

# **Bloomington Community Farmers' Market**

## **Notice of Meeting**

**Monday, September 16, 2013 5 pm**

**Parks and Recreation Conference Room  
401 North Morton Street, Suite 250  
(812) 349-3738, veldmanm@bloomington.in.gov**

### **AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes – June
3. Public Comment
4. New Business – consideration of changes for next year
  - Market ingress and egress
  - Extending dates when crafts may be sold
  - Prepared food vendor selection
  - For profit participants on Info Alley

Other potential changes

  - Follow up on social media guidelines
  - Proposal for April space selection
  - Change to invasive species guidelines
5. Old Business
6. Adjournment

**Bloomington Community Farmers' Market  
Advisory Council**

Monday, September 16, 2013  
5:00 pm

Parks Conference Room

**Advisory Council Members Present**

Bobbi Boos, Michael Salem, Susan Welsand, Sarah Ryterband, Janice Lilly, Linda Chapman, Daniel Young. Absent with advance notice: Geoff Grodner, Julia DeBruicker Valliant

**Market/City Staff**

Marcia Veldman, Les Coyne, Sasha Divine, Nicole Wooten and Robin Hobson

**1. Call to Order**

Janice called the meeting to order.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

The June 2013 minutes were approved with an amendment by Susan Welsand which reflected that there was no mention of the Green America contest at the Market.

**3. Public Comment**

No public comment.

**4. New Business – consideration of changes for 2014**

Issues were presented to the group which might come under consideration for change next year. The task at hand was to understand them and decide which ones the group wanted on the agenda for the December retreat meeting.

**A. Market ingress and egress** - Janice asked to hear from the vendors on this issue. Linda related that in July and August it was difficult to drive into the Market around 7 or 7:15 am due to congestion. She had to arrive around 6:15 or 6:30 am in order to avoid backups which were due, in her opinion to trailers which carry more product, take up more space and take longer to unload as compared to a single vehicle. She also experienced delays of up to 20 minutes waiting to leave Market. She shared that any policy around ingress/egress and trailers may only need to be enacted during the high season months. Susan noted the size of some larger trailers this season as contributing to the problem as they blocked people coming in and those trying to get out around them. She suggested a possibility of having those with oversize trailers being required to unload from Morton St. Linda suggested considering having those driving trailers be required to arrive earlier to avoid peak ingress/egress times. Mike supported the earlier arrival idea. Bobbi noticed more overall courtesy lately from vendors with trailers in terms of being aware of leaving room for others and that, like Linda, she noticed the situation has improved since the end of August. Susan mentioned she noticed trailers were being unloaded into two or three spaces while parked in the same location. Janice proposed this issue be examined further, possibly crafting a policy to take effect during the peak months. Sarah mentioned she noticed frustration and anger among vendors who seemed harried first thing in the morning due to this issue. Sasha agreed that this issue is worst in

the peak season. Robin commented that if it is clear that no progress in traffic movement is going to happen until a certain vehicle moved off the lot that she helps unload those vendors' items so they could move off the lot as quickly as possible. She also tries to point out to drivers the best way to position their rigs while making ingress and egress so that traffic could move most effectively around them. She noted that larger trailers have already been unloading from Morton St. after conversations with staff and that these parties understood the issue and willingly choose to leave their trailer out of the Market. As far as vendors unloading from a vehicle into multiple spots first thing in the morning, Robin noted the Market has been in overflow from July through the beginning of September so during this peak problem time, no vendors had third spots, and even second spaces were very occasional. She said some of the vendors with trailers are unreserved vendors who must wait until after the 6:30 lottery before accessing their spaces. Janice suggested putting a question on the vendor survey that would help to assess what other vendors see as contributing to the traffic issue and suggest some solutions. Marcia wondered if having those unreserved vendors with larger trailers unloading outside the Market represented a sufficient measure that dealt with the problem. Marcia proposed setting a maximum trailer size and those above the maximum length would be required to move them out by 6:00 a.m. in July and August. Bobbi suggested 6:30. Mike said reminding people to be considerate of others may go a long way. Linda said a reminder for vendors to help each other out would be beneficial.

**B. Extending dates when crafts may be sold** – Linda (expressing self-interest) brought up extending the crafts season to include September so decorated garlic braids could be sold instead of waiting until October like others who sell garlic braids. She would also appreciate being able to sell autumnal wreaths in September. Marcia said she is willing to consider allowing for dried flower-decorated garlic braids to be sold because both dried arrangements of flowers and garlic braids are both ok to sell outside of craft season. Sarah asked why crafts are limited to the months of April, May, October and November. Marcia related there was a craft committee that originally met that laid out the beginnings of these guidelines. She reminded that vendors need to sell eight times in June-September in order to be eligible to sell in October and November (and the following spring) and that this helps maintain that crafts are used to help farm vendors, as opposed to craftspeople, fill out their tables during slower produce months. Linda does not feel that the character of the Market would change to feeling “too crafty” due to the still bountiful regular farm products offered in that month. Linda’s spring crafts consist of those products she assembled the fall before and these tend to become brittle over winter. She would like to send them to Market when fresh for more time the previous fall. Janice asked the group if the vendors should be asked about whether they would like to see September included in the craft period. A discussion ensued around whether crafts should be limited to solely agricultural products. Janice asked if a subcommittee should be formed to examine these questions. Marcia responded that if any changes were made to rules that would result in a decrease of allowable craft items from what is currently sold at Market that she would definitely like to see a committee formed. She voiced reservations about the things that show up as allowable crafts at Market, but felt that customer demand sorts out those offerings that seem marginal to her, i.e. beaded jewelry. Linda suggested only purely agricultural craft items be allowed in September – knitted items from a vendor-produced animal’s fleece vs. purchased yarn knitted items. Marcia was hesitant about different levels of enforcement of crafts. Nikki reminded all that the soap question of earlier in the year took extensive time to research and discuss and said this would likely be the same. After more discussion, it was decided staff would discuss

and then decide the next step, but that if a committee is called for, it would be beneficial to have one in the wings and asked potential members. Linda and Janice were willing to serve if needed.

**C. Prepared Food Vendor (PFV) selection** – Janice recalled that City Legal has declared the PFV selection meeting, comprised of members of the FMAC and staff, is a public meeting; those submitting a proposal could be present at, but not participate in, the evaluative session. Janice sent three questions to the group: Do we want to recommend placing a higher value on local products? How do we define a local product? Do we want to place a higher value on functioning as a business incubator? Feedback from members about whether a higher scoring should be given for using local products included: more, but not most; preference is given [for local product]; and keep it where it is. Local product was considered by the group to be from the state of Indiana. On business incubator preference Sarah asked is it the job of the Market to be a business incubator? Linda said her inclination is to support a small fish over a big one and that if the product was sound, why not give a smaller party a step up? Currently, there is a preference in the judging criteria for businesses based in the City limits first, in Monroe County, second and all other areas of Indiana, third. Les said reliability would be an important consideration.

**D. For-profit participants on Info Alley** – Marcia reported about a quarter of the registrations received for Info Alley this year were from for-profit businesses. Teresa Birtles voiced some concern earlier this year about Oberweis Dairy tabling. She felt there conflicting with the interests of those vendors who sell dairy products at Market. City Legal was asked about what latitude the Market has for regulating Info Alley and the answer was that commercial entities would have to be eliminated and not hand-picked. There is a question of what constitutes a commercial entity. Since the Market does not turn anyone away from Info Alley, Marcia said she felt it was not worth adding another layer of management to avoid commercial entities at Market. Sarah spoke in favor of two tiers of pricing, with one, more affordable level for non-profits and another high rate for commercial entities. Les said that what we are providing in Info Alley represents a terrific opportunity for any entity to gain access to the marketplace and as such, in his opinion, for-profits should be charged at least as much as farm vendors, limited in number and perhaps done away with. Daniel said he has never seen private businesses advertising in the same place as activist groups and non-profits at Markets in other cities. There are a number of groups active in the community which are ad hoc and, as such, do not have 501(c)3 status. How are these to be dealt with? Janice brought up the comparison between IU Football (non-profit) and a local massage therapist (for-profit) as a demonstration of classification challenges and assigning fees. Janice asked Marcia to send out a list of 2013 participants to the group for examination noting that for-profit groups tend to rent for the season, but also tend to not participate every Saturday. A decision to address this issue was put off until the group had a chance to examine the data.

## **5. Old Business**

**A. Social Media Guidelines** - Marcia said the Department's social media policy, as develop by the Community Relations staff, was due to go to the Parks Board at the September meeting. Marcia will send the policy to the group. Les asked for any feedback to be addressed at the meeting. Janice proposed the Market subcommittee (Janice, Bobbi,

Dan) meet after the policy is approved in order to discuss what might be done within that framework. Marcia mentioned it would be good for that committee to review the changes made this season in the e-newsletter, Facebook, etc. and the effectiveness of those measures at a November meeting.

**B. Proposal for April Space Selection** - Marcia said that she has heard from a number of vendors who wished to know what their May- October space will be in the upcoming season while they are picking their April space. In order for this to be possible, the April space reservation forms would be due at the March reservation meeting so vendors, once they know what their May- October space would be, would know how to coordinate their space preferences on the April reservation form. A quick turn-around on the April map would be necessary, but this is possible.

**C. Change to Invasive Species Guidelines** – Guidelines to this effect have been in place for a number of years. This year, a vendor was growing a cultivar of an invasive. Ellen Jacquart, who heads the Monroe County Identify and Reduce Invasive Species group, contacted Marcia to let her know that a vendor was selling a Buckthorn cultivar known as Fineline Buckthorn at Market. Some literature the seller had noted that this sub-variety was not an invasive threat, but this conflicts with the opinion of Ms. Jacquart who is regarded as an expert in the field in Indiana. Marcia intends to update the Handbook to reflect that cultivars of invasive species are also prohibited.

**D. Moving FMAC Meeting Time** – To ensure free parking is available for members of the group, Janice proposed future meetings start at 5:15 pm starting in January. Also, Finch's, if available, will serve as the venue for the December FMAC retreat on Dec. 9. Those who wish to meet at 5 pm to order food may do so in advance of the meeting start time at 5:30 pm.

**E. Survey Discussion** – Sarah asked if FMAC members ever review the farm vendor survey questions and if it would be possible for advisory council members to distribute vendor surveys in order to encourage more feedback on the issues therein. Sarah volunteered to do this along with Janice and Dan. Marcia mentioned the survey will go out as an electronic version (Survey Monkey) in addition to the paper surveys distributed in the October Market Beet in the middle of the month. Sarah asked for an advance copy to be sent to the council members in order for them to contribute feedback on the questions of the survey.

## **6. Adjournment**

Minutes submitted by Robin Hobson