



**Merchants Meeting
July 5, 2016 at 8:30am
Westin Hotel, 157 High St.**

Staff present: Taffy Eaton, Amy Geren

Board members: Suzie Rephan, Max Bangs

Others present: Susan Driscoll, Steve Corman, Jeffery Burrell, Sophie Sarno, Lori Dorr, Lydia Finn

Minute 1. Welcome and Introductions

- Suzie Rephan welcomed everyone present and thanked Jeff Burrell for the use of the Top of the East

Minute 2. Old Port Festival/Shop for A Cause Summer Edition recap

- Shop for A Cause recap:
 - Amy mentioned that the merchants she talked to felt sales were at a normal level that day
 - Adam found that there was no confusion with Old Port Festival this year so we met the goal of separating Shop for A Cause Saturday and Old Port Festival Sunday.
 - Some retailers experienced a lot of theft during Old Port Festival
 - Vendor space taping replaced chalk and paint and was successful
 - Merchants said they did good business during the Old Port Festival
 - No parking signs going up afternoon on Saturday helped businesses. Suzie suggested having a special No Parking sign actually saying "Old Port Festival".
 - We will try using a Yellow Ban press release in 2017 to alert residents

Minute 3. Summer business

- Suzie asked the merchants present how business is going this summer:
 - Steve Corman reports that Vena's Fizz House is doing well and growing. Their 3rd birthday is on Saturday. Lots more new things coming by Christmas.
 - Suzie suggested having a non-alcoholic Vena's concoction in the Merry Madness tent – Steve said yes!
 - Sophie Sarno reports that Fish & Bone is doing great, especially over the last month
 - Lori Dorr said the Sock Shack is doing well. They will celebrate one year in August in the Congress St location.

Minute 4. Holiday planning

- Due to low attendance numbers at this meeting, Suzie quickly reviewed the events and said we will continue the discussion. We need to finalize holiday plans at the August meeting. One suggested change is to have Elfternoon Lunch start at noon rather than 11:00. Adam's Light up Your Holiday's event summary will be sent out with the August Merchant Meeting email.

Minutes 5. Other business

- Cadets: Amy is receiving reports from the PPD will compare them to 2015. The statistics will be available at the end of the summer. The cadets should be checking in with businesses.
- Suzie mentioned how easy it was to get a sidewalk sale permit which allows Leroux to set up tables outside. Be creative with getting around situations that are a problem to your business.
- Fewer vendors are setting up on the water side of Commercial Street now. Chuck Fagone is working on enforcement of Maine-made products.
- There are 6 new porta-potties in place on Long Wharf thanks to Steve DiMillo. He and Bill Frappier worked together on putting them in place.
- Suzie encouraged merchants to tell their employees and others about the new parking lot on Commercial Street. It costs \$5 for 24 hours. Spread the word.
- Suzie asked how late shops are staying open: 11:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm
- Suzie encouraged those present to bring neighbors to a meeting
- Suzie would like to have a survey sent about changing the meeting date to the first Thursday of each month

Respectfully submitted,
Taffy Eaton, Recorder