



Church Street Marketplace Commission Meeting Minutes  
March 18, 2015

Commissioners present: Jeff Nick, Celia Daly, Buddy Singh, Eli Lesser-Goldsmith, Lara Allen. CSM Staff present: Ron Redmond, Becky Cassidy, Jenny Morse, Eric Stadlin. Guests: Alice Asterita (by phone), Mark Kalloz (The North Face), John Blossange (Parks Commission), Gregg Meyer (City Attorney)

- I. COME TO ORDER
- II. AGENDA
- III. MINUTES
- IV. PUBLIC FORUM
- V. Chair's Reports
  - a. FY 15 projection and update on CSM finances – Alice Astarita, CPA via telephone
    - i. Alice discussed tools now available to CSM staff for A/R and Aging reports and will return once each quarter to meet with CSMC.
    - ii. Staff to formalize with CSMC its standards for non-payment/outstanding A/R by cart vendors, sidewalk cafes and banner placements. Do we want to budget a % of our budget for uncollected revenues? Surplus determined smaller after audit in FY 14
    - iii. Progress on Reducing Negative Fund Balance

Negative Fund Balance for FY 14 budget	-\$204,000
<u>PLUS FY 13 deficit after "true up"</u>	<u>-\$ 32,000</u>
Current Negative Fund Balance	-\$236,000
<b>Less FY 14 Surplus</b>	<b>+ \$88,000</b>
FY 15 Projected Fund Balance	-\$148,000
<b>Less FY 15 Projected Surplus</b>	<b>+ \$75,000</b>
Projected balance, end of FY 15	-\$73,000

*Report to Church Street Marketplace Commissioners  
Prepared by Alice Astarita, March 9, 2015*

*Collection We now have access to reports that show outstanding balances owed by each customer. Ron now has a report that he can run*

monthly and, after reviewing with Jeff Harwood, can make calls or visits to speed up or ensure collection. Revenue in the Budget to Actual reports present billed revenue regardless of whether or not it was collected. This way CSM does not have to rely on City employees for collection, but can take an active role.

As of February 28, 2015, \$ 49,120 was outstanding, of which approximately \$16,000 was from fiscal year 2014. Between now and year end, Ron has a chance to work with Jeff Harwood to reduce the outstanding balance and determine whether we need to incur a bad debt expense. According to Rich Goodwin, 99% of receivables are collectable city-wide due to liens or the right to terminate services. Therefore, we believe that bad debt expense, if any, would not be significant.

**Billing** We also now have access to billing reports which present exactly which customers were billed and when. This report is run by billing type (i.e., cart vendors, CAF, sidewalk cafes, advertising, etc...). This will make it easier to monitor billing and to explain budget to actual variances.

**Future projections** Rich Goodwin offered to create a report which presents year to date revenues and expenses broken down by month. This should provide useful information as Ron prepares projections for the current year, as well as future budgets.

**Fund Balance (Deficit)** The Balance Sheet in New World accurately presents the Fund Deficit at June 30, 2014 as (\$ 147,110). After audit and fiscal year 2015 is closed, that Fund Deficit will be reduced by the fiscal year 2015 surplus. In fiscal year 2014, adjustments were made after the preliminary June 30, 2014 report was presented to the Commissioners. We were unable to identify those specific adjustments, but the yearend adjustments whether made by City Accountants or Auditors) are likely to include the following:

- Additional accounts payable invoices that come in late
- Adjustments to accrual payroll (nothing you can do about that, but should not be significant)
- Adjustments to deferred revenue (we have now tried to match most of the billing dates with the correct fiscal year to minimize these adjustments in the future)
- Possible bad debt expense

- b. Preliminary review of FY 16 DRAFT operating budget. First priority is to pay down negative fund balance. Remaining surplus will be used for marketing in FY 16.
- c. Economic Development Infrastructure Fund proposal – John Blossange, Parks Commission
  - i. Proposes funding mechanism for bike path and City Hall Park via a 1% increase in the gross receipts (rooms & meals) tax – increasing it from 2 to 3%

- ii. CSM Commission expressed reservations with the additional tax and suggested alternative strategies including: 1) using all future incremental growth in the current 2% tax, and capturing that increase and allocating it to the bike path and City Hall Park; 2) limiting an increase in the gross receipts tax to three years (versus five) and provide even more oversight to the business community than what's being presented; increasing the stake of Burlington taxpayers as they too benefit from the bike path.

d. Safety and Security Actions

Jeff Nick discussed BBA's intention to reactivate the Downtown Action Group, ad hoc committee that helped launch Street Outreach Program in 2000. Jeff presented these ideas:

- i. Expand no-smoking boundary to the edges of the Church Street Marketplace District - *Done*
- ii. Work with BPD/Advocate for greater police presences, particularly in those areas of downtown where drug sales and use are openly occurring.
- iii. Day-time visits from BPD's K-9 unit, in and around the Mall Block and bus station where drug sales are occurring – *request made to BPD*
- iv. Explore using bus dispatch office as possible sub-station when the CCTA terminal moves to St. Paul Street, with video screen displays.
- v. Install web-cams once CSM's Wi-Fi system installed in April
- vi. Update aggressive panhandling and soliciting ordinance,
- vii. Enforce/enhance BC) 27-4, Unnecessary interference with use of sidewalk. *No person shall unnecessarily occupy, obstruct or encumber, or cause to be unnecessarily occupied, obstructed or encumbered, a sidewalk so as to interfere with the convenient use of the same by the public.*
- viii. Promote the prohibition of alcohol sales in drug stores, mini-marts, and gas stations prior to 11 am
- ix. Discuss with all downtown stakeholders what can be done to improve current situation

VI. Executive Director Report

a. Review of street performer rules and regulations and next steps.

Discussion with Gregg Meyer, City Attorney's office.

- i. Situation Analysis: Busier, more crowded Church Street; Cacophony of street entertainer performances
- ii. Goal: Raise standards; Show off Burlington's best
- iii. Expected Outcome: Fewer performers; Higher quality performances
- iv. Public process necessary to change the rules since Church Street is a public space. Circle act permits may deem higher fee because amount of space required.

- v. CSM Staff is research rules and fees in other like communities.
- vi. Staff looking to pre-approve performers representing academic institutions (schools and colleges) non-profits (such as Vermont Youth Orchestra, Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival) and established entertainment venues (Nectar's, Red Square, Signal Kitchen, Radio Bean, Higher Ground). Important to provide other organizations with a clear path to pre-approval.

VII. ADJOURN