

Meeting Minutes
Meeting of the St. Albans City Downtown Board
& Board of Directors of St. Albans for the Future
6:00 PM Tuesday, May 25, 2021
Via Remote Connection

Approved June 22, 2021

Board Members Present: Maureen Brown, Chair; Emily Richards, Vice-Chair; Ashley Cleare; Elizabeth Reed; David Glidden; Donna Howard;

Board Members Absent: Ben Letourneau; Jeremy Read; Rachael Sink; Erik Johnson, Secretary Treasurer; Keith Longmore; Valdemar Garibay

Public Present: Matt Haefele and Ashley Sandy with LONDONmiddlebury

Staff Members Present – Wendy Coy, Minute Taker; Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning & Development; Marty Manahan, Director of Operations & Business Development

1. **Call to Order – Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.**
 - a) **Attendance and introductions** – None
 - b) **Additions or Deletions to the Agenda** – None

2. **Social Media Update** – LONDONmiddlebury reviewed the social media report. Ms. Sandy reviewed specific details in the report. Reach vs. engagement was discussed with the Board. Member Glidden asked if LONDONmiddlebury had contacted the St. Albans Museum for old photos. Historical Downtown photo are getting a lot of likes and comments. Instagram continues to grow. They would still like more original content. Mr. Sawyer sent a link to the merchants. They received responses from four merchants, and they are getting good responses.

LONDONmiddlebury wanted to discuss the collaborative approach and get feedback from the Board on how it is going. LONDONmiddlebury is working on a manual for how the social media is handled throughout the month. London / Middlebury is offering workshops to the Board on how the social media is managed for the Downtown Board – two one-hour sessions was more manageable for Board members than one two hour.

The contract with LONDONmiddlebury ends at the end of June. The Board discussed finances and what the future of social media should be. The Board is going to send an appeal to businesses for money to contribute to the expense of having a Social Media consultant. The Board discussed with LONDONmiddlebury on how to get businesses to realize the advantage of having a Social media consultant; what data can be provided to prove ROI; what comes with the \$100 asked for in the appeal. Everyone talked about different ideas to use on social media.

3. **SAFF Financial Report** – Mr. Sawyer reviewed the Financial Report. The Unencumbered and Merchants line will be depleted soon. If the City can match what comes in the SAFF side the

social media contract can be maintained. The City is subsidizing the Downtown Dollars program. Member Howard suggested using some of the dollars for the expenses.

- a) **Discuss annual appeal to businesses** - Mr. Manahan suggested that the Board / City ask the community for donations; maybe get a sponsor for social media. Many Board members felt that the appeal should not just be to the businesses it should be to the whole community. Member Howard commented that people like to donate for concrete projects such as flowers, lights, and Halloween Haunted Park.

4. Discuss events/programs/committees –

- a) **Events and Programs** – Calcutta in the Park / Block party – The Board discussed many different ideas.
- b) **Arts** – The Committee is planning Make Music Day. They are going to use \$1200 from the Arts fund to buy drums due to not being able to borrow them from the school. There is a band booked to perform in front of City Hall. FoT is starting to meet and put together plans.
- c) **Social Media / Website** – See above
- d) **Projects: Kingman Street, Center Street, Stebbins Street, Etc.** – Kingman is a little behind schedule, but it is coming along.
- e) **Other** – Member Howard asked about doing lights in the auditorium. Mr. Sawyer stated that he was not sure there is funds in the City budget or the time this year.

5. Other Business

- a) **Approval of April 27, 2021 Meeting Minutes** – Member Howard made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Vice-Chair Richards seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.
- b) **Next Meeting Date and format – June 22, 2021:** It will be the same time. The Board can attend in person and there will be a Zoom option.

6. Public Comment – None

Member Glidden made a motion to adjourn. Member Howard seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.