

Meeting Minutes
Meeting of the St. Albans City Downtown Board
& Board of Directors of St. Albans for the Future
6:00 PM Tuesday October 16, 2018
St. Albans City Hall, 100 No. Main Street

Approved December 18, 2018

Board Members Present: Katy Collin, Chair; Erik Johnson, Vice-Chair; Maureen Brown; Sharon Holcomb; Donna Howard; Elizabeth Reed; John Kelley; Mike Blouin; Rachel Sink; Amanda Liese

Board Members Absent: Emily Richard; Laz Scangas;

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

- 1) **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order at 6:02 pm
 - a) **Additions or Deletions to the Agenda** - None

- 2) **SAFF Financial Report** - Mr. Sawyer reviewed the financial report. The unencumbered fund is still low and will continue to decrease. The t-shirts and mugs are for sale at the hotel.
 - a) **Discuss project demands on unencumbered fund and any motions, as necessary** – See below.
 - b) **Continue fundraising discussion** - Silas, at 84 Main, made a decision not to do pull tabs. Mr. Manahan is still checking with 14th star brewery and Ryan's. Member Liese suggested a 50/50 raffle during the holidays. Member Holcomb stated that the merchants couldn't do the holiday raffle and a 50/50 raffle. It would be too much. Member Howard suggested that they have one location, on small business Saturday, selling 50/50 raffle tickets. Vice-Chair Johnson suggested a downtown merchant's website to sell St. Albans merchandise. Member Holcomb stated that it would take sales away from the merchants. Mr. Sawyer stated that it would be good to get the St. Albans logo out there. Vice-Chair Johnson suggested that the website sell items that the merchants don't carry. Mr. Sawyer stated that the milk cans are going back into Downtown as well as some of the money from the Mayor's photo contest. Chair Collin stated that there would hopefully be calendars of the photos. Member Sink suggested a Downtown photo contest. Mr. Sawyer stated that he wasn't sure the City could support two photo contests a year. He thought it might be good to have a photo contest of quality Downtown photographs.

- 3) **Around Our Town online calendar** –
 - a) **Discuss next steps** – Mr. Sawyer reviewed his email sent to the Board. The only reason to do Around Our Town instead of relying on the Chamber of Commerce or the St. Albans City calendar is that the events can be entered by the people hosting the event. If the events aren't entered by the people hosting the events, the City has to rely on staff to enter events and that is not working. Things get missed and it takes time to get all the details. The coordination with the Chamber of Commerce needs to be discussed as well. He stated that if the Board deploys the Around Our Town calendar for the City, it will get other communities on board as they can see what the Around Our Town calendar can do for them. Vice-Chair Johnson reviewed the Around Our Time proposed budget. Member Howard stated that she understood it as the fixed costs would be split evenly and the variable costs would be based on the population of the

town. Vice-Chair Johnson confirmed that that was the idea. Mr. Sawyer asked if it would be a cost of \$3200 to launch the calendar. Vice-Chair Johnson stated that it would be the total cost. Member Howard stated that the self-entry idea would be a definite selling point. Chair Collin stated that she thought it would too. She thought that more people needed to be involved. Member Liese stated that she wasn't fond of the idea that anybody could post anything under the St. Albans name. Mr. Sawyer stated that he didn't think that it would be an issue. Member Blouin asked how many posts were anticipated. Mr. Sawyer stated that it averaged out to two posts a day though most of them were posted on Fridays and Saturdays. Member Sink asked if anybody asked Twiggs or other businesses if they were interested in adding things to the calendar if they already have a successful social media page. Chair Collin stated that there needed to be a point person to go out and talk to the businesses and sell the concept. Member Liese stated that she saw this as a calendar for the odd things that don't necessarily have their own media page. She was also concerned about having the house parties and yard sales just randomly posting things. Vice-Chair Johnson stated that they had categories on the main webpage so that people could find the specific events. Mr. Sawyer stated that this is chicken and egg scenario. No one wants to start the calendar if no one is going to use it but no one will use it if it isn't posted. He proposed having a staff member put all of the holiday events in the Downtown calendar so people have something to go to and the Board could get an idea of the interest. They could continue to explore the feasibility of the Around Our Town calendar and not spend the money now. Mr. Sawyer asked if there would be any way to allow people to access the Downtown calendar. Vice-Chair Johnson stated that there was a front end submission form that could be used. Mr. Sawyer stated that he should buy it and invoice the Board.

4) Project Updates –

- a) **Creative Economy Liaison** – Ms. Gamache could not attend the meeting. The survey for the co-working space has gone out.
- b) **2018 events, including FoT, Milk Cans, Last Night** - FOT is starting to receive money. Venues are set. Banners ordered. Posters are being printed. Last Night has a kick-off event for the bartender competition on November 1st. They are competing to create a signature drink for Last Night. Buttons have been ordered. They have table toppers to go on tables in the restaurants Downtown. Posters are in production. Lastnightvt.com is the website if people want to visit the site. Milk cans are out. There are eleven possibly twelve. The posters are out. It will be November 3rd in City Hall from 7:00 – 9:00. The Mayor's photos will be a live auction and the milk cans will be a silent auction. Halloween trick or treating Downtown is set. It will be Saturday October 27 from 12:00 – 1:00. Member Blouin asked if the high school students still painted windows. Member Liese stated that he should talk to Dee at the high school and she might be open to it.
- c) **City Hall Auditorium Improvements** – The committee is meeting a week from tomorrow. They are going to discuss how they want to get bids. It will be at 5:00 in the auditorium.
- d) **Social Media** – Member Sink reviewed the Q3 FB analytics. The reach continues to climb from quarter to quarter. The items of the history of St. Albans get the most traffic. Chair Collin stated that there could be a Do you Remember or Remember when...items on Facebook. Blogging is being done on a volunteer basis. A blog did go out about the co-working space and there was a

jump in traffic. She suggested that Downtown business buy blog spots. Chair Collin asked about the cost. The general going rate for a blog spot is \$125.00. It can go up depending on the amount of content. The information could be gotten in a 30 minute interview with the business owner. There could be a standard form that a person would take with them for the interview and then the form could be used by Vice-Chair Johnson and Member Sink to write the blog posts if the interviewer didn't feel comfortable writing the blog post. Member Reed stated that she would be interested in doing the interviews. Chair Collin stated that her business would be interested in being interview.

- e) **Kingman Street project** – There is a meeting on October 24th.
- f) **Downtown Wi-Fi** – No action
- g) **Storefront Accessibility Survey** – No action

5) Committee Reports –

- a) **Community Arts** – The art walk was done. They are talking about a date for next year. They are going to coordinate with the Recreation department to add a snow sculpting contest. They are going to do some things in the new year. Member Sink asked how the art walk went. Member Howard stated that two dozen committed to it but only a dozen showed up. Member Holcomb stated that the sidewalk sale did not go well. There weren't any customers. Member Howard stated that they discussed doing an art walk during open studio weekend as some artists didn't want to open their studios but did want to showcase their art. There was a discussion about different bands for the gala for the FOT.
- b) **Merchants / Promotions** – No action
- c) **Organization** –
 - i) Board Appointments – Mike, Katy, Sharon and Emily's terms are up.

6) Other Business

- a) **Approval of Minutes** – **Member Holcomb made a motion to accept the minutes of September 18, 2018 with corrections to Chair Collin's name. Member Sink seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.**
- b) **Other** – Mr. Sawyer asked about the next meeting date of November 20th. He questioned whether the Board needed to meet. December 18th is the date of the December meeting. **The Board decided not to meet in November but they would meet in December on the 18th.**

7) Public Comment – None

- 8) Adjourn** – **Member Holcomb made a motion to adjourn. Chair Collin seconded the motion. It passed unanimously at 8:32.**