

FARMERS' MARKET COMMISSION  
Meeting Minutes  
August 10, 2022, 7:00 pm  
Conducted Remotely

Commissioners Present: Kristina Becvar, Dominic Cianciolo, Myndi DeVore, Jessica Green, Julia Knier (Chair), Tom Newman, Dina Ross, Jill Stewart

Commissioners Excused: Rachel Hahs, Liz Stolfa, Artie Walker (Trustee Liaison)

Staff Liaisons Present: Cindy Hansen, Erica Helms, Sara Semelka

Pilgrim Church Liaison Present: Leslie Sutphen

**Call to order.** Chair Knier called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

**Agenda approval.** Commissioner Stewart moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Ross seconded. All commissioners present voted in favor.

**Minutes approval.** Chair Knier requested a correction regarding the provision of tables and tents to organizations. Commissioner Newman moved to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2022 meeting as corrected. Commissioner Green seconded. All commissioners present voted in favor.

**Public comment.** No public comments were submitted.

**Chairperson's Report.** Chair Knier asked commissioners to devote a few Saturdays to the Market, particularly tear down.

**Village/Liaison Reports:**

**Market Manager.** Ms. Helms is finalizing the details for the Corn Roast. She will follow up with Lake Theater to advertise on their marquee at a discounted rate. She is working with Nancy Alexander who is a Corn Roast veteran and lead volunteer. Help is still needed with tear down.

Ms. Helms received anonymous feedback that the last hour of the Market is extremely slow and affecting the vendor's willingness to participate next year. They suggested 8:00 am to 12:00 pm or 7:30 am to 12:30 pm. Chair Knier asked Ms. Helms to send a general response to all vendors requesting more feedback, which Ms. Helms will include in her next update. Commissioner Newman will also ask vendors for feedback. Ms. Helms also received comments that the Market is a great organization with great customers.

Ms. Helms received the new tote bags and is reviewing the budget to order long-sleeved shirts. Chair Knier advised against hoodies because of being shown in previous years that they don't sell at a profit margin and when they don't sell at the end of the season, they're often damaged as they sit in storage. Ultimately, they're a profit loss. Ordering takes two to three weeks for the shirts.

Two new market assistants, Teddy and Dearra, started last weekend. Colleen quit so we still need one more to be fully staffed. The Market has never been fully staffed this year. Commissioners are encouraged to share the assistant job description with their networks.

**Pilgrim Church Liaison.** Ms. Sutphen reported that donut sales are steady but partners are struggling to get volunteers, particularly the early morning shift. Iced coffee has been very popular and Pilgrim is looking at other offerings that are less labor intensive than donuts.

Ms. Sutphen will alert Andy, the morning captain, about an additional source of power for the roaster. The Church has extension cords but she recommends checking with Public Works to see if they have more. Commissioner Newman clarified that the roaster's heat is gas and the rotisserie is electric. Ms. Sutphen said there is a water hose connection by the downstairs door.

**Vendor Representative.** Commissioner Newman said a vendor complained to him that the refuse and compost bins are being moved before 1:00 pm. Ms. Helms will talk to the market assistants and make sure they keep the bins out until at least 1:00 pm.

Commissioner Newman had a lengthy discussion with a vendor who was expressing concerns about duplication of products within the market. This incumbent vendor feels they are stepped on by new vendors bringing in identical products to what market has had for decades. Chair Knier said we will discuss next month in executive session.

#### **Committee/Project Reports:**

**Volunteer.** Commissioner DeVore encouraged commissioners to volunteer and bring friends and reach out to networks. We need help tearing down the Corn Roast this week. Chair Knier will volunteer this weekend and Commissioner Cianciolo, who has led the Corn Roast for the commission for 7 years, will add his name and kid's to the SignUpGenius to give an accurate volunteer count.

Chair Knier suggested highlighting volunteers on social media. Commissioner DeVore said we've been hitting Mommail and social media. She suggested organizing an end of the season thank you for volunteers. We could do one in the spring as well and encourage everyone to bring a friend.

Chair Knier suggested the Volunteer and Communications committees have a call to discuss the messaging. Commissioner Green thinks it would be nice to get groups to volunteer, like a young professionals group. People may be more inclined to volunteer with people they know.

Chair Knier believes there may be sustainability clubs at OPRF and at Fenwick. Commissioner DeVore suggested trying to organize block parties to pick a weekend at the Market. Chair Knier suggested it be added to the Village's block party guidelines. Ms. Helms suggested Meals on Wheels and Oak Park Township's youth volunteer program. Ms. Helms will send Kelly's contact info to Commissioners DeVore and Green. Ms. Sutphen offered the Pilgrim parking lot for a thank you event.

**Communications.** Commissioner Green distributed Corn Roast flyers in the community. Ms. Helms said we can make flyers for the Pie Bake-Off at no cost. Commissioner Stewart suggested contacting Melissa Elsmo to get a story. The call for judges is new this year. It's on the [Village website](#).

**Events.** Commissioner Cianciolo confirmed that Nancy will arrive at 6:30 am. He is in touch with Scott and the roaster and corn will be there. Ms. Helms will bring one knife and cutting board. Ms. Helms ordered compostable trays, liners, and paper bags and will make signs for the compost bins.

Ms. Helms is confirming the details for payment. The info tent will have Link, merch, and corn ticket sales. She has extra change for cash purchases and a card swiper. Ears will be \$2 again this year.

Commissioner Cianciolo confirmed the roaster will be in the same southwest corner. We have caution tape in the basement and barricades in the shed. Chair Knier reminded everyone to wear a hat to pull hair back, and to thank customers for supporting the Market. Commissioner Ross clarified the Pie Bake-Off is not a fundraiser.

Ms. Helms shared the press release and Corn Roast video. It's also National Farmers' Market Week so we're encouraging people to vote for our Market. Commissioner DeVore suggested we make a QR code so people can vote while waiting for corn. Ms. Helms will bring one and she'll have Pie Bake-Off applications. Commissioner Cianciolo expects corn to be available by 8:30 am.

**Sustainability.** Commissioner Becvar asked for a status update on our compostable produce bags. Ms. Helms received a quote and will forward it to her. Chair Knier suggested we tell Corn Roast customers to put everything in the gray bin, since some don't know what "compostable" means. Commissioner Becvar cannot attend this weekend but will be at the Market on future weekends.

**Executive Session.** A motion was made by Chair Knier and seconded by Commissioner Becvar to enter into executive session to discuss proprietary vendor concerns.

**Adjourn.** With no new or old business, Commissioner Newman moved to adjourn. Commissioner Cianciolo seconded. Chair Knier adjourned the meeting at 8:36 pm.