjourned the meeting at 7:18 PM.