



CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE

Church Street Marketplace District Commission Meeting Minutes Wednesday, February 21, 2024

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners: Mark Bouchett, Becky Holt (Zoom), Linda Magoon, Sarah Beal (Zoom), Sam Tolstoi, Romeo von Hermann, Cara Tobin, Erik Monsen (Zoom)

Absent: Chris Haessly

Staff: Kara Alnasrawi – Executive Director, Stephanie Shohet – Administrative Assistant, Samantha McGinnis - Project & Event Manager, Andrew Bacher - Project & Events Coordinator

Members of the public:
None

COME TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve: Romeo. Second: Linda. Unanimous approval.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve: Erik. Second: Sam. Unanimous approval.

PUBLIC FORUM – GENERAL

None

TREASURER'S REPORT

- Sam reports that we are 63% through FY24, and things are looking good.
- There is nothing of concern as far as the budget is concerned.

CART VENDOR PROGRAM – SUMMER 2024 (VOTING ITEM)

VOTE EXPECTED ON SLATE OF CART VENDORS

- Andrew shares a presentation about the cart vendor application process and the 2024 applicants and lets the commission know about staff's recommendations.
- He explains why three of last year's vendors are not returning.
- Romeo makes the motion to approve all but the last one (per staff's suggestion). Sam seconds, and approval is unanimous.

CAFÉ FEES (VOTING ITEM)

VOTE EXPECTED ON ANNUAL 1% INCREASE

- Kara explains that each year, outdoor cafe fees have increased 1% but proper documentation around this decision is lacking
- Although 1% does not keep up with inflation, she suggests that this continues
- Sam makes the motion to approve. Romeo seconds it, and there is unanimous agreement.

APPLYING NON-PROFIT FEES TO STREET TENANTS

VOTE EXPECTED

- Kara explains that last season the commission approved a new fee structure for events on the street.
- In order to encourage our own tenants to use the street, we would like to offer them a discount, which would be the same charge as to a nonprofit organization.
- Linda moves to approve this change.
- Questions and discussion follow about what sort of activities are included and why there would be a charge.
- Sam moves to approve the change. Linda seconds, and approval is unanimous.

Erik leaves at 10am.

MARKETPLACE IMPROVEMENT RFP ACCEPTANCE (VOTING ITEM)

VOTE EXPECTED ON BIDDER

- Kara presents the bid from Don Weston Excavating, to address deferred maintenance of the bricks using the \$1,000,000 of Congressionally Directed Spending, for which she is seeking approval by commission.
- Discussion follows about the degree of disruption this work will cause, ADA compliance, and specifics about what will be fixed.
- Linda makes the motion to accept the bid, Romeo seconds this, and approval is unanimous.

MARCH MEETING (VOTING ITEM)

VOTE EXPECTED REGARDING REQUEST TO MOVE MEETING

- After a short discussion about alternate dates, Linda makes a motion to move the meeting to March 27, Sam seconds this, and approval is unanimous.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Kara tells about the advertorial that Seven Days is working on to encourage community members to shop downtown and the city-wide business survey that is currently circulating.
- She details the efforts being made by staff to attract shoppers to the street this month and tells of the new businesses and programs that we will be welcoming soon.
- Kara updates the commission about eclipse-related issues such as parking, merchandise, portolets, and our website.
- She explains the timeline of the Main Street project as well as disruptions in parking and water that will be experienced.

- Kara has requested strengthening of the no trespass ordinance, and she tells about how she is working to create transition documents for the new mayor.

CHAIR'S REPORT

- Mark mentions that the eclipse is providing us with an opportunity to positively affect us for years into the future. If we make their experience a positive one, visitors will keep coming back.
- He explains how at Homeport, he is giving employees incentives to work extra hours, and that we need to encourage everyone to think about how we can be good hosts.
- Discussion follows about school closings on April 8, how to feed all of the visitors, parking, advertising, and merchandise.
- Mark reports that the Vermont retail theft bill is now off the table.
- He tells about the recent BBA event which was attended by people from cities around the country, discussing how they deal with public safety and homelessness.

MEETING IS ADJOURNED