

2014 Whaling City Festival canceled

From the Whaling City Festival board:

After almost 45 years of celebrations, the Whaling City Festival, one of the city's trademark events will be canceling the 2014 festival. The New Bedford's Whaling City Festival Board of Directors voted Monday evening to cancel the 2014 Whaling City Festival. The action taken by the board was necessary due to the challenging economic conditions, resulting from a decrease in corporate sponsorship, an increase in operating cost and a large decrease in volunteers which is the backbone of the festival.

Forty five years ago the Whaling City Festival was founded by a group of local community organizers to create a free fun filled event for family and vendors to come together. The festival has been run by a group of volunteers who dedicated many hard working hours to put on a 3 day event for the local community.

In 2013 the festival upon reviewing the budget, projected a decline in revenue for following years to come with increasing expenses. We decided we needed change. In the latter half of 2013 the board was pursuing to keep the festival open later in hopes of drawing a larger number of vendors which would in turn increase revenue allowing the festival to bring in different entertainment as well as the long term goal of bringing back the once loved laser light show. Steps were taken by the Festival Board to gain this extra time, but were not met by the City of New Bedford until early April. We had original decided to cancel the festival in March but due to the public's outcry to continue, the board upon being granted an extra hour to stay open decide to give it one last run.

With only three months to plan a twelve month festival and with a handful of volunteers, as we approach July, it has come to our realization that cost to run a meaningful festival were much higher than what the budget could support without putting the festival in substantial debt.

The Whaling City Festival board wants to stress that this was an extremely difficult decision and was not taken lightly. The festival board has put many personal hours in the past years to make this an enjoyable event for the entire community. We are truly disappointed that we can no longer continue to run the Whaling City Festival. In conclusion we would like to thank all of our previous sponsors and supporters who made our previous years successful and enjoyable for EVERYONE.