



CSMC Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 27, 2020

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners: Becky Holt, Linda Magoon, Jeff Nick, Jed Davis, Lorre Tucker, Lara Allen, Mark Bouchette, Buddy Singh, Sarah Beal.

Members of the Public: via Zoom

Staff: Kara Alnasrawi, Executive Director. Julia Chalmers, Marketing Specialist.

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Jeff presents the agenda and requests approval
 - Lorre requests to discuss the mural removal
- Agenda is approved

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 13, 2020 Motion: Lorre Tucker, Second: Mark Bouchette. Unanimously approved.

PUBLIC FORUM:

No public participation

CHAIRS REPORT:

- Jeff shares that Kara will review the budget
- Jeff shares DPW/BBA will speak on parking

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

- Kara introduces new changes to budget in accordance with decisions made in last commission meeting

BUDGET REPORT

- Kara reviews FY21 budget proposal following fee abatement:
 - The budget has been balanced at \$444k
 - The City tentatively agrees to contract Kara and Julia to cover 80% of salaries while the Commission covers the remaining 20%
 - Kara and Julia will move offices to cut rent budget in half
 - The event planner position budget has been defunded, but the position is retained as vacant
- Lorre asks how the maintenance team is doing
 - Kara shares that they have done the required health training and are excited to rev up work for the summer
 - Kara shares the maintenance budget is well protected and the team is ready
 - Lorre points out that a well-maintained street is great for business
- Lara shares that it is hard for business right now

- Lara shares she wishes the maintenance team was covered by the City and is nervous that Church Street will not be successful without Kara and Julia working full time for the street
 - Kara explains that if the City were to cover the salaries of maintenance there would be a need for a charter change, and this solution is the most efficient following the decisions of the last meeting
 - Lara shares the Church Street owners need to come together
 - Lara reiterates that the street needs support
 - Lorre points out the level of creativity of Church Street merchants and that we will pivot and do things differently
- Jeff asks if anyone has any other questions on the budget
 - Jed asks if the new office is ADA compliant
 - Kara confirms it is
 - Jeff shares the rent is half of what we were paying before
- Buddy gives motion to approve budget, Linda seconds, unanimously approved

PARKING

- Kara introduces Alex Bunten (BBA) and Jeff Padgett (DPW) to discuss parking updates
- Kara reminds the commission parking is related with the DID
- Jeff shares that they are planning to begin charging the meters and charging the garage again beginning June 15th
- Jeff shares they are looking into employee parking options and a one hour-free meter
- Jeff welcomes input
- Linda asks what the timeline for this effort is
 - Jeff shares that the goal is to get the gates back down as soon as possible to return to normalcy and keep it down
- Jeff P shares they are able to offer free employee parking, 4-hour free parking for customers with validation, and one hour free on the meters for about 2 months with City Place Burlington money and previously allocated money
- Jeff Nick asks if the DID tax is essential to the Burlington plan
- Sarah shares free parking is causing confusion and difficulties for stores offering curbside pickup
- Sarah asks if there is conversation around parking and outdoor seating extensions
 - Kara shares there is a streamlined process created for this and is available now on the RRC site
- Jeff asks if one-hour free parking is helpful or if it deters turnover
 - Sarah shares that the customer habits have changed and they are doing quick pickups, and she is in support of one-hour parking
 - Lorre asks how they will be communicating this information and that she is frustrated with the confusion the community feels around parking
 - Jeff P shares it will be a challenge and that stores will need to have signage
 - Jed asks if there is an option to just return to normal parking rather than starting new plans
 - Mark, Lorre, Sarah and Linda agree
 - Linda reiterates the meters are already confusing and to just leave them be
 - Linda shares that we need to keep things as they are, and then remove 2-hour free parking to achieve long term goals
 - Jeff Nick suggests free employee parking is needed
 - Lara reiterates
 - Jeff summarizes the feedback received

- Alex presents on what was done for Parking in the DID last year
 - New garage and gate system were created
 - Updated website and revised SEO strategy
 - Created a parking app to help find parking areas
 - Expanded communications
 - Municipal garage wayfinding project is in works
 - Updated standards of maintenance are in works
 - Alex reviews some projects placed on hold due Covid
 - Alex shares what the future could look like for DID
 - Better communications, employee parking, data collection, street meter program, expand private parking management
- Alex proposes a 50% budget cut
 - Linda appreciates that a 50% cut would coordinate with the merchant fee cuts
 - Linda reiterates that any award program should be an award and not an expectation
 - Jeff P shares there is money from FY20 that can be rolled over FY21
- Kara reminds the commission that they will be voting on the DID fees
 - Kelly shares the rate is based on the property value
 - Kara confirms city council has final say
- Sarah recommends that the property owners pass the discount down to their tenants
 - Jeff explains the complications with leases
 - Sarah reiterates that this is not a huge win for small business and the time required for business owners to ensure they get this discount is cumbersome
 - Jed agrees and shares the City needs to make a stronger effort to support small business
 - Linda shares the City Council is not doing all it can and asks what the commission can do to help them understand the necessity of this
 - Kara shares that City Council public forum is an important place to speak
- Sarah asks if the savings from the budget cut can be used to market for small businesses
 - Kelly shares this would require a community vote
- Jeff P. explains the history of the 2 hour free program
 - Cost is \$700,000
 - DID was created to help cover cost
- Jeff Nick calls commission to vote for a 50% reduction in DID funding for FY21
- Sarah shares concern this will not be helping small business and it will be difficult to increase the fee in the future
- Jeff P. shares that the funds must be used for a parking program that includes 2 hour parking
- Jed makes motion to reduce funding by half for FY21 and have landlords responsible to pass it down, Linda seconds, 6 – 3 agreement

WHIM AND LEUNIGS CAFÉ RENT FEES

- Kara indicates she has spoken with both tenants and that an abatement is requested
- Jed makes motion to abate rent for Leunig's Kiosk and Whim for March April and May, Second by Sarah, unanimously agreed

CAFÉ FEES

- Kens pizza requests approval for café license for take-out space
 - Linda asks if Monelle is okay with this
 - Kara confirms that she needs written acceptance from Monelle

- Jeff asks if this is only for social distancing or permanent request
- Sarah asks for clarification on the clearance
- Debra Miller joins the conversation
 - Deb explains it would be 6 tables coming out 8 feet, and compares it to Dobra Tea's side set up
- Kru Coffee requests approval for café license
- Lara makes motion to approve Kru's outdoor café seating, second by becky, unanimous approval
- Sarah shares concern over space for Ken's Pizza seating
 - Jeff reviews the space via google earth and confirms there should be ample space
- Kara shares Debra's drawing of Ken's Pizza idea for the space
- Buddy motion to approve Ken's Pizza outdoor café seating on Bank street for reapproval on April 28th 2021, 8-1 agreement

GENERAL ASSEMENT OF THE STREET

- Kara shares that merchants have been working together very well on the street and respecting space
- Kara reminds the commission that street entertainers and cart vendors are suspended until June 15th
 - Suggest commission meets again in 2 weeks to make decision on vending and entertainers
- Kara shares line organization directive
 - Reiterates safety is the top concern always
- Linda asks for more information on vacancies
 - Jeff shares GAP is closing, Eddie Bauer is leaving, David's Tea is probably closing, B.Good is leaving but someone may take the space.
- Sarah shares the street is in a dire situation and there needs to be a collective message that business needs help
- Lara shares there is a disconnect between the City Council's understanding of the situation and the pain the businesses are feeling
 - Kara explains the efforts the City is taking to support small business
 - Kara explains the State is the key player in this and urges business owners to write to the legislature

MURAL DECISION

- Lorre shares the mural was such a large community effort and funded by the community and for it to be dismissed because the City Council feels it is racist, and to spend \$30,000 during this time to remove it is upsetting.
 - Jeff agrees
 - Lorre and Jeff discuss their feelings towards the mural
- Jed suggests that the commission makes a motion to request the city make an effort to reimburse the community members who invested in the mural
- Sarah suggests a motion is made to promote adding murals rather than take away

NEXT MEETING

- Kara suggests commission meets again in 2 weeks, Wednesday June 10th
- Commission members list some agenda items they want to see
 - Discuss cart vending
 - Discuss city wide projects
 - Discuss mural

ADJOURN