

**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, FEBRUARY 27TH, 2024**

***DRAFT***

**Members of the Board Present:** IN PERSON: Maureen Brown, Chair; Erik Johnson, Sec/Treasurer; Jeremy Read; Shannon Smith; Debra Morton; K.F. Samandari; Donna Howard Alternate VIA ZOOM: Emily Richards, Vice-Chair; Lauren Bode.

**Members of the Board Absent:** Ashley Cleare; Jackie Hawkins; Nichole Cunningham; Lauren Bode; Sharon Holcomb; Valdemar Garibay; Jennifer Kostuck, Alternate

**Members of the SACA Committee Present:** None

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

**Members of the Public Present:** Diane Read VIA ZOOM: Marlena Valenta

1. Begin Recording and Call to Order. E. Richards calls meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
  - a. Attendance and introductions.
  - b. Public Comment on items not on the agenda - None
  - c. Additions or Deletions to Agenda. - None
2. Walk/Bike St. Albans & Year of the Bike Presentation: Marlena Valenta
  - a. M. Valenta here to spread awareness and information about Walk/Bike St. Albans. They've been piloting a program for kids that can record their rides and enter in to win a gift card to Bootlegger Bikes. They will be working with BFA students in the environmental science class to do a bike parking assessment in St. Albans. Many efforts around getting younger people out and trying new things, new routes, and exploring the area.
  - b. A few events/ideas in the works: Bike Swap, Bike Maintenance Camp for Teens
  - c. A. Young has been a part of recent discussions and meetings about the walkability and bikability of the city. M. Brown asks if there are any marketing materials that Walk/Bike St. Albans has put out. M. Valenta shares that she doesn't believe they have but appreciates the idea and will look into that.
3. SAFF Financial Report
  - a. A. Young shares it was discovered that the 7 Days site the board used for ticket sales had not paid out 2 years of sales. So, about \$8,000 has been deposited for FOT. S. Smith believes that was meant to go to a charity. E. Johnson shares that it was, but there are various ticket sales lumped into that number, so some back end work needs to be done to break out what sales were for which event.
  - b. S. Smith asks if we are still waiting on sponsors for the Summer Concert Series. A. Young shares that is an agenda item later on. S. Smith asks if we have ever considered putting out a donation box in the park. A. Young and M. Brown thinks that is a great idea and will look into it.
  - c. D. Howard joins at 6:14 PM.
4. Discuss events/programs/committees
  - a. Events
    - i. Town Meeting, Maple Festival, Kingman Fest, etc.
      1. Town Meeting
        1. A. Young shares the plan is to hand out eclipse glasses on Town Meeting Day. She also shares that they received 5,000 pairs from the state so that helps with supply.
      2. Maple Festival

1. A. Young continues to push window display, urging for business to try and finish prior to the eclipse to really showcase the
2. D. Howard reminds of the Book Fair in St. Albans this weekend.
3. Kingman Fest
  1. S. Smith shares there are some new vendors this year, otherwise no other major changes. The lineup for music should be announced soon.
- ii. ECLIPSE Planning Update
  1. A. Young shares the vendors who will be joining: 14th Star, Mama Llama, Branon's Maple, Green Mountain Kettle Corn, Chelsea Approved (vegan/gluten free items), Nimble Arts (busker), Greenfeet Gardening, etc.
  2. A. Young shares that Greenfeet Gardening reached out about streetscape during the event. She offered to do some themed streetscaping with sun and moon balls hanging from the planter hooks on the lightposts.
  3. A. Young and C. Sawyer have discussed using the funds from the Vibrancy Grant to fund some of the Eclipse cost since the grant is on a tight timeline in terms of spending down. D. Morton motions to approve utilizing funds from the Vibrancy Grant for the Eclipse event. E. Johnson seconds. S. Smith asks what the cost is. A. Young shares it is estimated at \$6,775. S. Smith asks how much will remain after that. A. Young states it would leave about \$11,000. E. Richards asks if that means an amendment for the allocation to the grant needs to happen. A. Young confirms there would need to be some change, but most of that is already accounted for, so it wouldn't be a huge lift. Motion passes with all in favor.
  4. E. Richards asks if there is a plan to sell the items in the park. E. Johnson is adding it to the volunteer sheet.
  5. E. Richards asks if the city is doing anything to encourage businesses to open during the Eclipse, she heard that some aren't thinking about opening because it isn't really worth it for them during Maple Fest and other events that go on. M. Brown believes this event is different from Maple Fest in that the streets aren't closed and there is a known influx of visitors coming. S. Smith mentions that online, Google will still show as closed for many of those businesses. A. Young has been trying to compile a list and posting that online so the business that are open are posted somewhere. D. Howard suggests putting large posters up in the vacant storefronts to advertise who will be open.
  6. A. Young shares Mayor Tim Smith will do some opening remarks at the event.
- iii. Business Social wrap up - The Drake February 5th
  1. A. Young thought it went really well. D. Howard, E. Johnson, M. Brown all agreed.
- iv. The Vermont Railroad Show and Rotary Home Show sign ups
  1. E. Johnson discusses the need for more volunteers. Board members discuss and fill in some time slots needed.
  2. E. Johnson shares an image of the City's table from the Home Show last year and asks if anyone has any suggestions on layout. D. Howard mentions a poster. E. Johnson confirms they discussed that earlier and plan to have a poster and QR code to get people buying shirts. D. Howard also wonders about a better table cover. A. Young knows the recreation department has one and will look into getting one for the city.
  3. E. Johnson shares that the rotary has graciously comped the price of tabling at the Home Show in exchange for banners to go up in the city.
- v. Summer Concert Series
  1. A. Young shares that
  2. A. Young states that New England Federal Credit Union has come back as the banner sponsor. Ben & Jerry's has also agreed to come back as the next step down sponsor. Those 2 sponsorships cover all the bands that are lined up for the series and A. Young is hopeful that it will cover the cost of advertising as well./

3. Another component of that is that Michael Bradshaw, from Great Eastern Radio (radio stations in the area: Frank, Froggie, Penguin), reached out about an in-kind donation of free advertising of them on the Summer Concert Series in exchange for ongoing 60 second advertising throughout the summer. A. Young is seeking input from the board on their thoughts of this in kind donation versus a monetary donation.
  4. M. Brown asks if there is possibility of advertising other events. A. Young isn't sure but will asks Michael. J. Read thinks it is a great idea since it is helping to bring more visitors to the downtown area.
  5. E. Johnson motions to approve the in kind donation from Great Eastern Radio. S. Smith seconds. Motion passes with all in favor.
  6. S. Smith reminds the board of the Chair Affair and that last year it was discussed to change it up and do a corn hole set instead. D. Morton asks for clarification. S. Smith shares that the chair designs were not as well received last year as the year prior and that it had been proposed to design corn hole boards instead. The thought was that people would be more apt to engage if there was a buy-in for them.
  7. E. Johnson suggests getting a volunteer list together for the Sunday Vendors in Taylor Park so the Downtown Board is represented at these events.
- b. Programs - None
- i. Business/Building Inventory Committee Update - no update
- c. Fundraising/Appeals
- i. Eclipse Sweatshirt and sticker
    1. Approve \$200 for Blake Getchell's design
      1. A. Young shares that Blake Getchell requested \$200 for the use of her imagery. D. Howard motions to approve the \$200 for the Black Getchell sticker design. E. Johnson seconds. 7:08 PM. Motion passes with all in favor.
    2. Sweatshirt design
      1. A. Young shares the since the last meeting, changes to the design have been made. A. Young shares the new design, with help from Vermont Clothing Company. There will be a long sleeve shirt, t-shirt, and sweatshirt.
      2. D. Howard asks what the rules may be around sharing the design if she wanted to use it. A. Young is curious what she is interested in doing. D. Howard wanted to do up bags. A. Young will check with Matt about bags and get back to her. E. Johnson asks if a test print could be done for the Home Show/Railroad show just so there is physical example and could help with sales. A. Young will check into that.
      3. D. Howard mentions custom postage that she recently learned about. The postage is free to design, someone just has to take the time to design something. A. Young will look into. All on the board are curious what this could be used for in the future and are excited about.
- d. Marketing - None
- i. Business/Consumer Committee Update
    1. A. Young shares the surveys the committee came up with and that C. Sawyer found good success with the recent City survey format, so the committee has decided to stick with that design.
    2. The Business Survey highlights questions seeking information on longevity of business downtown, operating hours and expansion, workforce issues, media/advertising.
    3. The Consumer Survey highlights questions seeking information on reasons for visiting, employment inquiries, demand of operating hours, and channels of advertising, etc.
  - ii. Advertising Committee Update
    1. A. Young shares the surveys speak to the Advertising Committee update since the results of the surveys will direct them on how and where to advertise for the downtown.
  - iii. Channel 3 Visit

1. A. Young shares that Channel 3 stopped by with a sponsorship opportunity for the Eclipse. For \$4,950, WCAX has put together a proposal for a select few areas to advertise. A. Young is curious what the board thinks. The consensus from the board is that the eclipse is advertising itself and that its not really necessary to spend the \$4,950.
- e. Arts
    - i. SACA Update- Nichole & Jennifer absent.
    - ii. Animating Infrastructure Grant - Approve letter of support signature MB
      1. A. Young speaks on Nichole and Jennifer's absence sharing that this grant is meant to \_\_\_\_ with getting art out into public environments. The first part of the grant (\$5,000) is the proposal/pitch of the overall idea. Once approved, work can begin on preparing an area. The second part of the grant involves hiring an artist to do the artwork. E. Richards motions to approve M. Brown signing a letter of support to apply for this grant. S. Smith seconds. Motion passes with all in favor.
  - f. Social Media/Website
    - i. Website RFQ
      1. A. Young shares there is no RFQ yet.
  - g. Organization- None
    - i. Election of Officers for 2024
    - ii. A. Young asks if M. Brown would like to remain board chair and if any other members are interested in stepping up. S. Smith asks what the roles are. E. Johnson, M. Brown, and A. Young give a general summary of the board roles. M. Brown agrees to remain board chair. S. Smith motions to approve M. Brown as chair. E. Johnson seconds. Motion passes with all in favor.
    - iii. A. Young asks if E. Richards would like to remain board vice chair and if any other members are interested in stepping up. E. Richards will continue if no one else is interested. D. Howard motions to approve E. Richards as vice chair. D. Howard motions to approve E. Richards as vice-chair. D. Morton seconds. Motion passes with all in favor.
    - iv. A. Young discusses the unique situation of secretary/treasurer being held by E. Johnson and his candidacy for City Council. Pending the results from Town Meeting Day, E. Johnson may be stepping down from the Downtown board and his position as he will be accepting a board seat for City Council. D. Howard motions to approve E. Johnson as secretary/treasurer. M. Brown seconds. Motion passes with all in favor. E. Johnson moves to table until the next meeting.
  - h. Other
    - i. None.
5. Other Business
    - a. Approval of Minutes 1/23/2024
      - i. E. Richards motions to approve minutes. D. Howard seconds. Motion passes with all in favor. M. Brown abstains since she was absent.
    - b. Next meeting March 26, 2024, 6 PM
    - c. Other
      - i. S. Smith asks who is in charge of the Eclipse event. A. Young shares it is mainly her. S. Smith and D. Howard concerned about safety, garbage, etc. A. Young shares that the SAPD and Public Works will be on-site and taking care of most of those items.
      - ii. E. Johnson shares that a recurring sponsor sheet has been built to track sponsorship over the year.
      - iii. E. Johnson shares his hopes of being elected to City Council, thanks the board for all their support over the years, and looks forward to helping out with Downtown events in the future.
  6. Adjourn. M. Brown adjourns the meeting at 7:33 PM.