

FARMERS' MARKET COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
June 13, 2018
7:00PM
Village Hall - Room 101

Present: Laura Lencioni (Chair), Dominic Cianciolo, Julia Knier, Jennifer Purrenhage, Market Manager; Colleen McNichols; CIC Liaison; Frank Pond, Church Liaison; Jeff Petertil

Excused: Staff Liaison; Mike Charley; Summer Vendor Liaison; Jim Vitalo, James Robinson-Parran, Dina Ross, Mary Chris Jaklevic

- 1) Call to Order @ 7:10pm
- 2) Agenda Approval: Approved, First by Knier, Second by Purrenhage
- 3) Public Comment: No comments
- 4) Approval of Minutes – May 9, 2018: Approved, First by Cianciolo, Second by Knier
- 5) Church Liaison Report (Jeff Petertil): With the exception of the rainy morning, church donut sales have been going well. No problems to report. OPFM female staff and commissioners expressed gratitude for use of the church restroom facilities this season. We are grateful that the church's coffee cups and lids are compostable now. Signage was discussed to help patrons compost appropriately. Petertil mentioned the two new bike racks on the grass on Lake Street side of the parking lot for market visitor (located on the Village owned parkway). These can be picked up and removed in November by VOP Public Works, when the market closes for the winter.
- 6) Vendor Liaison Report (Jim Vitalo): No report
- 7) Chair Report (Laura Lencioni)
 - a) Food Donations: Lencioni spoke with a representative from Notre Dame about receiving and picking up our food rescue/gleaning every other Saturday during the market season. This appears to be problematic for the organization, as they do not have a consistent volunteer base to pick up. They wanted to receive a telephone call each Saturday, to inquire if they were prepared to receive and pick up that day. We decided to stay with Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry every week (like last season), as they have an excellent volunteer rotation and their pantry manager is well-equipped to receive and store market food efficiently. Lencioni is coordinating with the Pilgrim Church food rescue liaison and OPRF Food Pantry manager to facilitate the schedule.

- b) OPFM was not represented at the Day in The Village (June 2) this year, as the only two people signed up to staff the booth (McNichols and Lencioni) were both car-less on the Sunday and could not move the table and tents to the park. In addition, McNichols has a sprained foot and was not able to help Lencioni sufficiently on that day. In addition, the event on June 2nd was the same day as the OPRF High School graduation, so many of the commissioners and volunteers were busy and could not participate in the public event. Lencioni mentioned she would have a presence at the Fourth of July parade this year to make up for the absence, but that it would not become part of the work plan for 2019, as most commissioners are out of town on July 4 or not available.
- 8) Farmers' Market Liaison Report (Mike Charley)
- a) Charley was not present and did not report.
- 9) Farmers' Market Manager Report (Colleen McNichols)
- a) McNichols asked for feedback on this year's Go Green Days (first two markets of the season) as the programming and format was a new experiment. Commissioners seemed pleased with the GGD participants, turn out and the presence of the Village Trustees, Clerk and Sustainability Departments. Attention was paid to avoid any "greenwashing" and schedule organizations and individuals with a proven track record of sustainability and integrity and who meet our new requirements. The bee display was a big draw to adults and children alike. The staff did not receive any negative feedback about the events. Go Green participants were very pleased and asked to be invited back next year. We have been asked by Sally Stovall of Go Green Oak Park to have a booth at the next year's Go Green Days. That request will be honored.
 - b) Because of the Spring weather, McNichols tried to compensate with the limited fresh produce available by scheduling preservation kitchens like Bushel and Peck's who offer a large variety of jarred items that they grow themselves. These pop-up vendors were quite popular and attracted more folks to the May markets (May 19 and May 26). We did have a rainy pre-market opening morning (May 19) which hurt attendance and a very hot second market (May 26). However; we were thrilled Opening Day was not completely rained out, as it was in 2017.
 - c) The Chef Demos have been very popular with educational presentations, recipes available and delicious samples. The Heritage Restaurant demo with Chef Sieger Bayer was very popular. He purchased all the ingredients at the market in the morning and gave due credit to our wonderful vendors.
 - d) The market staff continues to remind folks to bring their own berry and produce containers (empty yogurt tubs with lids for berries or storage containers) and their own reusable bags and coffee cups. Mindy Agnew (Sustainability Dept) created three wonderful banners (from recycled material) to help us promote the "bring your own" campaign as we try to reduce single use plastic bag use at the market. In addition, the

staff is selling reusable/washable recycled cotton canvas bags and washable eco-produce bags at the info tent. Also, Knier is trying to line up the volunteers to audit plastic bag use at one of the most popular produce vendors in July. She staffed the compost and recycle bins during busy period for opening markets to help guide shoppers to proper bins with an Environmental Ambassador from OPRF High school. Mindy Agnew gave a tutorial to the Ambassadors about what is compostable and recyclable.

- e) McNichols thanked Purrenhage for continuing to bring in, and schedule, wonderful volunteers to help at the market.

10) Committee/Project Reports

- a) Purrenhage wanted to focus on scheduling seasoned volunteers at the market, as she would prefer to meet and greet new volunteers herself, when she is available. She discussed the Volunteer Appreciation night scheduled at the Cork/wine festival by the VOP. McNichols promised the Friends of the Market special custom t-shirts would be available by early July. These will be handed out to thank our regular volunteers for their time.
- b) Local youth fulfilling their required court-ordered service hours will be available to help breakdown the market and wrap up and close in the next few weeks. Purrenhage says they are a wonderful bunch of teens who got in trouble for rather minor violations and would be (and have been) excellent help at the market.
- c) Purrenhage mentioned a new social media blog and newsletter being initiated by local food writer Melissa Elsmo (who was a judge for pie-contest last year and a journalist at the Wednesday Journal) entitled Oak Park Eats! Elsmo will feature our market news with photos, seasonality reports, interviews, recipes, etc. for the entire season, if we provide updates and info every Monday prior to the Saturday market. We are thrilled for this publicity and look forward to alerting the vendors of this new opportunity. We hope she will continue as a judge for our-pie-baking contest and continues to be a great supporter of the OPFM.
- d) The second annual pie-bake off contest was discussed (event is 9.1.18). Potential candidates who would serve as M.C. this year and returning judges for the competition were discussed. The Toastmasters org was mentioned and some names were discussed. Purrenhage encouraged volunteers and commissioners to sign up to help at this event and the Corn Roast on Aug. 11.
- e) Knier mentioned her ongoing recruitment for Sustainability Ambassador volunteers. She said when the waste bins are not staffed with guides, a great deal of landfill is deposited in the recycling and compost bins and she feels a need to sort herself at the end of the market. The staff is attaching proper signage to bins each week—but they are not enough for confused shoppers.

11) Old Business

None.

12) New Business

None.

13) Adjourn @ 8:10, first by Purrenhage, Second by Knier.

Next Meeting Wednesday, July 11, 2018, 7-9 pm, Room 101, Village Hall