

## MYTHS AND **FACTS** ABOUT THE FEB 2 OCCUPY BUFFALO EVICTION

**MYTH 1:** Since Occupy Buffalo has been evicted, the movement is over.

**FACT 1:** Occupy Buffalo is not going anywhere. We are still in Niagara Square and continue to organize and be active in the community!

General Assemblies are still scheduled for Saturdays at noon, and Mondays&Wednesdays at 7pm at Niagara Square. There is a calendar of events on our facebook page and our website [www.occupybuffalo.org](http://www.occupybuffalo.org).

**Come join us!**

**MYTH 2:** Occupy Buffalo rejected the city's offer.

**FACT 2:** We are sorry that we did not make it clear that Occupy Buffalo was unable to come to an agreement with the city due to lack of time to reach consensus. During negotiations Occupy Buffalo had requested more time. The city refused. Consequently the inability to reach consensus led to our inability to sign the agreement. It was not the result of a decision made by Occupy Buffalo.

We operate according to 95% consensus. We do this to ensure that voices in the minority also shape the final outcome. As you can imagine, listening to all voices and working to an agreement takes time. So, why were we unable to sign the agreement proposed by the city? At least in part because the city only gave us five hours, 7pm-12am, to discuss the new terms the city had "offered" us.

**MYTH 3:** The City of Buffalo offered Occupy Buffalo a permit until March 8<sup>th</sup>, thereby giving us a five week extension.

**FACT 3:** Despite the original agreement's being renewable for two months, the new agreement proposed by the city had an end date of March 8<sup>th</sup>. The city changed both the duration of our agreement and the capability of the agreement to be renewed.

Here is an piece of the original agreement.

This Agreement shall extend through February 1, 2012 and shall be renewable for additional periods of two months upon compliance with the terms contained herein and continued safe operation within the Square.

**MYTH 4:** Occupy Buffalo wanted to stay in Niagara Square for an indefinite period of time.

**FACT 4:** During negotiations Occupy Buffalo asked for more time to come to consensus about a reasonable date to break down the camp. This request was reject by city officials during negotiations.

Because we had not had any reason to suspect that the original agreement would not be renewed for two moths, we did not have the opportunity to discuss a realistic timeline to implement a smooth transition from encampment.

**MYTH 5:** Occupy Buffalo felt it owned Niagara Square and would not share with other groups or people.

**FACT 5:** We make our best effort to welcome all people. Our original agreement with the city specified that we would leave the park when other groups wanted to use the space without us there.

We had been working to accommodate Winter Fest to their full satisfaction (including fully vacating the park) even while negotiating a new agreement with the city. During our negotiations we continued to recognized the reasonableness of this part of the agreement, and even after being evicted, we continue to work to clean up and restore the Square.

**MYTH 6:** The police needed to be sure they had enough force to subdue us if we were resistant

**FACT 6:** Occupy Buffalo has a track record for non-violence and the amount of force the City displayed against its own people during a peaceful protest was unwarranted.

See an hour long video of our eviction for yourself: <http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/20165687>

The City had no reasonable expectation that we would resist. Since the beginning of our movement, Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>, we have always conducted ourselves peacefully and worked with the City, including the police and fire departments, to create a safe and non-violent environment. Even during the raid, those who choose to be arrested practiced civil disobedience peacefully and non-violently. Occupy Buffalo will continue to engage in non-violent direct action and to speak truth to power. If the city changes their approach from one of intimidation towards the people to one of non-violence, then we are open to collaborating with them to work for the common good.