

Oak Park Farmers' Market Commission Meeting Minutes  
January 13, 2010, 7:00 pm, Rm. 101

Present

Chairperson Melissa Wittenberg, Market Manager Meredith Conn, Communications Department Staffer Leslie Boehms, Staff Liaison Mike Charley, Vendors' Liaison Jim Vitalo, Village Manager Tom Barwin, Friend Grant Jones

Commissioners: Rebekah Braslow (minute taker), Betsy Fechalos, Frank Pond, Chris Mitchell, Warren Bakker, Sam Dali

Absent: Nancy Fjortoft (commissioner), Jeff Petertil (church liaison)

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:05 by Melissa Wittenberg

2. Public comment was made by Tom Barwin.

In the context of the deep recession and our community's unique ability to provide sustenance to our populace within walking distance of their residences, he felt that expanding the Farmers' Market approach both conceptually and physically would facilitate greater economic stability amongst our business owners. Options to fulfill this idyll would include creating community garden plots, transforming the Village Market (on Chicago) into a site welcoming local growers and butchers, and adding retailers to the present Farmer's Market to create a sort of "synergy" enhancing both the market and our local retail environment.

The committee discussed Mr. Barwin's comments, feeling that his excellent ideas would enhance our community and creating another Farmer's-like Market, say on Marion Street, which incorporated local retailers would be welcomed. The present market at Pilgrim Church, however, is committed to being an exclusively growers/ producers market.

3. Minutes: There was a motion to approve the November 17, 2009 meeting minutes, by Frank Pond and seconded by Chris Mitchell. All present commissioners unanimously approved.

4. Communications Department: Leslie Boehms

Information for Leslie Boehms has been successfully transmitted from Melissa Wittenberg and Betsy Fechalos, who are the only commissioners to be in contact

with the Communications Department. If information is for the Village website it should go to David, and marketing materials should go to Leslie, with a copy to Mike Charley. Leslie needs a high resolution font for the Market logo, which Chris will provide. Changes are needed for fliers: special events, for sale items, application for growers. The Asst. Manager job ad will be posted on Facebook & Twitter. Mike Charley will get a digital camera for the Market to get photos to put on the Facebook site. Cameraman Joe Kreml will finish the time-lapse photography the 2nd market day (May 29.)

#### 5. Budget Report: Mike Charley

Despite having a slightly higher budget this year, he encourages thrift. If anticipated purchase price >\$100 ought to get 3 bids which include 1) female or minority vendor 2) purchase price 3) nature of item. The turn around time to get Village input is two days. If it is an item previously purchased by prior vendor, or has a unique provenance, the bid process can be detoured. Get a tax exempt letter from him for all purchases. Call vendor in anticipation of purchase to warn them of your tax exempt status.

#### 6. Chairperson's/ Management Committee Report

Discussed changes to Vendor Applications and to Ordinance and Rules of Operations. Other than elucidating that one space for the grower would be 8.25 feet, the width of one parking spot (using multiple spaces would merely cost a multiple of the charge for one space, granting no reduction for using more space) all items listed in the agenda item commentary were discussed in detail.

Vote: Motion made by Frank Pond, seconded by Chris Mitchell. The following commissioners voted unanimously to approve the proposed amendments, put before the Board this month, as described in their entirety: Betsy Fechalos, Frank Pond, Chris Mitchell, Warren Bakker, Rebekah Braslow, Sam Dali & Melissa Wittenberg. There were no dissenters.

#### Committees and Special Events:

- Friends Committee has been taken over by Melissa Wittenberg.
- Food Donation Committee has been taken over by Melissa Wittenberg.
- Special Event Friend Recruitment will most likely be on Tuesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm, at the Main Library. Melissa Wittenberg is point person.
- Special Event Opening Day/Vendor Orientation is on May 22 and Melissa Wittenberg is point person.

- Special Event Green Day will be the first two market days, May 22 & 29. Betsy Fechalos will be unable to be in charge as originally anticipated. Point person needed.
- Special Event Day in our Village will be on Sunday, June 6. Chris Mitchell & Frank Pond point persons.
- Special Event Corn Roast will be August 21. Rebekah Braslow will be unable to be in charge as originally anticipated. Point person needed.
- Special Event Vendor & Volunteer Appreciation Day will be September 25. Betsy Fechalos & Sam Dali will be point persons.
- Special Event Stone Soup will be the closing day of the market, October 30. Melissa Wittenberg will be point person.

7. Church Liaison: Jeff Petertil. Absent. Reported on his behalf, Melissa Wittenberg informed the Commission that the donut committee is open to a more eco-friendly option to replace their Styrofoam coffee cups in the future.

8. Growers' Liaison: Jim Vitalo. Discussed benefits of having credit card abilities, where the grower gives an accounting note to the purchaser. This is taken to the Booth, where a credit card is used. The receipt is taken back to the grower and the product is given to the purchaser. Chair Wittenberg has some information on this item, and will discuss it further with other markets on 2/6/10 at the Chicago Farmers Forum.

9. Merchandise: Chris Mitchell

Looking for good non-disposable, non-breakable mugs. Unlikely to change logo.

10. PR: Betsy Fechalos

Working on light post banners for summer season, about \$132 each. They will celebrate 35 years of FM. Interested in getting several to span distance from Ridgeland to East, maybe to Oak Park, given enough money and no other competition for post space. Journal ads: Will include market address. Special events include Green days (May 22 & 30), Corn Roast (Aug. 21), Stone Soup/Closing Day (Oct. 30). Need laminations of new items for sale, disposal signs.

11. Manager's Report

In 2009, \$80 was turned into the commissioner's booth, belonging to an anonymous patron. The commission will discuss what to do with it – donate it, etc.

Asst. Manager job opening: 2 applications submitted so far.

Vendor, Wettstein Organic Farm, recent loss of their 24 year-old son addressed with a sympathy card.

12. New business

Will consider putting vendor applications online for 2011 via:

<http://www.managemymarket.com/>.

13. Old Business

None

Next meeting second Wednesday of the month, Feb. 10, 2010, room 101. Please alert the chairperson in the event of an anticipated absence.