

Upper Merion Farmers Market Advisory Board

September 19, 2023 - 7:00PM

Meeting Minutes

The Upper Merion Farmers Market Advisory Board meeting took place on September 19, 2023. The meeting was called to order 7:05 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present in person were Beth Davis, Sue Saraceni, Lauren Dare, Sarah Lattanze, Jasmine Ali, Brian Sell, Tina Garzillo, Eric Huhn, Koren Draper

Minutes:

August 15, 2023 minutes not available.

Old Business

N/A

New Business

Chili Cook Off Planning – 16 entries; judges- Bill Jenaway, Tony Hamaday, Tina, maybe Dan Russell

Barktoberfest/Spooktacular Planning – maybe keep with four-hour timeframe; children Halloween parade; dog parade; use big tent

Survey results

Vendor survey – 11 responses – 81.8% plan on returning; 56.6% plan to return for selected dates; 63.6% interested in a winter market; 80% interested in a monthly night market; 72.7% believe special event days increase sales, especially opening day and Zucchini 500; Weather impacts sales the most; marketing comments/suggestions- posters at local businesses, postcards and flyers, expand marketing to Norristown and East Norriton; post signs on main roads; 90% like new location at Nor-View Farm, especially due to tents and more foot traffic

Patron survey – 70 responses – 30 patrons have attended for six or more seasons; 27 attend 2-3 times/season, 19 once per month, 12 every other Saturday, 11 every Saturday; driving attendance – 51 vendor list, 35 food truck, 27 weather, 18 special event, 9 other; 56 would recommend to others, 13 not; how to improve the market – vendors (more food, better, flower, variety, cheese, coffee, farm, farmers market, veggie, produce, fruit, crafts); most purchased – 63 produce/farm, 41 bakery, 41 food truck, 17 craft/artisan, 16 alcohol/beverage; want to see more of – 55 produce/farm, 44 bakery, 38 food truck, 21 alcohol/beverage, 19 craft/artisan, 7 other; interested in attending winter market – 56 yes, 13 no; frequency of winter market – 26 monthly, 17 bi-weekly, 12 weekly; interest in a monthly night market – 51 yes, 17 no; special events – 38 opening day, 27 family fun day, 24 Spooktacular/Barktoberfest, 19 chili cook off, 17 hot diggity dog, 13 Zucchini 500; other special events – 45 peach festival, 41 pick your own flowers, 33

cocktail day, 27 carnival day, 21 craft vendor day, 12 other; like location at Nor-View Farm – 51 yes, 15 no; receive weekly newsletter – 49 yes, 11 – no, would like to sign up, 8 – no, not interested

Winter market

Vendor recruitment and retention – Jasmine and Sarah created spreadsheet of potential vendors; lock in new vendors. Paige does not work Thursdays and Fridays and starts very early in the mornings Monday through Wednesdays making phone calls to existing and potential vendors difficult.

Signs and advertising – get more simple signs out; we can get sponsors for materials

Jonas is not coming back next year. He has someone taking over.

For 2024 run season 28 weeks starting May 18, 2024.

New ideas

Staff Liasion Comments – Brian Sell

Board Liasion Comments – Tina Garzillo

A lot of retirements among township employees. There are 270 township employees and up to 400 in the summer. UMT is 17.1 square miles with 33,000 residents.

KOP bid is interested in helping UMFM with marketing and some possible funding. They said NOW is the time to make contact with vendors for 2024 season. Make initial contact. Get contact date and follow up. How many points of contact?

Tina requested flash mob for opening day 2024 season. Maybe Koren can cater opening day?

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm. Motioned by Eric first and Koren second.

Post meeting action notes.

- 1) Brian to let us know which vendors registered for fall fest.
- 2) Brian to get FreeCamp info to Jasmine.
- 3) Paige to connect with Lauren at KOP Bid for suggestions on how to connect with vendors.
- 4) Jasmine to connect with Jonas' new replacement and provide rules and regulations and obtain contact info and how he wants to communicate.

- 5) Brian to follow up with Paige to see if she used contact info for Federal Donuts that Sue emailed to her.
- 6) Jasmine to connect with Jonas at the next market regarding what is happening with Peach Bottom Farms and the market.
- 7) Jasmine is going to draft a letter for vendors regarding next year's main market and will send to board for review.
- 8) All - email Sarah and Jasmine the vendors you want contacted.