

Bloomington Community Farmers' Market Advisory Council

Monday, May 21, 2018 at 5:30 pm

Advisory Council Members Present

Kathy Aiken, Bruce McCallister, Rachel Rosolina, Carmen Siering, Cortland Carrington, Leslie Sommer, Rebecca Vadas, Mary White

Public Present

None

Staff Present

Marcia Veldman, Leslie Brinson, Les Coyne

1. Call to Order:

Kathy called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of Minutes

February minutes were approved.

3. Public Comment: None

4. New Business

- A. **Introductions-** With new members present the group went around the table to introduce themselves.
- B. **Selection of Chair and Vice Chair-** The current chair and vice chair (Kathy Aiken and Carmen Siering) were elected to these positions in October and it was determined that they would continue in those roles for 2018 as well.
- C. **Update regarding incident at Market-** Marcia provided background information on a situation at Market with a vendor and community members. The first concern regarding the vendor was expressed to Market staff in late 2016. In the fall of 2017 there were three incidents reported to Market staff that included individuals approaching the vendor booth and harassing the vendor. The vendor did call the police at least two times at Market to report the harassment. Prior to the 2018 Market season, staff added language to the Farm Vendor Handbook to encourage inclusion, diversity and the promotion of behavior that is in the best interest of the Market. On May 12, 2018, the vendor was approached by two women, one man and young boy at Market. The boy, who was carrying a baseball bat, began asking the vendor about his beliefs and willingness to sell to him. Another Market vendor was at this booth and told the child that this was not the best place to have this conversation. The customer group was filming this interaction. Since the situation escalated, the visiting vendor began filming the interaction with his phone. His phone was knocked out of his hand by one of the customers and picked up by the male customer. This male customer began to walk away from the vendor booth and was tackled by the visiting vendor in an attempt to get his phone back. In the meantime someone had alerted Market staff and 911 had been called. Crystal Ritter, who was serving as Market Master that day,

approached the men fighting and told them to stop and remove themselves from the Market. The “visiting” vendor did stop fighting and the male customer and one of the female customers ran. The police apprehended the customers and at least one arrest took place. Police are currently reviewing the report to see if it qualifies for a suspension from the Market by Parks and Recreation. This is a difficult issue and staff are consulting with City Legal. The Department has requested a police officer be present at the Market for the time being. Staff will continue to monitor the situation and take additional steps if needed.

- D. **Ideas for Market Promotions-** Marcia provided a list of the current marketing being done for the Market. Becky added some of the things she has been doing for their business on Facebook. Becky suggested we ask vendors and customers to share Market posts to help spread the word. Videos taken from the vendor or customer point of view was suggested. Leslie suggested providing vendors with a social media gif that would allow them to promote their business and their attendance at Market.
- E. **General Market Updates-** Marcia reported that we have hired a new Market Master, Sarah Mullin, and she will begin on June 4th. Sarah comes to us from Indianapolis where she has played a role in Farmers’ Markets both as a vendor and as a staff member, additionally she has gardening experience. The summer Homegrown Indiana Farm Tour is shaping up to be a great one and will take place on Sunday, July 15th. Marcia gave the group an update on the current parking challenges for the Market. The owner of Johnson Creamery is no longer in favor of the lot being available during Market due to liability concerns and wear and tear on the lot. Construction has also closed 10th Street and will eliminate access to the west lot from that direction. Access to the west lot will only be available before 7:45am and after 1:00 pm on Saturdays. Farm vendors that are staying through the entire Market will be able to park in the west lot, but all early departure vendors will need to find other parking. This will continue until July 7th. Staff have created info sheets for farm vendors and info alley participants and will send out a press release to let the public know of parking options. The Market website has also been updated with new information.

5. Old Business- none

6. Adjournment- meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.