

Upper Merion Farmers Market Advisory Board

July 18, 2023 - 7:00PM

Meeting Minutes

The Upper Merion Farmers Market Advisory Board meeting took place on July 18, 2023. The meeting was called to order 7:06 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present in person were Beth Davis, Sue Saraceni, Lauren Dare, Koren Draper, Sarah Lattanze, Jasmine Ali, Brian Sell (Tina Garzillo and Eric Huhn joined in later.)

Minutes:

Approval of June 20, 2023 minutes. First – Lauren Dare; Second – Koren Draper

Old Business

Zucchini 500 had 29 participants. It went well except for the extreme heat and humidity. Suggestion was made to use the small tent next year. End the track at a point where the “cars” can roll out onto the pavement. This year there was an on deck call so that the next group would be up and ready early.

New Business

Fall Fest logistics meeting was held with Dave Dolga, Dan Russell, Jeff Hickman, and Dennis Rudzinski. The primary contact is Dave Dolga. This is a Public Works event. There are 13 vendors lined up. The farmers market can set up an info booth. There can be a scarecrow contest. Upper Merion Park & Rec will run Barktoberfest and Spooktacular events. It was suggested to have a subcommittee for this with Brian as chair. Lauren volunteered to be on subcommittee. The event runs 10am to 5pm. Paige will still email newsletters, but the event will not be called a farmers market.

Paige is planning Hot Diggity Dog event for August 12, 2023. Due to expected heat, it was decided to cancel the dog attended events. Lauren suggested giving out a free bag of dg goodies.

As for vendor recruitment and retention, Beth requested the list of farms that had been contacted for the last five years. Discussed Neil’s Sharpening Services and Harlesyville Beekeeper. Lost Happy Being due to staffing issues. Moishe’s Pickles was a no show too many times so not wanted back. The following questions were asked. If we start the season with “x” number of vendors and ended with “y” number of vendors, what happened to cause this? Why are we not retaining vendors? Why is there a boost at the end of the season? What are the numbers telling us? What are the trends? Beth brought up the disparity between the amount of produce vendors versus artisan vendors. She note that the Phoenixville Farmers Market has 17 produce vendors, 3 bread vendors, 9 artisan food producers, and one sustainable product vendor. Craft vendors are only allowed once per month. The Downingtown Farmers Market has 7 farms, 2 bakeries (one

bread, one desserts), and 8 food and beverage vendors. The Kennett Square Farmers Market has 10 farms, 9 food and beverage vendors, and a botanical soap vendor.

Windy Springs Farm told Lauren that they want to come back in 2024.

For the rotating board table, historical commission was at 7/15 market. Library is scheduled for 7/29, Shade Tree 9/23, and EAC 9/30/23.

Tiffany made updates to the website. Please email Beth with your ideas.

Brian wants to do a survey after consortium is over. One survey for vendors. One survey for customers. Beth will send email for suggestions.

As for signs, Brian did not follow up on the A-frames. Tina Garzillo is supposed to look into permanent wayfinding signs for Nor-View Farm and the Upper Merion Farmers Market. Tina has requested from board members suggestions for the extra three panels on the permanent sign at the farm; for example, "Saturdays 9am to 1pm" and "Special Event This Saturday." Please email Beth with your suggestions. Tina needs this information for the sign vendor and has already asked for suggestions a few times. Brian and Paige are to follow up with Tiffany regarding sign for the tent. Allendale Road sign direction cannot be changed. Koren and Sue said it can be read as it is currently situated. Jasmine and Sarah have noted that there have been some cars speeding through the parking lot.

Brian and Paige are to follow up with Tiffany on boosting social media posts. Jasmine and Sarah are to continue with their social media posts. Jasmine is to take pictures, especially simple pictures.

Koren asked if anything is being done for Small Business Saturday, 11/25/23.

Regarding volunteers, it was asked if anyone has heard from Pam Heffner. Is she alright?

Suggestion made to include police and fire dept. at Family Fun Day next year.

Suggestion made to include food drive during chili cook off.

Question came up on timing of pole barn. There will be no pole barn construction the fall of 2023 per Tina.

Sue had emailed the board, Brian, Paige, Sarah, and Jasmine about National Farmers Market week, August 6 – August 12.

Brian wants input from the board. All ideas are to be sent to Beth and Beth will then send one coherent document to Brian.

Question came up as to whether or not suggestion cards should be available at the info booth.

Staff Liasion Comments – Brian Sell

Consortium show is Adams Family on 7/24/23 at the middle school. There is also an art show.

Board Liasion Comments – Tina Garzillo

In 2024, single use plastic bags ban goes into effect 1/1/2024 and single use plastic utensils ban goes into effect 7/1/2024.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm. Motioned by Lauren first and Eric second.