

FARMERS' MARKET COMMISSION
Special Meeting Minutes
(Approved June 10, 2020)
May 7, 2020
7:00PM
Conducted Remotely

Commission Present: Laura Lencioni (Chair), Dominic Cianciolo, Myndi Devore, Rachel Hahs, Julia Knier, Jennifer Purrenhage, Dina Ross, Jill Stewart, Liz Stolfa, Katie Weaver.

Village Trustee Present: Arti Walker-Peddakotla.

Staff Present: Staff Liaison Cameron Davis, Market Manager Colleen McNichols, Staff Member Mindy Agnew and Director of Public Health Mike Charley.

Others Present: Vendor Liaison Frank Damiano and Church Liaison Jeff Petertil.

- 1) Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by chairperson Lencioni at 7:06 pm.
- 2) Agenda Approval: A motion, to accept the agenda as presented, was made, seconded and approved.
- 3) Public Comment: Chairperson Lencioni asked Staff Liaison Davis if any written public comment had been submitted. Davis stated that no public comment had been submitted, per the directions provided on the agenda document.
- 4) Approval of Minutes: (Acted on later in the meeting under old business) A motion, to approve the March 11, 2020 commission minutes, with two minor revisions, was made, seconded and approved.
- 5) Chair Report (Laura Lencioni) - Commission Chair Lencioni invited Staff Liaison Davis to introduce himself to the Commission. Davis stated that he is the Assistant Director of the Village's Development Customers Services Department. He announced how happy he is to be working with the Commission. Davis provided information about his 32 years of municipal/County experience in Illinois. Commission Chair Lencioni then had each of the Commission members introduce themselves.
- 6) Farmers' Market Staff Liaison Report (Cameron Davis) - Davis reported that the Oak Park Farmer's Market will open on May 30th and extend through October 31st. He then described the revised lay-out that had been developed for the 2020 Market. Davis welcomed Mike Charley, the Village's Director of Public Health, to the meeting. Davis invited Charley to the meeting so the Commissioners would be able to get answers to any questions they may have regarding the Director's May 4th Order, "Social Distancing and Related Requirements for the Village of Oak Park Farmers' Market."

Charley provided some opening comments to the Commission regarding how the Order was developed and then he answered questions from Commission members and others regarding specifics of the document. Charley stated that he is open to potentially adjusting portions of the order as the Market's season progresses. Charley will research the question asked regarding volunteering if you are in an "at-risk" group and report back to the Commission through Davis. In addition, a question was asked regarding if there could be multiple entrances and exits from the Farmers' Market. Charley responded that the entrance to the Market, per his order, needs to remain at the SW

corner of Scoville Avenue and Lake Street and the exit at the SE corner of N. East Avenue. The Market participants should then move quickly around the block in a clockwise direction. It will not be easy to control this effort as there may be many opportunities to enter the Market from other points. Charley is sure that the Market volunteers and staff will do their best to train regular customers and inform new attendees on the Market's new pedestrian flow pattern.

Davis introduced Staff Member Mindy Agnew who will be assisting the Commission this year in an effort to increase the number of volunteers that may be needed to facilitate the 2020 Market. Mindy greeted the Commission.

Davis also provided the Commission with information on the Village's efforts to identify additional Village staff members that may be available to assist the Market on Saturday's. Davis will have more information to share on this topic next week. Davis shared that the Village management staff is putting together a plan on how staff members will return to Village Hall. Davis expects to see some Village staff members working on Saturday's at the Market but the exact number of workers is undetermined at this time.

During discussion a concern was raised by several Commission members regarding the staff support that Farmers Market Manager McNichols would be provided in the morning and throughout the day of the Market. Davis communicated his intent to be present at the Farmers Market on early mornings every Saturday, with the exact time to be determined. Further, both Davis and Mindy Agnew will be present during the season to provide ongoing direction and support to McNichols.

Farmers Market Manager Report (Colleen McNichols) – McNichols reported and commented on the planned 2020 Market layout and logistics and the "WhatsGood – The Farmers Market On-Line" ordering platform. McNichols also provided a vendor update and shared her thoughts on the need for volunteers.

McNichols provided the good news that most of the Market's previous vendors will be returning in 2020. There are a couple of vendors who will be firming up their decisions this week and she hopes to have a more exact Vendor count at the Commission's next meeting.

McNichols commented on the great need for additional volunteers this year and she encouraged Commission members to think about, during this coming week, where they might like to volunteer their time in 2020. She will be meeting with Commission members and Agnew to continue strategizing how to get the word out about volunteer opportunities and to better define the Market's volunteer needs.

McNichols provided a brief overview of the "WhatsGood – The Farmers Market On-Line" ordering platform. She mentioned that several Commission members may be available to assist vendors in setting up their on-line presence in the WhatsGood app. Additional discussion ensued regarding how "WhatsGood" and the aggregation effort will be managed. McNichols stated that during the first week, the number of orders taken through "WhatsGood" would be limited to approximately 50 and then the number would increase over time.

Commissioner Knier inquired if the Health Directors Farmers' Market Order had been shared with farmers and vendors with a process in place for them to seek clarification and assistance regarding the document. McNichols assured the Commission that it had been shared and that a process was in place.

A question was asked regarding who would handle the LINK/SNAP responsibilities at the Information Tent. McNichols discussed the matter and reported that a Village staff person would need to handle that responsibility.

- 7) Church Liaison Report (Jeff Petertil) - Petertil communicated his and the Church's support for the changes being made to keep this year's Market safe. He provided a brief update to the Commission regarding efforts being put-forth by Church volunteers to prepare for the upcoming donut sale season.

Vendor Liaison Report (Frank Damiano) – This report update had been inadvertently left off of the agenda. Damiano reported on conversations he has had with vendors who are happy that the Market is starting on May 30th. Damiano stated that he had completed signing up to utilize the “WhatsGood – The Farmers Market On-Line” ordering platform, as previously discussed. He will be utilizing it for the Andersonville Farmers' Market. He had positive comments regarding the simplicity of the on-line set-up and said he would be utilizing this new opportunity at Oak Park's 2020 Market. Damiano will continue to work with McNichols to address any vendor concerns that may arise.

8) Committee/Project Reports

- a) Volunteer: Purrenhage communicated that a phone meeting will be scheduled with McNichols and Agnew to further discuss volunteer needs for the 2020 Market and strategize on expanding the pool of available volunteers. Purrenhage will report back on these efforts at the next meeting.
- b) Communications: Stewart communicated that due to the COVID-19 emergency, she is concerned that the 2020 Market is behind in messaging regarding communicating-out this year's changes. Stewart will have more to report, regarding communication efforts, at the next Commission meeting.

Commissioner Knier commented that she felt that communication and signage needed to be ramped up quickly as this is a brand new location, layout and process. She commented on her belief that the general public will need this information as soon as possible in order to understand and adjust their shopping habits.

- 9) Old Business: This is where approval of the minutes occurred on the Commission's agenda, as previously indicated.

10) New Business: A motion was made, seconded and approved to hold the Commission's regularly scheduled meeting on May 13th beginning at 7 p.m.

11) Adjourn: A motion was made, seconded and approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Prepared and submitted for consideration by Cameron Davis, Staff Liaison:



