

FARMERS' MARKET COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2020
7:00 p.m.
Conducted Remotely

Commission Members Present: Laura Lencioni (Chair), Myndi Devore, Julia Knier, Dina Ross, Jill Stewart, Liz Stolfa, Rachel Hahs, Dominic Cianciolo, Jennifer Purrenhage, Katie Weaver.

Staff Liaison Present: Cameron Davis, Asst. Director Development Customer Services

Staff Present: Mindy Agnew, Sustainability Manager and Colleen McNichols, Farmers' Market Manager.

Others Present: Church Liaison Jeff Petertil.

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lencioni at 7:06 p.m.
- 2) **Agenda Approval:** A motion to accept the agenda as presented was made, seconded and approved.
- 3) **Public Comment:** Chairperson Lencioni asked Staff Liaison Davis if any written public comment had been submitted. Davis stated that there was no public comment.
- 4) **Approval of Minutes:** May 7, 2020 Meeting Minutes were approved with a change from an "i" to a "y" in the spelling of a name on page six. Davis will make the changes, as directed.
- 5) **Chair Report (Laura Lencioni):** Chairperson Lencioni expressed her thanks to everyone who has helped to make the Market a success. Specifically, she mentioned Robin and Rachel's efforts in the aggregation pilot-program area, Village staff's work regarding all aspects of the Market operations and volunteers, who will be vital to this year's Market success.

Going forward, Chairperson Lencioni stated that the Commission will see what does and does not work. She mentioned that we will have better feedback as we hold additional Markets. She will send out a questionnaire for the July meeting in an attempt to get feedback from everyone and she will then compile that feedback.

The issue of diversity in the Markets' farmers/vendors was briefly discussed. Chairperson Lencioni will have additional discussions about how to move toward diversity this year.

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- 6) **Farmers' Market Staff Liaison Report (Cameron Davis):** Staff Liaison Davis reported that the core of the Village staff's support of the Market will come from employees in the Development Customer Services Department. In addition, Mindy Agnew, the Village's Sustainability Manager, will play a key role in the success of this year's Market. In addition, Davis expects outstanding support from the Public Works Department, the Police Department, the Health Department and other staff members, from miscellaneous departments.

Davis reported that the May 30th Market had 1,750 customers followed by the June 6th Market with 2,464 customers, a 41% increase in attendance. The staff counts everyone who enters the Market and the numbers this year will be very accurate.

Village staff will have weekly discussions about potential operational process improvements for the first several weeks of this Market season. Adjustments will be made, especially if ideas are identified that can result in additional safety for customers, staff and volunteers.

Davis mentioned that vendor placement is very important to the success of the Markets flow. Market Manager McNichols will play close attention to what does and doesn't work. A few neighbor complaints have been addressed with McNichols relaying information to vendors about how to mitigate early morning noise.

Davis also mentioned several complaints from residents living in the subdivision immediately east of East Avenue. Staff will work with the subdivision to limit cut-through traffic on the subdivisions private access drives.

Finally, Davis mentioned that staff will be working with Public Works staff to create an entrance that allows residents access to the Village's dog park, immediately adjacent to the Market off Scoville.

There were no questions.

Staff member Mindy Agnew offered her thanks to Commissioner Purrenhage for her assistance with organizing volunteers. She reminded all volunteers that they need to check-in at the information tent every Saturday so that their temperature can be taken. One of Mindy's focuses this year will be to assist in securing volunteers to support Market operations.

- 7) **Farmers' Market Manager Report (Colleen McNichols):** Market Manager McNichols mentioned how grateful she is for all the staff and volunteer assistance this year. She reported that the Market is going well. She is still adjusting vendor placement. McNichols has heard complimentary comments from the vendors who are appreciative that Oak Park is facilitating the 2020 season.

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Commissioner Knier asked about new vendors and vendors that are not in attendance on a weekly basis. McNichols stated that several vendors have been with the market for years but stagger their attendance, not being able to be present every week.

Commission Purrenhage asked about African American vendors. McNichols responded that Johannesen Farms owner's wife is African American. Skibbe farms is run by a gentleman who is also African American. Manager McNichols is always looking for diverse vendors and will be able to focus on that effort next year. Chair Lencioni recommended establishing a sub-committee to support Diversity efforts in 2021.

- 8) **Church Liaison Report (Jeff Petertil):** Liaison Petertil asked if the aggregation pilot-programs order limits will remain at 72 or if they will be increased. Staff Liaison Davis stated that for now the number will remain around 72 until at least after July 4th then the volunteers running the program can determine what their capacity for dealing with orders will be going forward.

Petertil mentioned that Robin Schirmer, aggregation volunteer, did a post on Facebook discouraging online ordering of only donuts. Petertil wanted to report that the Church does understand that announcement.

Petertil reported that while donut sales are not the same as last year, the sales are still good. The Church would like to sell coffee but will wait to see if that is possible in the future.

- 9) **Vendor Liaison Report (Frank Damiano):** Mr. Damiano was not in attendance.

10) **Committee/Project Reports:**

- a) Volunteer - Commissioner Purrenhage reported that her focus is on getting and organizing volunteers. The first Market had 17 volunteers and the second Market had 15 volunteers, many of which were repeat volunteers from the first week. Purrenhage mentioned that she is getting a lot of volunteer interest from the community. She mentioned that volunteers must check-in at the information tent for health check, standard questions, temp taken and to receive their vest and nametag.

Commissioner Stewart asked if we are keeping track of volunteer hours. Purrenhage said that volunteer hours and names of volunteers are being recorded.

Aggregation Pilot Program – Commissioner Hahs reported that the Commission will have a better understanding, in the coming weeks, about how many volunteers will be needed to maintain the aggregation program. As the volunteers get more efficient in their process, the number of volunteers may change.

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- b) Communications - Two blog posts have been developed highlighting Nichol's Farm and the cheese vendor. Commissioner Hahs created memes on social media, using parts of the Farmers' Market logo, and is happy to share the templates for everyone's use.

Commissioner Knier mentioned that she would like to work with other Commissioners to examine the possibility of more Market sustainability-initiatives for the future.

11)**Old Business** – There was no old business.

12)**New Business** – Chairperson Lencioni mentioned the possibility of establishing a Diversity Sub-Committee for next year's Market. Chair Lencioni reminded Commissioners that several individuals are cycling off the Commission this year.

13)**Adjourn:** A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. The motion passed.

Next Commission Meeting will be August 12, 2020.