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The Broadway Market Management Corporation

Abstract

Poverty is an ever-growing problem affecting much of the country. People fall into financial holes and certain industries make sure that they stay there. Low-income individuals are targets for businesses that make their money by providing needed benefits now with an exorbitant cost later. Jacob S. Hacker, a political scientist at Yale, has said that low-income people are forced to live beyond their means by businesses that target them. According to a series in *The Buffalo News*, "The High Cost of Being Poor," there are a number of unethical practices being perpetrated against low-income producing people.

Keywords

Buffalo, Data/Demographics/History, Buffalo History, Historic Preservation, Fact Sheet, PPG, PDF

The Broadway Market Management Corporation

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1. What is the agency's website and contact information?

Website: <http://broadwaymarket.com>
Broadway Market, 999 Broadway, Buffalo, NY 14212
716-893-0705

2. What geographic area does it serve?

The Broadway Market serves Buffalo's East side. It has been located at Broadway and Fillmore since 1888, and there is a rich cultural history attached to it.ⁱ

3. Who runs The Broadway Market Management Corporation?

Until very recently, the Broadway Market was run by the Broadway Market Management Corporation, under Executive Director, Richard Fronczak. James Malczewski, Helen Wylubski, Peter Cammarata, Otis Cowart, and Joseph Petruso were members of the board.ⁱⁱ Some of the members were appointed directly by the mayor. Other members included the city comptroller, the Fillmore District member of the council, the Erie County Legislator representing the area, tenants and the neighborhood business group.ⁱⁱⁱ

As of Monday, September 29, 2008, the current board decided to dissolve the corporation, effective October 31. At this time Mayor Byron Brown and Common Council President Dave Franczyk will be free to appoint new leadership.^{iv} As of November 1st, the Market will be handled by a new non-profit organization, thus signifying the end of the 24-year control of the market by the management corporation.^v

4. What does the Broadway Market have to offer to the community?

According to the Broadway Market web-site, there are a variety of meat, poultry and produce stands, along with bakeries and candy stores.^{vi} The market also has some unique stores that sell special spices and novelty items. The market started as a way for immigrants to mainstream into American society but still keep their cultural practices. It offered many different cultural food choices from all around the world and it maintains that tradition today.^{vii}

5. How is the agency funded?

After receiving approval from the Internal Revenue Service, the Broadway market became a nonprofit organization. With this change, the Broadway Market became the Broadway Market Management Corporation, and it relied on public funding for programs and services. When the market became a nonprofit organization it was a welcomed change due to dwindling funds.^{viii} The market has relied over the years on grant money from different public entities. The City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program has given funding to the market over the years, adding up to \$402,729.96. Being a tenant of the City of Buffalo has also had its benefits. Since 1988 the Broadway Market has been forgiven \$36,000 a year in rent. Also, in 2003, the City forgave the market of \$382,513.56 in utility debt.^{ix} In 2006 the Broadway Market received a \$25,000 grant from the Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood Alliance Food Project.^x

6. What controversial issues has this agency faced?

- The most serious issue is the very public criticisms of the boards' ability to properly run the Broadway Market. Buffalo Common Council President David Franczyk has been very vocal about his mission to replace current management in an effort to save the Broadway Market. Franczyk argues that the board is inundated with conflicts of interest and that it lacks vision. He also states that all efforts to revitalize the board have been met with stark resistance. In response, Executive Director Richard Fronczak claims that the Common Council is trying to take over the management corporation and that they are not concerned with solving the problems faced by the market.^{xi}
- Another big issue the Broadway Market is facing is the declining surrounding neighborhood. Executive Director Fronczak claims that "the market is a reflection of the neighborhood" and that people are afraid to come into the neighborhood to shop at the market.^{xii} After a meeting in June of 2008, many of the attendees felt that the Broadway Market could not be helped if the surrounding area was not

helped.^{xiii} Also, along with a rent increase, the board has voted to decrease security at the market.



- The Broadway Market also faces a lack of funding. Fronczak claims that the city failed to meet its responsibilities as the landlord for the Broadway Market location. The Broadway Market management board claims that the building needs new lighting fixtures, that the air-conditioning system is incredibly old, and that there is damage to the outer structure due to falling concrete. According to the current board, under the previous five-year lease that expired in June, the city was responsible for all of these problems. Executive Director Fronczk claims that the city did nothing to fix them.^{xiv}
- The management group is also dealing with issues with tenants. At the end of August 2008, the grocery store Save-A-Lot has refused to pay the recent rent increase until the lease agreement with the city is negotiated. Fronczak believes that this is a political ploy to overthrow the current board.^{xv} Other tenants have argued that this is not a good time to increase rent when declining revenues have made it difficult to maintain their businesses. There has also been a steady decline in the number of tenants. Recently the market lost one of its biggest tenants, Key Bank. This loss of business has been distressing to the other tenants of the market and the board. During a tenants meeting held on September 23, 2008, Channel 7 news revealed that the tenants decided that they wanted to meet with the Buffalo Common Council to discuss options of a board change.

7. What efforts have been made to change this agency or its programs?

There have been many efforts to make changes in the Broadway Market. These efforts are not new either. Some of the efforts have been small suggestions to improve the situation, and some have suggested drastic changes.

- A need for a change in the market has been a consistent theme in the past. In the years 1998-2000, the Project for Public Spaces/ Public Market Projects (PPS/PMC) presented a strategic plan for the Broadway Market. This plan included an outdoor “market square”, merchandising the interior and updating practices.^{xvi}

- In 2006, Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, earmarked 1.2 million dollars for the market. This money was meant to be used for a new community kitchen and other much needed infrastructure improvements. Instead of respecting the wishes of the Congresswoman the management board decided they wanted to use the money to turn almost half of the market into a clothing store. With this decision, the Congresswoman decided not to earmark the money. This was an opportunity to effect change that was thrown away.^{xvii}
- Recently, Council President Franczyk suggested a very controversial plan to help the Broadway Market. With the expiration of the market's lease in June of 2008, Franczyk suggested that the city let the lease expire. With the expiration of the lease a new board could be formed and a new contract could be formed with that new board. The old board would be completely dissolved. Executive Director Fronczak responded with a pointed resolution for the future.^{xviii}
- It has been suggested numerous times that the market be advertised more efficiently. Also, it is believed that advertising special sales and community events could help the market^{xix}.
- It has also been suggested that the Broadway Market extend its business hours. Currently, the market is not open on Sundays and it closes at 5 pm during the business week. For working class families who work a normal business day it is impossible to go to the Broadway Market.^{xx}

Many of the proposed changes have been voiced many times over. According to Common Council President Franczyk, things as simple as making the market more cleanly have been overlooked. Franczyk believes that there is a plan for change. It just needs an efficient board to implement it.

8. How has Mayor Byron Brown responded to the recent controversy?

Mayor Brown released a statement calling for a new board for the management corporation. He also feels that a new Executive director is necessary for the Market to grow and change. Brown says that with a new board he would start talks with Buffalo Common Council President David Franczyk to create a new lease agreement with the market. Brown made this announcement after a meeting with the tenants of the market to discuss rent increase and Save-A-Lots recent actions.^{xxi}



9. How can I contribute input to the agency's decisions?

The way to contribute input to the agency is by attending general meetings that are open to the public. You can also contact the board via e-mail, or post your opinions on the different articles online.

10. How do I learn more about the agency?

To learn more about the agency you should always start with the website. Also, The Buffalo News has a number of articles pertaining to the current issues surrounding the Broadway Market.^{xxii}



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- ⁱ <http://broadwaymarket.com/b/news.php>
 - ⁱⁱ <http://www.buffalonews.com/cityregion/buffaloerie/story/420597.html>
 - ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.buffalonews.com/home/story/371957.html>
 - ^{iv} http://www.newwnypolitics.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=856&Itemid=16
 - ^v <http://www.buffalonews.com/258/story/451947.html>
 - ^{vi} <http://broadwaymarket.com/b/news.php>
 - ^{vii} <http://broadwaymarket.com/b/page.php?9>
 - ^{viii} <http://buffalo.bizjournals.com>
 - ^{ix} http://newwnypolitics.affluenceattainment.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=637&Itemid=2
 - ^x www.foodsecurity.org/CFPprofiles-NewYorkState.pdf
 - ^{xi} <http://www.buffalonews.com/home/story/371957.html>
 - ^{xii} <http://www.buffalonews.com/377/story/379055.html>
 - ^{xiii} <http://www.buffalonews.com/home/story/371957.html>
 - ^{xiv} <http://www.buffalonews.com/102/story/426726.html>
 - ^{xv} <http://www.tmcnet.com/usubmit/2008/08/22/3614959.htm>
 - ^{xvi} http://www.pps.org/info/projects/markets_projects/broadway_market
 - ^{xvii} http://artvoice.com/issues/v7n26/what_the_market_will_bear
 - ^{xviii} http://artvoice.com/issues/v7n26/what_the_market_will_bear
 - ^{xix} <http://www.buffalonews.com/home/story/371957.html>

^{xx} <http://www.buffalonews.com/home/story/371957.html>

^{xxi} <http://www.buffalonews.com/102/story/442928.html>

^{xxii} <http://broadwaymarket.com/b/news.php>

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