

Bloomington Community Farmers' Market

Notice of Meeting

Monday, May 16, 2016 at 5:30 pm

**Parks Conference Room, Suite 250, City Hall
(812) 349-3738, veldmanm@bloomington.in.gov**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Public Comment
4. Old Business
 - Innovative Farm Arrangements
5. New Business
 - Dogs in the Market
 - Artisanal Food Fare/Food Trucks
 - Sale of Wild Collected Mushrooms
6. Adjournment

Bloomington Community Farmers' Market Advisory Council

Monday, May 16, 2016
5:30 pm

Parks Conference Room

Advisory Council Members Present

Leslie Burns, Carmen Siering, Rachel Rosolina, Janice Lilly, Bruce McCallister, Bobbi Boos, Rachel Beyer

Kathy Aiken was absent with notice. Don Rhudy not present pending his appointment approval.

Public Present

none

Market/City Staff Present

Marcia Veldman, Robin Hobson, Emily Hall, Les Coyne

1. Call to Order

Leslie called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of Minutes

The April 2016 minutes were approved.

3. Public Comment

No public comment.

4. Old Business

A. Innovative Farm Arrangements

Marcia mentioned that she invited Lee Jones of Stranger's Hill to join the conversation and, since there are a couple of different innovations afoot, that we consider each proposed scenario separately. By way of background, the Joneses have shared property, but the products they currently bring are grown by them, with the exception of native plants to be sold at SNAYL Day, which were grown on the shared land by Dave and Heather Reynolds, for a one-time event.

Leslie Burns owns a 5 acre berry farm that she has worked for the past 5 years. She plans to rent the farm and the business to a young farm couple. Leslie supports grant writing and major infrastructure decisions pertaining to the property, but is not currently active in farming aspects. Renters of said farm have applied to Market as farm vendors in the current season. Leslie is interested in accruing and keeping attendance points over time which are acquired by parties farming her land for herself, even though she is not the primary vendor on the contract. Her rationale is that she is training farmers and providing them with resources they need to get a successful start in farming. Bobbi raised a question around the scenario of any subsequent new farmers who would rent from Leslie and who would walk into the Market as new vendors with points already assigned to them. Janice asked about the succession of points in the case of death of primary vendor. Marcia's responded that immediate family (parent, child, spouse, or domestic partner) would inherit the points. Beyond that, points may go to a qualified vendor listed on the contract for those years they were listed by the primary vendor as additional vendors. Without the primary vendor making decisions about to whom the points should go, there would

potentially be some discernment about how to divide up points among several interested parties. In the end, the points are tied to the vendor and not the land. To operate any differently would be a huge departure from the way the Market has worked. Bruce points out that in recent years, new vendors have had no problem accessing spaces in the Market as holders of zero points. Bruce made a motion to make no changes to the current points structure in place at Market. Motion was seconded and a vote carried the motion.

Rachel Beyer described the Bread and Roses/Mavourneen scenario of ownership and partnership. In this case, the points, which belong to Jonas Carpenter as the primary vendor of Bread and Roses Nursery (BRN). Salem Willard owns the land where BRN and his own, separate business venture, Bread and Roses Gardens (BRG) operate. Jonas and Rachel, who are married, also own Mavourneen Farm together. At this time, all these businesses are allowed to be represented under one 2016 contract at Market, owing to the fact that Jonas works with both BRN and BRG plus his mutual ownership of and financial interest in Mavourneen. (Permission was obtained through the Market Manager at the beginning of the season with the understanding that further review would be given to the matter.) However, after this season, Jonas will no longer lend his labor to BRG, but will continue at BRN and Mavourneen. In light of this fact, Jonas and Salem wish to split points accrued to this point in time. Salem has been an additional Vendor on the contract for all seasons that Jonas has been the primary.

Marcia pointed out language in the contract: “A Vendor may be party to only one Market contract and may not have a financial interest in any other Market contract.” She gave some background on that sentence which explained that when the change was made to no longer allow first come, first serve access to spaces thereby limiting the number of spaces a vendor could access until all vendors had secured spaces, there was a need to prevent Vendors from creating more than one contract per farm or family in order to garner multiple spaces. Where this comes into play for Jonas, et al. is that in order for Jonas to sell Salem’s produce from BRG at Market, he needs to participate substantially in it by working there. However, he will still have an interest in BRN, which is the main source of income between Salem and Jonas. Currently, Mavourneen focuses on fall production and BRN on the spring and so the two will not wish to have two tables at the same time. If Mavourneen expands, they will want to vend spring and fall. Janice points out that the complicating factor is that two separate farms wish to tack their produce onto BRN. Marcia asks if Salem wants to sell his product at Market. Rachel could not answer this for Salem.

If there is a way to allow for this in the spirit of the Market, without opening loopholes in the contract, it would be through discretion given on an individual basis and presented to the FMAC to lend transparency to the decision-making process. Les suggested a standard be established for this discretionary process. Janice and Carmen make remarks in support of this. Les suggested refining the phrase “financial interest”. Marcia suggested that a committee be formed to take a look at this question outside of the FMAC.

5. New Business

A. Dogs in the Market

Carmen requested materials with which she could inform Market customers about the Market rules around pets at Market. She mentioned her discomfort with engaging customers herself about this. Marcia noted there is a quarter page flier that serves this

purpose at the Market info table. Marcia agreed to redesign the format of this information to make it easy to carry.

B. Artisanal Food Fare/Food Trucks

Under consideration is whether to hold an artisanal food fare for unique and crafted food items. Marcia presented the concept as a monthly event akin to the A Fair of the Arts. This could be held on Plaza 1A. Customer surveys would reveal more data about spending habits at Market to evaluate this concept and that of food trucks at Market. Robin suggested that artisan products be a showcase for farm vendor products so they would not view this event as antithetical. Janice spoke in favor of artisanal foods as her experience with these at other Markets where vendors were creating items from their own produce.

Marcia related the prepared foods vending area has enjoyed a lot of success as a popular addition since it was formed. In 2008 (first year the B-line was open) revenues from PFVs were \$19,500 with 172,000 customers visiting that season. In 2015, PFV revenues were \$46,000, with 250,000 customers in attendance. There are frequently long lines for food stalls. Adding food trucks would potentially be a way to expand food service without intruding upon the farm vending area. Going across the B-Line on 8th St. west toward Rogers St. could work with a street closing or securing parking spaces for food trucks. There is a lot of expressed interest from food vendors. PFV RFP could ask interested parties to apply to be food stall or food truck participants. One perception brought by some of the farm Vendors is that customers come with a finite amount of dollars and there is concern more food attractions will detract from farm sales. Rachel R. indicated that people know what they are going to Market to buy ahead of time and card readers are widely available. Bruce noted customers spend an average of \$2 per customer on prepared foods, but farm vendor perceptions are powerful to reckon with. His concern rests with his perception that when people approach the Market from the PFV area, they may not venture into the Market and that creating another space for food or artisanal products may worsen this. Would it draw people to the vicinity or to the Market? Would non-Market attending food truck culture take up parking that Market customers would otherwise use? Janice opined that people don't confuse what they are there to purchase – nobody confuses kale for muffins. Rachel B. wondered whether farmer income has increased with prepared foods. Les noted food trucks are not located near farmers' markets or flea market. He felt food trucks were sequestered away from both these events. Rachel R. suggested a once monthly trial to test what would happen. Marcia said she would be inclined to try a couple food trucks for a season for a low-impact trial. Janice asked whether if this would be fair to PFVs.

C. Sale of Wild Collected Mushrooms

Marcia met with Marti Crouch to discuss interest on the part of a couple Vendors who wish to see the types of wild collected mushrooms eligible for sale at Market to be expanded. The process for this could be simple – a proposal is submitted to staff and they consult with the Mushroom Inspector. A set of guidelines would be put in place for these submissions.

6. Adjournment

Minutes submitted by Robin Hobson