

**CSMC Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, December 18, 2019**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Commissioners: Jeff Nick, Becky Holt, Linda Magoon, Buddy Singh, Lara Allen, Sarah Beal, Mark Bouchett, Lorre Tucker. Stakeholders: Melissa Desautels, Kelly Devine, Alex Bunten  
Staff: Kara Alnasrawi, Executive Director

**INTRODUCTIONS:** Becky Holt welcomes as newest commission member. Jeff highlights major objectives of Commission for new member. Becky gives a brief personal overview.

**VOTE IN CLERK:** Samantha McGinnis to be clerk for Commission meeting. Motion-Buddy, Second-Linda, Unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – November 20, 2019 Motion-Lara, Second- Lorre. Unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC FORUM:** Kelly Devine, Alex Bunten, Melissa Desautels

- No public comment

**WHIM (62 Church St.) LEASE EXTENSION:**

- Melissa Desautel will be exercising her right to extend the lease for the first of two 5-year option terms

**CITY OF BURLINGTON FOOD TRUCK PROGRAM**

- Third meeting of city's Food Truck Committee will be held today (12/18). Alex Bunten from the BBA and Jeff Nick from CSM will be attending
- Jeff asks Commission for thoughts on food truck program and outlines important points (noted on agenda)
- Discussion ensues about benefits and detriments of food trucks and how other cities handle food truck issue
- Commission to keep needs/concerns of food carts and brick/mortar restaurants in mind
- General feeling is that an actively managed food truck program, which takes into consideration unfair competition for our cart vendors and brick & mortar restaurants, could be beneficial once the Downtown Improvement District is expanded and administered by the district.

**PARKING & SNOW REMOVAL**

- Top deck of downtown parking garage is blocked off because of snow. Snow needs to be removed and top deck re-opened so it's ready for busy weekend ahead.
- Software glitch at the downtown garage over weekend that continued until yesterday. Real issue. You can see why consumer gets frustrated.
- Alex- BBA did a second print run on merchant validations for Lakeview/College garage. Potential to run this program through Feb. Early results from DPW indicate that this initiative did not fill garages to capacity
- "How to park your sleigh" advertising was well done
- Discussion about if/how to extend free/discounted employee parking. CSM will work closely with the BBA

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

- **Transition of leadership:**
  - Kara meeting with City Attorney and CAO to do due diligence and understanding all aspects of department
  - Creation of workflow, there are no systems, a lot of energy setting up structure, getting a work flow, no staff currently
- **Hiring Marketing assistant:**
  - Kara, Linda Magoon, Lynn Reagan (HR) on hiring committee: Marketing Assistant and Administrative Support. 4 candidates selected for interviews
  - Kara working with HR to create new position: event planning/mgmt and fundraising
- **Budget concerns:**
  - Kara working with Buddy Singh and Steve Lock (interim CAO)
- **New leadership outreach to fee payers and merchants:**
  - Kara went door to door night before Thanksgiving to introduce herself and received a good response
  - Supporting local merchants through holiday season. (Samantha McGinnis instrumental).
  - Kara making herself available to press. Spreading word of free parking and shop local. NBC 5, WCAX, VTDigger. Others (Melissa, Kelly, Alex) have also been in the press
- **Top Events and Holidays:**
  - Shop Local Event with the Mayor – Kara and Mayor visited three locally owned stores. Mayor shopped in each. Press was present for event.
  - Holiday Tree Lighting. Governor attended, Make a Wish child flipped the switch.
  - Santa Parade was well attended. Xfinity "elves" wore Vermont Flannel Company to support local business.
  - Window Display Contest was a success. Street looks festive. Will repeat next year.
  - Shop & Sip - not great results. Day of the week (Wednesday) may be wrong
  - Hot Chocolate - well received. Llyndara has data on coupon use. Northfield Savings Bank (sponsor) happy. Event structure helps people explore other stores.
  - Jeff- Brookfield helping to fund parking initiatives, budget in place, CEDO supposed to project manage. Alex tracking parking vouchers
  - Men's Night Shopping Event Reward – early results aren't great. Next time make promotion the same for all participating locations
  - Caroling- positive feedback - will do again
- **On-going projects - Kara:**
  - Coordinated with DPW/BPRW to open 9 parking spaces by the park previously blocked by construction.
  - Concrete pad - dumpsters with Casella. More expensive than had been pitched. On hold for now
  - Bathrooms in the Mall open
  - Merchants' Meeting (1st one run by Kara) attendance good. Kara messaging this is the place for people to be if they want to be heard. Forum discussion/feedback
  - Kara approved as ex officio member on the BBA board going forward. This will promote further cooperation between the two organizations.
- **Goals for 2020 - Kara**
  - Data – lack of data. Marketplace surveys are only getting 30-40% response rate (i.e. not representative). Looking at 3rd party to collect data from stores.
  - Review Corporate Sponsorship - Would like to find more local corporate sponsors
  - Social Media - moving this in-house with the marketing position hire. Looking at comparable cities.

- Review Events - events feeling stale, time for a refresh. Need events to be community friendly and commerce supportive.
- Fundraise for street infrastructure - there is only \$3,000 in the foundation budget for capital repairs. Perhaps need fundraising event. As a reminder, Marketplace does not have access to City Capital funds.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

## **ADJOURN**