

CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE DISTRICT COMMISSION

March 15, 2023

9:00AM

Location: City Hall, Bushor Conference Room, 149 Church St.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners: Mark Bouchett, Erik Monsen, Becky Holt, Chris Haessly, Sarah Beal, Buddy Singh, Sam Tolstoi, Cara Tobin

Absent: Linda Magoon

Staff: Kara Alnasrawi – Executive Director, Julia Chalmers – Marketing Manager, Jed Sass - CSM coordinator, Jahna Belz – Marketing Coordinator

Members of the public: Isaac Owusu

COME TO ORDER

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion: Becky Holt

Second: Buddy Singh

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion: Buddy Singh

Second: Becky Holt

PUBLIC FORUM

TREASURER'S REPORT

- We are 71 % through the fiscal year, 61 % through expenses for the year.
- Maintenance is the only place we are getting close to our allotted budget.
- Buddy and Kara spoke to the Clerk Treasurer's Office because of the inconsistencies with the 2022 audit.
 - o We will have a deficit of 14k instead of Buddy's predicted surplus of 20k because
 - Difference related to mistake in Covid era funds transfers
 - o Kara feels confident we can make up this difference.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Events coming up on the Marketplace: Free Cone Day, Spring Shop Hop, Easter Bunny on Church Street, Earth Day, Mother's Day, Marathon, Music on the Bricks, Jazz Fest, and Juneteenth.
- Street Banner prices and language is being updated based on Commissions vote to increase banner program and event fees on the Marketplace in 2023.
- Phase one of the Leahy Grant RFP has been posted
- February 24th Mayor went in-front of the Burlington businesses on Zoom
- Kara engaging with bars about Dram Shop Laws because of the negative economic impact they've recently had on the Burlington Bar community.
- Kara conducted staff annual reviews and they went great.
- We had a staff retreat and brainstormed ideas for the future of the department.
- Kara is getting involved with the 108 Cherry Street Building Project to help secure the economic vitality of Church Street.

DISCUSSION

- Mark asks what the legislative push with the Dram Shop Laws is.
- Kara explains the general consensus from the business community is to rewrite them because Vermont has particularly harsh laws for bar owners.

- Commission talks about the impacts of potentially expanding the district in the future and how that would affect the downtown and commission.

CHAIR'S REPORT

- After Town Meeting Day's ballot results the spirit in the Police Department is high

CART VENDOR APPLICATIONS FOR 2023 SEASON

a. REVIEW LICENSE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

- There are 20+ available spaces, and 18 applicants for the Cart Vendor Program.
- There are 9 returning vendors, and 9 new applicants who we are recommending for approval.
- Jed reviews the returning vendors and recommends approving them on a slate.
- Jed talks through each individual new cart vendor and explains why we recommend approving all of them on a slate.
- Isaac Owusu zooms in explains what he plans to do with his cart. He wants to make Traditional Ghanaian food. Asks commission to wave some of the fees for first time cart vendors because of the access barrier.

b. VOTE NEEDED

- Motion: Sarah Beal
- Second: Mark Bouchett
- Unanimous approval

ILLUMINATED SIGN REQUEST

a. ILLUMINATED SIGN APPLICATION – FLOAT ON CANNABIS

- The sign in question is for the old half lounge space "Float on Cannabis."
- Applicant originally wanted the sign to be internally illuminated. Which historically has not been approved on Church Street
- Now the applicant would like to illuminate the signs through a solar powered light. External illumination has previously been approved on the street

b. VOTE NEEDED

- Motion: Sarah Beal
- Second: Chris Haessly
- Unanimous approval

MARKETPLACE COMMON AREA FEES FY24

a. DISCUSSION ONLY

- The Marketplace has not raised common area fees for the past 7 years. Historically, they have been raised more frequently
- The Marketplace is sensitive to the fact that inflation has caused the prices to go up for businesses, however inflation has impacted the department's budget as well
- Maintenance staff is an important piece to consider, they get paid competitively, but their equipment will need to be updated soon.
- Buddy comments the Maintenance Team does run up against their budget the most.
- Mark brings up the point that it's better to pay fees little by little for business owners so they can better fit increased fees into their budget.
- The raise in fees would be a smaller percent than the rate of inflation.
- Commission suggest Kara work on a budget that raises the fees 5%.
- Commission indicates is leaning towards raising the fees for at least 5%.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

- Motion: Buddy Singh
- Second: Chris Haessly