

FARMERS' MARKETCOMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

September 29, 2021

7:00 PM

Conducted Remotely

Commission Present: Chairperson Rachel Hahs, Jill Stewart, Myndi Devore, Julia Knier, Dominic Cianciolo, Jessica Green

Commission Not Present: Dina Ross, Liz Stolfa, Katie Weaver

Trustee Present: Arti Walker-Peddakotla

Staff Liaison Present: Cameron Davis

Additional Staff Present: Kathy Jacob

Farmers' Market Manager Present: Kimball Ingram

Others Present: Church Liaison Leslie Sutphen and CIC Liaison Mr. Frank Pond

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Hahs at 7:00 pm.
- 2) **Agenda Approval:** A motion was made to approve the agenda, as presented. The motion was seconded and approved.
- 3) **Public Comment:** Staff Liaison Davis stated that no public comment had been submitted, per the directions provided on the agenda document.
- 4) **Approval of Minutes:** Chairperson Hahs stated that she did not feel the August 10, 2021 minutes were completed in enough detail. She asked to have a vote on approving the minutes postponed to the next meeting so that she could add additional language. Staff liaison Davis reminded the Commission members that at their July meeting the Commission asked staff to shorten the minutes. Chairperson Hahs will revisit the August minutes for consideration at the next meeting.
- 5) **Chair Report (Rachel Hahs)** - Chairperson Hahs informed the Commission that she sent a recommendation to the Interim Village Manager to have the part-time Farmers' Market Manager position begin employment in January. This is in response to the Commissions previous vote to recommend adding 80 hours of time to the budget for the part-time Farmers' Market Manager. Will be part of the budget recommendation going forward.

Chairperson Hahs stated that during tonight's meeting she would like to spend time going over ideas for the Commission's 2022 workplan. The plan is due to the Village Manager's Office in October. The Commission can then

finalize the workplan at their October meeting.

The Commission had previous discussions regarding a prepared food pilot at the Market and she would like an update from Market Manager Ingram regarding this item. Market Manager Ingram stated that he has discussed this issue with numerous vendors who report that they would like to participate in a prepared food sales pilot program in 2022.

Chairperson Hahs stated that since current Market Manager Ingram will not be returning as Market Manager in 2022, she would like the Commission to discuss, at its next meeting, how the Commission members can best assist a new Market Manager when that individual begins their employment in 2022. Commissioner Cianciolo wanted to know how the new Market Manager will be recruited. Staff Liaison Davis reported that the Village's Human Resources Department will post the position on the Village's website, submit it to the State Farmers' Market Association and advertise it in additional locations per their standard practice. Davis will send an e-mail to the Commission, providing a link to the job posting, when Human Resources makes it available.

## 6) Committee/Project Reports

### Events:

- **Corn Roast:** Commissioner Cianciolo said the event went smoothly. He states that he believes the event raised approximately \$1,400.
- **Pie Baking Contest:** Commissioner Ross was not in attendance but did share with Chairperson Hahs that thus far, the Commission has only two contest participants. Chairperson Hahs stated that Commissioner Ross wants to know if the Commission would like to cancel the event if no one else wants to participate. Staff Liaison Davis said the Village's Communications Department did release information about the contest to the community several times. Chairperson Hahs stated that at least five more contest participants are needed in order to move forward with the event. Staff Liaison Davis stated that the Village will produce signs to attach to vendors booths at the Market on Saturday, along with a large sign at the entrance, encouraging additional interest participation. The decision was made to give one final push to attracting additional contest participants.
- **Stone Soup:** Commissioner Cianciolo stated that they needed to get a restaurant lined-up to make this years' soup. Staff Liaison Davis will send the Carnivore businesses contact information to Manager Ingram for follow-up, to see if they would be willing to make this years' soup.
- **Volunteers:** Commissioner Devore informed the Commission that the last two markets will need additional volunteer assistance. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact her.
- **Communications:** Commissioner Stewart had nothing to report.

- **Sustainability:** Commissioner Knier stated that the Market's compost bins are being put to good use.

7) **Church Liaison Report (Leslie Sutphen )** – Church Liaison Sutphen reported that the Church's donut sales are continuing to improve over 2020 totals. She reported that in response to the Health Department's wishes, the Church has reduced the number of tables so that people are not sitting so close together. Also, being able to sell coffee has helped raise revenues. She reminded the Commission that the Church will be selling chocolate donuts at the October 30<sup>th</sup> Market.

8) **Vendor Liaison Report (Frank Damiano)** - Not present.

9) **Farmers' Market Manager Report (Kimball Ingram)** – Market Manager Ingram reported that Vangie's Farm is being added as a vendor. This new vendor attends the Logan Square Farmers' Market and they are looking to see if Oak Park will be a fit for them as they look to expand Market attendance. Ingram reported that this vendor does sell organic products.

Market Manager Ingram reported that the Link Program has had an outstanding year with over \$23,000 in sales. The Market's coupon match program is currently at \$10,500 in sales. Chairperson Hahs asked if he has done anything differently this year for the increase in Link Program utilization. Ingram reported that the Market Manager Assistants have done an outstanding job administering this program in 2021 and he feels that that the program participants feel more welcome to participate, potentially less intimidated to participate, this year. In addition, changes that Village staff has made, regarding processing transactions, has made transactions much quicker. Commissioner Knier requested the amount of merchandise sales. Manager Ingram reported sales over approximately \$1,000. Ingram reported that most of the long-standing inventory has been depleted. Chairperson Hahs thanked Manager Ingram for all of his hard work over the past year.

10) **Farmers' Market Staff Liaison Report (Cameron Davis)** – Davis requested that Chairperson Hahs designate a Commission member to work with him on the 2021 vendor survey. Commissioner Stewart indicated she would be happy to help and Chairperson Hahs will assist.

11) **Other Business:** Chairperson Hahs shared the Commission's 2022 work-plan template for review.

- Events
  - Earthfest (Village Sponsored Event) – Held in April. Commission to participate with Mindy Agnew, Village Sustainability Coordinator. The Commission typically shares a table with the Village with Commission members volunteering. Furthers the Farmers' Market Commission's message regarding sustainability and why having a Farmers' Market increases sustainable activity. 2019 raffled a basket with products from FM vendors. Raises awareness of the market and increases sustainability message.
  - Friends Recruitment Night – The Commission facilitates this event

designed to recruit potential volunteers. Help to create a community around volunteers. Make a more causal event. Leave open as to what the Commission would like to do in 2022.

- Go Green Days – Commission special event that is sustainability focused. The Commission partners with non-profits in the green industry. After 2018 made it more sustainability focused. Each organization participating must have a sustainability focus. Do not want grocery stores to participate, only sustainable partners.
- Children’s Activities. Pretty straight forward,
- Corn Roast Event – Fund Raiser for the market. Provides fresh roasted corn to Market customers and raises money to help support the Market’s budget. Supports the market’s programming.
- Pie-Baking Contest – Participants use vendor products to create pies that are judged by community volunteers. This event highlights vendor products and involves the Community in Market programming.
- Apple Heritage Festival – This is an educational focused special event highlighting various apple varieties The Market manager will facilitate if time is available and Commission will support the manager in facilitating the event One Saturday only event held in Fall.
- Stone Soup – Involve a local restaurant in using vendor produce to create a soup for the benefit of Market customers. This is facilitated by Commission volunteers.
- Sustainability – Education initiative. The Commission to develop ideas on how to educate Market customers on sustainability.
- Food Demonstrations - unable to do yet but will revisit in 2022.
- Market Operations
  - Logo Redesign – The Commission can begin the process of replacing the existing logo in 2021. Commission members will work on this project over the next couple of months. Try and start the process this year. Money in budget this year. Commissioner Stewart will take the lead on finding a designer to redesign the logo. Also, would like to retire the old logo with a fond farewell.
  - Food Donations – Volunteers representing Beyond Hunger facilitate this ongoing program.
  - Farm Inspections – Market manager will continue this tradition of doing on-site inspections for a number of pre-determined vendors.
  - Compost & Recycling Education and Outreach – talk about in context of the Friends recruitment night.
  - Customer Survey – Hope to complete a survey in 2022.
  - Vendor Survey – Annual survey that is distributed each year following the conclusion of Market operations.
  - Networking – reach out to other Farmers’ Market, Join the IL Farmers’ Market Association.
  - Amend Farmers’ Market Ordinance – as needed Commission will work with Village staff to amend.
- Chairperson Hahs will make changes discussed and resend a working-draft to Commission members for further discussion next month. She asked Commission members to contact her with any additional thoughts or feedback regarding the 2022 work plan.

12)**Adjourn:** A motion was made, seconded and approved, to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Next Meeting: October 13, 2021