

**Bloomington Community Farmers' Market
Farmers' Market Advisory Council (FMAC)
Meeting Minutes from January 13 at 5:30pm
Allison Conference Room**

Council Members in Attendance: Kathy Aiken, Robin Kitowski, Suzanne Mann, Bruce McCallister, Rachel Rosolina, Rebecca Vadas

Council Members Absent: Cortland Carrington (unscheduled), Leslie Sommer (scheduled), one vacancy.

Staff in Attendance: Marcia Veldman, Sarah Mullin

Community Members in Attendance: none

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Minutes

December 2019 minutes were approved.

3. Business

Debrief from Parks Board Meeting on January 9

Kathy had questions regarding public comments that were made at the Park Board about the cost of market security costing \$80,000 per week. Marcia said that that is not accurate. She clarified that the market budget includes direct expenses but does not reflect the cost of market security. Costs that aren't reflected in the budget include services within the department such as marketing, and Operations division assistance; The Parks Department also gets assistance from other City departments such as the legal department and the police department and those costs aren't reflected in the budget. Suzanne asked about a comment made at the Parks Board meeting regarding sharp shooters. Marcia said she does not know anything for certain. Kathy asked if there is a way the market can communicate out to the public that some of the comments made at the Parks Board meeting were inaccurate. Suzanne asked if, in the future, there would be an additional fee that would be encumbered due to security. Marcia said that it will not be included in the market budget this year, but she can't speak to years to come.

Rachel asked a question about widening the market boundary and limestone barricades. Marcia said that exact locations of these blocks haven't been determined but they would be similar to the blocks that are on Showers Plaza and they would be to meet Homeland Security requirements hopefully in lieu of the orange barricades in some areas. There may not be a decision related to where the barricades will be placed until closer to when the Farmers' Market opens.

Marcia clarified that rules of behavior were tabled and, at the time, it was said that they would be reviewed at the January 28 meeting, but they may be moved to the February meeting.

Marcia said that the north boundary of the Farmers' Market will be moved past the picnic tables on the B-Line where there is a walkway to the west lot. She said there will be space for about 3 Info Alley free spaces marked inside the boundaries.

Robin asked how long the west lot parking will be closed due to the garage construction project. Marcia said that she was unsure of how long it would be closed but she will meet with parking officials prior to the space reservation meeting.

Kathy asked if the issue related to signage for the vendors has been settled. Marcia said the farm vendor handbook, contract and application have been approved in draft form and address expectations specific to vendors. It is the intention to leave the rules about signage for vendors as they are, allowing for signage for promotion of one's business and products only. She said that a challenge regarding signs is that our regulation of them has to be content neutral. She also said the marketing department will work on signs to welcome customers.

A question was asked about vendors wearing messages on their clothes. Marcia said that the market won't be regulating what people are wearing.

Suzanne commented that she was pleased with the thoroughness of the commissioners' comments at the Park Board meeting.

Farmers' Market Advisory Committee (FMAC) Openings/Changes

Carmen Siering has resigned from the FMAC. Her term was going to end in March. The spot will be filled when other vacancies are filled in March. There are only 4 current members who can reapply. There will be at least 7 new members: 5 openings due to term limits and resignation and 2 new positions for food and beverage artisans (pending approval). This will go before the park board on January 28 for approval, as will extending the current term 1 month. Beginning the new term in April allows for food and beverage artisans to have been selected and allows them time to apply.

Suzanne asked about an orientation retreat for the new committee. Marcia said it would be a public meeting but it could be a working meeting which does not have a public comment period. When the new link is open for FMAC applications, Marcia will send the link to the existing committee as well as getting it out to various community groups.

Bruce asked if there could be a screening question to assess their interest in the Farmers' Market on the Advisory Council application. Marcia said she would look into it.

The new balance of membership will be 5 customer reps, 4 farm reps, and 2 food and beverage artisans (pending approval) on the council. The FMAC needs to have 5 qualified electors of the City (city residents), which generally have been customers in the past since most vendors don't live in City limits.

2020 FMAC meetings will generally be scheduled on the 3rd Monday of the month. February's meeting will be held on Feb. 24 due to the space reservation meeting.

Food and Beverage Artisan Update

Another item that was tabled on the last park board agenda was the food and beverage artisan fees. The park board and staff did receive the minutes from the last meeting and the FMAC recommendation. After review, the department plans to recommend a 10% of sales fee for food and beverage artisans again this year, in part because of the significant increase in cost to make that change.

Suzanne said that is very disappointing, and asked that the staff recommend at least a 1-2% decrease. Marcia said she understands. A 10% of sales fee is the staff recommendation but ultimately, it's the Park Board's decision. Suzanne asked if the staff sees it changing eventually. She also asked if the budget for A Fair of the Arts was part of the Farmers' Market budget. Marcia replied that it is not. Suzanne said that if it was added maybe it would help financially. Marcia said that she has made that suggestion in the past, but that recommendation has not been accepted to date. She asked if the art fair keeps growing or if it has a finite space. Marcia said it has a finite space, but it could expand into April and potentially into November although November might not have as much interest due to the weather.

Suzanne suggested that if the Tuesday Market really grows and adds different features that raise money, maybe that would help offset the artisan fees in the future. Rachel feels like after everything the market and the vendors have gone through this season, the City should know it's going to be paying extra to make up the budget and the City should make these changes. The City should financially support the market in the ways that it needs to grow in order to be a viable market. Kathy is worried that food artisans will not want to come back after comparing fees to other markets in the area. Robin says it's hard to compare markets because each is so unique.

Suzanne asked if the number of food and beverage artisans could grow or if it is limited. Marcia said there may be some options to grow the space a bit. Suzanne asked if the Parks Department anticipate most vendors returning. Marcia expects a high percentage to return. However, there are some that have expressed concerns and may not want to return.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for food and beverage artisans and food trucks will be posted on Jan 14 and is due on Feb 3.

There will be a food and beverage artisan application review meeting on Thursday, Feb. 13 at 12pm.

Broadening Inclusion Meeting Debrief

There was a Broadening Inclusion meeting on January 9th after the Park Board meeting. A concern expressed by the subcommittee and echoed on social media was that they did not hear an acknowledgement of the reasons why people are protesting at the market at the Park Board meeting. This needs to be addressed. They discussed making a statement as a community saying no to bigotry and intolerance and asking people to sign on. They also discussed the importance of understanding that not signing on wouldn't assume that their sympathetic to bigoted ideas.

Other ideas that were discussed were planning events that celebrate different cultures at the Market; conducting outreach to populations that don't typically come to the Market and finding out if there's something that can be done to make the Market more attractive to them; Increasing presence on social media, marketing the price, taste, freshness/quality/durability comparison between the Farmers' Market and the grocery; and working with potential youth vendors/school gardens.

The list of contacts where FMAC openings will be sent will go to the next subcommittee meeting and see if they have additional ideas.

Marcia let the FMAC know that the Bloomington Parks Foundation received about an \$80,000 grant from the Bloomington Health Foundation for tripling WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program vouchers.

There are currently 9 members of the Broadening Inclusion subcommittee. One member of the public has been attending since the first meeting and has applied to be the 10th member. The chair and vice-chair of the subcommittee are eager to have him join. They'd like to keep the subcommittee to 10 representatives so it's not a continually changing dynamic.

There was a motion to accept Jason M. as a new member of the broadening inclusion subcommittee. The motion passed.

Farm Vendor Space Reservation Meeting

The farm vendor space reservation meeting will take place on Monday, February 17. There is a potluck at 5:30pm and meeting begins at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers.

4. Adjournment

Adjournment at approximately 6:50pm