

## Oak Park Farmers' Market Commission Minutes

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Present: Chair Melissa Wittenberg, Commissioners: Frank Pond, Barb Dolan, Ann Bill, Betsy Fechalos; Market Manager Meredith Conn; Assistant Market Manager Kathy Lewis; Staff Liaison Mike Charley; Grower Liaison Jim Vitalo; Guests Rebekah Braslow, Sam Dali (friends & prospective commissioners)

Absent: Commissioners: Nancy Fjortoft, Chris Mitchell; Church Liaison Jeff Petertil

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm.

The May 2009 minutes were approved as corrected. The Commission was reminded that approved minutes must be submitted to the Village. Melissa will send the approved minutes to the necessary individuals.

**Budget report-Mike Charley:** The Market is still waiting for the \$2000 IL Department of Agriculture grant money which will go towards advertising. It was suggested that the Market consider undertaking a quick survey to ask people how they found out about the market. The information collected could be used to measure the effectiveness of our advertising.

**Chairperson report-Melissa Wittenberg:** Flyers were distributed to 100 N. Scoville and 100 N. Elmwood neighbors prior to this year's season opening. Neighbors who bring the flyer to the Commissioner's Booth are entitled to a Farmers' Market coupon. So far we have given out about 5 coupons.

The opening day Grower's Breakfast & orientation went very well.

CIC has indicated we will be getting a liaison very soon.

The early opening is going smoothly except that there continue to be people who come at 7am rather than 8am. This is a safety issue when people are milling about when the growers are setting up. There is some interest in having the Market open at 7am every week next year. It was suggested we poll the growers to see if they see value in that before pursuing this change. Any change in hours would need to go before the Village Board.

**Special events-Meredith Conn:** Go Green was very well received by both the public and the participating organizations. The intent is to repeat this event next year.

**Day in Our Village-Frank Pond:** Guess the vegetable was a big hit again. Tip for next year: don't use rhubarb—it makes a big mess. A giveaway would be nice for next year.

**Manager's Report-Meredith Conn:** Merchandise is averaging \$200 a week. Honey people committed to regular attendance but they haven't been to the market yet. They say they will be here after July 4. It is important the booth staff and growers be especially vigilant about safety and thefts. The Market has a regular beat policeman who should be informed of any suspicious activity.

The Commission Chairperson will send a reminder to the church that the shed must be packed in a very specific way for everything to fit.

**Growers' Liaison-Jim Vitalo:** The growers felt Go Green day was very successful. The growers seem to be up and running smoothly.

**Friends Committee-Barb Dolan:** We have lots of new people signing up to be a Friend. There was a good turnout at the Library recruitment event and the FYI article attracted a lot of attention.

**Public Relations-Betsy Fechalos:** Advertising on "L" is in place. Some of the IL Department of Agriculture grant money may be used for advertising at the Lake Theater or for an ad in the Answer Book. It was suggested the commission think about ways to advertise to those people who are in town for athletic events being held at the high school.

**New business:** Concerns about the application process should not be directed to commissioners but go to the Market Manager.

**Old business:** Farm visits have been left in the budget because they are so important to supporting our mission.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 8 at 7:00pm in Village Hall. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ann Bill.