



# CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE

## Church Street Marketplace District Commission Meeting Minutes Wednesday, January 18, 2023

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Commissioners: Mark Bouchett, Erik Monsen (zoom), Becky Holt, Linda Magoon, Chris Haessly, Sarah Beal, Buddy Singh

Absent: Sam Tolstoj, Cara Tobin

Staff: Kara Alnasrawi – Executive Director, Julia Chalmers – Marketing Coordinator, Stephanie Shohet – Administrative Assistant, Jed Sass - CSM coordinator, Andrew Bacher - Project and Event Coordinator

Members of the public:

None

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion: Chris. Second: Becky. Unanimous approval.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion: Buddy. Second: Linda. Unanimous approval.

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

None

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

- Buddy shares that we are 55% through the fiscal year, and we are doing better than expected.
- Maintenance expenses are higher than expected, but Kara explains that this is due to overtime from storm cleanup as well as the shift differential as a result of unionization.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- Kara updates that the Marketplace Garage construction which will continue through spring.
- She explains that the holidays went well, and that a survey has been sent out to Marketplace merchants. Discussion follows about the lack of attendance at merchant meetings.
- Kara tells of speaking about retail theft at the mayor's press conference on safety & security. This leads to discussion about Vermont's retail theft laws, gun laws, the status of the pod community, and the need for mental health assistance.
- Kara introduces Andrew, the new Project & Event Coordinator.
- Kara describes plans for the ice sculpture event in March. This leads to discussion about ideas for a future "Winterfest" to draw people to the Marketplace. Ideas include: a chili

contest, a collaborative sale, lunch deals during Penguin Plunge weekend, window murals, bringing back Mardi Gras and restaurant week.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

- Chairman Bouchett explains that although December sales were good at his business, traffic was down.
- Theft remains a huge problem for merchants, and that the laws need to be revised
- Discussion follows about what merchants are doing to try to deal with theft, the fact that even the police are hesitant to do much because of the consequences to offenders, and the fear that merchants will decide to move out of downtown.
- Mark tells of a meeting he attended with Champlain Housing Trust about the pod community. He was disappointed that potential problems (such as consequences of misbehavior and overflow) were not addressed.
- Becky clarifies that rules of good behavior will deter those who don't want to follow the rules from living there in the first place.
- Mark will email merchants to remind them of merchant and commission meetings.

### **HOLIDAY WRAP-UP PRESENTATION**

#### **- STAFF PRESENTATION**

#### **- DISCUSSION ONLY**

- Julia shares her 2022 holiday season recap.
- Kara mentions that our new 9' menorah was well-received.
- Sarah requests that we prioritize video advertising in 2023.
- Discussion follows about how we are planning to include more minority communities with our revolving loan fund and plans for acknowledging Vietnamese New Year in 2024.

### **CART VENDOR PROGRAM CHANGES**

#### **- STAFF PRESENTATION WITH LICENSING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **- VOTE NEEDED**

- Jed shares a presentation detailing the 2022 cart vendor program and proposed changes for 2023.
- **Proposal 1:** include a third nonprofit vendor spot. Motion to approve: Sarah.
- Discussion ensues about protocol for voting during public meetings, and then vote continues. Second: Buddy. Unanimous approval.
- **Proposal 2:** increase vendor fee on top block from \$750 to \$1200. Motion to approve this increase: Linda. Second: Becky. Mark, Buddy, and Sarah approve. Chris is opposed.
- **Proposal 3:** increase allowed cart size from 32 square feet to 50. Motion to approve this increase: Sarah. Second: Becky. Mark, Buddy, and Linda approve. Chris abstains.
- **Proposal 4:** allow cart vendors to share a spot (one during the day, another at night). Motion to allow: Sarah. Second: Linda. Chris abstains. All others approve.

### **BUDGET**

#### **- DISCUSSION ONLY**

- Kara points out that budget season is starting, and she will be coming to commission with proposals of possible changes to Marketplace fees.

### **MEETING IS ADJOURNED**