

Upper Merion Farmers Market Advisory Board (FMAB) Meeting

November 17, 2020

7:00 PM via Webex Technology

Present at the Meeting:

Eric Huhn (Chairperson), Lydia Dan-Sardinas (Vice Chairperson), Lauren Dare and Erika Spott (Secretary *pro tem*); Vince Lattuca (Staff Liaison) and Tina Garzillo (Board of Supervisor Liaison). No guests were in attendance.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Huhn called the meeting to order, and after the Pledge of Allegiance, the October Meeting Minutes were unanimously accepted. The Advisory Board also confirmed that the September Meeting Minutes were final and complete for public posting.

Old Business:

Mr. Lattuca reported that COVID-19 precautions remain in place at the Market, but, in light of recent information from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Montgomery County, stricter guidance would soon be forthcoming due to the rising infection rates, and that the stricter guidelines would likely effect the Winter Market. Mr. Lattuca added that he is monitoring the situation and will conform the Market to any updated guidance as warranted. Discussion followed among FMAB members regarding the upcoming November 21 Market (last market of the regular season); specifically around vendor placement, logistics and operating procedures to ensure safe practices following COVID-19 precautions.

Mr. Lattuca further reported that the October 31 Market (Halloween Market) was well-attended, in particular the childrens' Halloween event, hosting approximately 150 children. The Market and event observed social distancing and face masks were required.

[The November donation Saturdays have also been successful, and will continue to be highlighted in the newsletter, including the ECDC Small Business Saturday event at the Market.]

Mr. Lattuca confirmed that the Winter Market would adding November 28 and December 12 as Market days, and as a result, there would be a Market every Saturday through and until the Christmas holiday. Mr. Lattuca also reminded the FMAB members that Winter Hours for the Market were from 10 AM-12 PM. He also reported that the newsletter would revert to a once per week publication issued on Thursdays. Saturday events and pre-order information would be combined. There was discussion among the FMAB members regarding potential vendors for the December markets.

New Business:

Mr. Lattuca requested that the FMAB members give consideration to planning for the 2021 season, taking into account both the possibility of a regular season and the continuation of a COVID-19 restricted season.

The FMAB discussed the necessity for a December 15 meeting and resolved that Mr. Lattuca would have the discretion to cancel the meeting upon one week's notice if there were no new or important agenda items.

Staff Liaison Report:

Mr. Lattuca reported that there were no current no sponsorships, but that Ms. Vattimo would be starting the outreach process earlier in 2021 and that Mr. Lattuca would like to target prominent local retailers for sponsorship commitments rather than gift card donations. He also reported that he was working on a birdhouse craftsman for one of the December Markets as a specialty vendor.

Chairperson Huhn also noted in discussion that the deadline for Manna orders is Friday, November 20 and that the pickup location was Paladar in the Village at Valley Forge Town Center.

Board of Supervisor (BOS) Liaison Report:

Ms. Garzillo reported that the Church Road bridge replacement construction is set to begin on December 30, 2020 and that alternate routes for traffic in the area would be implemented. Estimate construction duration: 1-2 years. Ms. Dare requested that added police presence on Crooked Lane be considered for traffic control.

Ms. Garzillo further reported that there were 2 potential proposals for uses of the former garden center at Norview Farms. One is a request by the Community Cupboard to utilize the existing greenhouse to supplement its produce offerings year-round. The BOS has requested a business plan from the Community Cupboard. The second request is for a miniature golf course proposed by Petrucci's. A business plan by Petrucci's is also in progress. Issues for mini-golf are similar to the FMAB's concerns about the Market moving there: traffic flow (especially in the evening), parking, impact on surrounding residents, etc.

Ms. Garzillo also commented on a development plan submitted for a 20-acre parcel between the Glenn Rose housing development and Heuser Park, which is currently up for sale. The potential buyer would like to use the site as a staging area. If the transaction does not close, the Township would consider entering negotiations to acquire as open space.

Finally, Ms. Garzillo reported on the 2021 budget, noting that the operating budget had been reduced from \$44MM to \$41.66MM, which aligned with the overall 10% reduction in revenue that has been caused by the pandemic. By reducing the budget, the BOS was able to avoid a tax increase in 2021. Ms. Garzillo encouraged FMAB members to shop and use the services of local businesses.

There being no other business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Spott and seconded by Ms. Dan-Sardinas, and the meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Submitted:

Erika Spott, Secretary *Pro Tem*