



Church Street Marketplace District Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

ATTENDANCE:

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

Staff: Kara Alnasrawi – Executive Director, Stephanie Shohet – Administrative Assistant, Jed Sass - Church Street Marketplace Coordinator, Samantha McGinnis - Project & Event Manager, Jessica Dudley - Marketing Manager, Jahna Belz - Marketing Specialist

Members of the public: Laura Wheelock and Olivia Darisse from DPW, Collin Hilliard from the Burlington Business Association, City Councilor, Melo Grant on Zoom

COME TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

PUBLIC FORUM – GENERAL

- City councilor, Melo Grant, speaks over Zoom. She encourages council members to watch the most recent city council meeting, which includes an important presentation by the Burlington Police Department narcotics unit.
- She encourages councilors to reach out to Governor Scott and our legislators about opioid funds.

Chairman Bouchett introduces new commissioner, Romeo von Hermann.

PRESENTATION FROM DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS REGARDING MAIN STREET PROJECT

a. DISCUSSION ONLY

LAURA WHEELOCK – SENIOR PUBLIC WORKS ENGINEER

OLIVIA DARISSE – PUBLIC WORKS ENGINEER

- Laura shares her screen, and Olivia delivers updates about the [Main Street project](#).
- The design was completed in July, and the work is scheduled to begin in late November.
- She explains that Natalie Boyle has been hired as an outreach consultant.
- The presentation leads to a discussion about the history of the project, outreach, loss of parking, and accessibility during construction.

ADVERTISING RULES – NON-PROFIT VS. FOR-PROFIT

a. PUBLIC FORUM FOR ITEM

b. VOTE NEEDED

- Kara explains that she spoke with the city attorney office about cannabis advertising/sponsoring.
- We will jeopardize federal grants if we advertise cannabis.
- Discussion follows about whether businesses could pair with a nonprofit organization.
- Linda makes a motion to adopt the new advertising guidelines. Romeo seconds. Approval is unanimous.

STAFF UPDATE ON HOLIDAY PLANS

a. DISCUSSION ONLY

- Kara introduces Jessica Dudley, our new marketing manager.
- Sam recaps the upcoming holiday plans for the Marketplace, which include: Santa parade, tree lighting ceremony, employee appreciation week, free hot chocolate, window decorating contest, Menorah, Santa mailboxes, Santa visits, kids train, parking discounts, shopping & dining guides, street decor, and marketing.
- Discussion follows about marketing to the surrounding towns and including video promotion.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Kara explains that with our extra funding this summer, we were able to present 70 additional events.
- She tells of the new BFD plan to respond to overdoses.
- Discussion ensues about businesses leaving the Marketplace, new businesses moving in, and the plan for security during the holidays.

CHAIR'S REPORT

- Mark explains that as a merchant, there are things that he can't control, but we should all do our best to make sure visitors to the Marketplace have a delightful experience.
- By hosting events, making the street a fun place to be, and encouraging others to come downtown, we can help to change the perception that it is unsafe for guests.
- The more people out shopping and dining, the less public safety is an issue.
- He shares that at the last merchants' meeting, several merchants shared this positive attitude and opinion.

TREASURER'S REPORT

- Sam reports that we are 29% through the year, and we are looking good so far.
- Chris asks about a budget presentation, and Kara explains that it will happen in the spring.

Meeting is adjourned.