

Nashville Farmers' Market
Regular Meeting
January 27, 2016

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Nashville Farmers' Market (NFM) Board was called to order by Board Chair, Margot McCormack, at 8:36am. Board members in attendance included: Margot McCormack, Kia Jarmon, Tyler Brown, and Frank Cardenas. Other attendees included Susan Jones, Macey Amos, Tasha Kennard, Jackie Contreras, Charles Kizer, Carolyn Sanders, Rich Reibling, John Hull, Keith Merritt, Michael Murdoch, Councilman Freddie O'Connell, Thaddeus, Crystal DeLuna-Bogan, Monchita Davis, Molly Berliss, Robert Wolverton, Michael Baudinot, and others.

A quorum was present.

Announcement

Ms. McCormack opened the meeting by reading the following standard statement:

As information for our audience, if you are not satisfied with a decision made by the Farmers' Market Board today, you may appeal the decision by petitioning for a writ of cert with the Davidson County Chancery or Circuit Court Your appeal must be filed within 60 days of the date of entry of the Board's decision. To ensure that your appeal is filed in a timely manner, and that all procedural requirements have been met, please be advised that you should contact your own independent legal counsel.

Approval of Minutes

The NFM meeting minutes for December 16, 2015 were approved as written.

Board Announcements:

Kia Jarmon noted that she will be rolling off the board. At the request of the Mayor, Ms. Jarmon will be serving on the Beer Board effective as early as February 6, 2016. Ms. Jarmon stated that the market is still of great importance to her, is proud of the work the board and staff have been able to accomplish during her tenure, and will continue to be an advocate for diversity and equity at NFM. Ms. Jarmon thanked Ms. Kennard and commended Ms. Kennard on her work.

Ms. McCormack noted the need to fill the position of Vice Chair once Ms. Jarmon rolls off. Ms. Kennard explained the process for transition to the Beer Board before a board member can be nominated to fill the spot. Ms. McCormack stated that she will nominate Tyler Brown.

Ms. Jones introduced Macey Amos as a new member of her team that will be assigned to assist NFM in legal matters and will be present at Board meetings in the future.

Ms. Kennard thanked Ms. Jarmon for her service and requested for Ms. Jarmon to please stay involved with the market.

Ms. Jarmon recommended that NFM pursue diversity when nominating new board members.

Ms. McCormack noted that we will be taking the rest of the agenda out of order.

New Business

Ms. Kennard recognized visitors in attendance to discuss the TN State Museum project and offer a presentation.

Ms. McCormack thanked the visitors for coming and gave them the floor.

Mr. Rich Reibling referred to the Mayor's letter to NFM Board members and noted that legislation amending the NFM lease with the state has been filed with the City Council. Mr. Reibling noted that Councilman O'Connell will likely pursue community engagement around the museum project and reiterated the Mayor's support of the market. Mr. Reibling stated that the lease amendment mean change and will lend to the long term strength of the market. Her recognized there would be necessary changes made to the market's current business model, especially the revenue structure. He also stated that the Mayor will support the market through the transition, that the changes create opportunity and allots funds to the market for purposes of restoring the existing facility. He also stated that the Mayor's office recognizes that more money may be necessary to make required changes. Mr. Reibling noted that the state and city have maintain an outstanding relationship through the current and previous administrations and that they are happy to cooperate with the state on the museum project. Mr. Reibling then introduced John Hull, Vice Commissioner of the Tennessee General Services.

Mr. Hull stated that the state is excited about the project and pleased about the relationship with the city. The Governor is directly in charge of the project and will raise \$40 million in funding for the project in addition to the \$120 million provided by the state. He stated that the state plans to break ground in April 2016 and complete the project by Fall 2018. He also stated that the state plans to do outreach across the state to build visitor interest in the museum. He introduced the project partners in attendance including EOA Architects, Turner Construction, and Compass (project manager) and stated that this team will present the project plan in its current state today.

Mr. Keith Merritt of Turner Construction began the presentation by introducing himself. Ms. McCormack asked how many workers are anticipated during construction. Mr. Merritt stated that there would be a maximum of 225 workers on-site at the peak of construction. Mr. Merritt

presented an aerial view of the site and explained how the construction logistic plan may impact transportation routes to the market. He stated that the logistic plan will maintain the loading dock entrance at NFM and will coordinate with NFM staff about moving into the shed area. Ms. Jarmon requested information about the MWBE hiring process for construction crew. Mr. Merritt noted that Turner Construction will offer 4 employment packages with various scopes of work, and will conduct outreach events for potential workers. He stated that they will also direct sub-contractors to state resources to ensure that employment opportunities are open to all parties. Mr. Merritt described the site fencing and that the fence cover will have graphics to make the site more visually appealing during construction. Ms. Jarmon suggested he contact Metro Arts to create a public art piece. Ms. Kennard asked whether sidewalks would be accessible during construction. Mr. Merritt stated that the ultimate goal is to keep the sidewalks open as much as possible.

Mr. Michael Murdoch of EOA Architects continued the presentation with architectural renderings of the proposed state museum building and grounds. He explained the parking scenario as accommodating 155 parking spaces. Ms. Jarmon asked where state parking currently located on the property will be relocated. Mr. Hull responded that they would utilize the new state parking garage. Ms. Jarmon asked why not create underground parking to have more spaces available. She stated that 155 parking spaces is not enough parking to accommodate the needs of both the museum and the market and asked where we will direct overflow parking once the project is finished and where will customers go in the meantime. Mr. Hull stated that he does not have an answer at this point but that construction parking will be located in a lot on Jefferson rather than in the market parking lot. Ms. Kennard requested to know when the state will acquire the Market's current north parking lot. Mr. Hull answered that the market will have access to the north parking lot at least through the end of April and Turner Construction will take control in May. Mr. Merritt noted that if that plan changes, market staff will be notified.

Ms. Kennard stated that the construction lines up with peak season and that the market will be working on a parking solution in the meantime. Mr. Brown responded that his interpretation is that there is no plan for addressing the lack of parking during construction and Mr. Hull stated that they do not have a temporary plan for parking. Mr. Reibling stated that the Mayor's office is exploring option and that state lots are open to the public on weekends and evenings and suggested placing maps around the market and communicating parking options to the public. Ms. Jarmon stated that we need to discuss what a temporary parking solution looks like. Ms. McCormack asked whether state parking is free. Mr. Reibling responded that state parking is free. Ms. Kennard asked whether the Sounds are planning to utilize parking lots other than state lots and Mr. Reibling stated that the Sounds will direct parking to the state garage. Ms McCormack asked how many seats are in the Sounds stadium to which Mr. Reibling responded 8500. Mr. Brown stated that the market will need clear information to be able to share with the public. Mr Reibling stated that the circulator bus is free to ride downtown.

Mr. Hull stated that the farmers market is an important part of the museum plan, that no food will be available at the museum for that reason and that special events at the museum will draw traffic to the market. Ms. McCormack asked for clarification on valet parking. Mr. Murdoch stated

that valet parking helps make the building accessible. Mr. Kennard asked how many people visit the museum currently and how many are projected to visit in the future. Mr. Hull responded that the average is currently 115,000 per year and the goal is to draw 250,000 a year in the future. Ms. Kennard states that the market is excited about our new neighbors, and asked if there is an outlook for the Jefferson Street corridor to provide additional parking long term. Mr. Hull responded that currently there is no plan. Ms. McCormack asked if admission to the museum will be free to which Mr. Hull responded yes. Mr. Brown asked if traffic studies have been conducted on how museum construction will impact area traffic to which Mr. Merritt responded that there will be little impact since construction traffic will take place at odd hours.

Ms. Jarmon stated that she would like to see collaboration between the state, city, and market around PR and communication so that the community has the opportunity to hear what is happening. Mr. Cardenas asked if there is a thought process behind driving museum food customers to the market. Mr. Reibling suggested creating a marketing campaign and partnership with the market and also stated the museum flow will naturally come to market. Mr. Hull suggested working with museum staff.

Ms. Kennard expressed that market staff has been communicating with Market House merchants to prepare them and has been discussing adding seating options. She stated that seating is already at capacity so the market is working on a plan to accommodate increased traffic. She stated that merchants are excited about the potential of new revenue. She stated that the market hosts 40 special events a year and will need to work with the museum and park to accommodate special events. Mr. Reibling stated the project is a work in progress, that the state is showing that they are open to the process and communication. He also stated that the current lease is a 40 year lease with the state and that the state could take the entire site but that the city wants to keep the market and will take any proceeds received from this transaction and put it back into the market. Mr. Reibling stated that it is difficult to anticipate everything that may happen but that an open line of communication is important.

Ms. Jarmon stated that attention needs to be given to the market's beautification and asked what is the plan for market updates. Ms. Kennard explained that she and Mr. Kizer have met with representatives from the Metro General Services project management team and that Metro General Services will be doing an infrastructure assessment, and that the market will be utilizing funds to improve infrastructure as a first priority. She stated that the second priority will be projects geared towards revenue development and that the third priority is experiential or beautification. Ms. Kennard went on to explain some potential beautification projects including partnering with the Metro Arts Commission. Ms. McCormack asked where restrooms fit in the priorities and Ms. Kennard responded that restrooms are part of infrastructure.

There was a motion to approve the lease proposal, and the motion was approved by consensus. Ms. McCormack made a motion to rescind the previous vote, which was also approved by consensus. Ms. McCormack then made a motion to approve the lease amendments as outlined in the letter from Mayor Barry, and the motion was approved.

Mr. Reibling thanked everyone for their time and many of the presentation guests departed.

Ms. Kennard explained the upcoming process for the proposed lease amendment, stated that Freddie O'Connell is sponsoring the legislation, and encouraged all Board members to attend the committee meeting taking place on February 16th. Ms. Kennard stated that it is understood that the current market plan for financial self-sufficiency will need to be amended. Ms. McCormack asked how the South Shed enclosure project figures into the revised plan. Ms. Kennard stated that the revised plan right now is to do a facility assessment so that the market can use funds to address ongoing facility problems, that the \$4 million dollars will likely not be enough to cover all the market's needs, that the market will be requesting additional funding, and that the current plan will not work b/c of the state project. Ms. Kennard stated that as part of the infrastructure assessment, the market will consider whether an all-seasons shed enclosure will facilitate financial self-sufficiency. Ms. Kennard stated that it is important for the market to maintain the integrity of the market with room for all merchant types and referred the board to the Amendments and Recommendations sheet.

Mr. Brown suggested the market communicate publicly what the revised plan is. Ms. Kennard commented that for the moment the market's communication goal is to meet the needs of market merchants. She stated that on April 1st all merchants will be placed in the South Sheds and that this will be announced in the Merchant Meeting taking place Friday January 29th. Ms. McCormack responded that the benefit of the new plan is that all merchants will be placed together. Ms. Jarmon asks how communication with merchants is going and how we can hone our mission. Ms. Kennard then discussed the merchant and community feedback received up to this point and stated that market staff will continue to gather feedback.

At this point Ms. Jarmon removed herself from the room for personal business.

Mr. Brown asked where the Garden of Babylon lease stands to which Ms. Kennard responded that the GoB lease amendment will be held until the Market lease amendment is completed. Mr. Brown asked if it's possible to limit traffic in that area. Ms. Kennard discussed parking options and the market's plan to adjust loading policies. She stated that the market is in discussion with the city and state to explore accessing state areas and that market staff will meet with MTA to get people to the market at no cost. She stated that we can utilize the fence line in reference to special events and described a "special event overlay".

Mr. Brown stated that we shall keep an open mind and continue to push forward and try new things.

Strategic Planning

Ms. McCormack moved to defer strategic planning, and the motion was approved.

Financial Overview

Ms. Kennard stated that the current budget included the implementation and utilization of an updated South Shed, and that now attention turns to the the deficit the market faces by not having an updated South Shed and how this affects the market's revenue structure going forward. Ms. Kennard introduced a Financial scenario sheet, and discussed the various scenarios there-in.

Mr. Brown asked how much control the market will have over how the planned \$4 million will the be spent. Ms. Kennard responded that the Mayor's letter does not clarify this.

Staff Update

Ms. Kennard stated that the call for the 2 positions has officially closed and that Ms. Kennard and Ms. Contreras will begin reviewing candidates.

Ms. Contreras explained the 2016 merchant application process. Ms. Kennard introduced the 2016 rate sheet and explained how the rate structure has changed. She noted that the rate sheet will be further amended once the market loses access to the North Sheds. Ms. Jarmon asked how these changes will affect Craft and Flea Merchants to which Ms. Kennard responded that the market will no longer articulate rates on merchant types with the exception of farms of 10 acres or less. Mr. Baudinot asked whether merchants will have to pay for access to the 10x10 space on the exterior of the sheds to which Ms. Kennard responded that the space in question will not be available. Ms. Jarmon asked if more time could be given before implementing the new rate structure to which Ms. Kennard responded that we must have the rate card available when applications are available by Feb. 1 and that the staff recommends transitioning to this rate structure on April 1. Mr. Brown stated his agreement in avoiding unnecessary stress on merchants. Ms. Kennard stated that the staff will communicate changes and gather feedback from Merchants.

Ms. Kennard referred next to the requested Amendment to Merchant Standards requiring all eligible food merchants to accept SNAP benefits. Ms. Jarmon asked about the cost and process of becoming a SNAP retailer and Ms. Contreras explained the application process and associated expenses. Ms. Jarmon expressed concern that the federal paperwork would be prohibitive for some farmers. Ms. Kennard referred to data that supports the growth of revenue associated with accepting SNAP benefits.

Ms. Kennard went on to highlight the requested Amendment to Merchant Standards expanding collectives from 4 to 8 and waiving liability insurance for non-food merchants. Ms. Jones of Metro Legal inquired whether Metro Legal has been in the loop regarding the requested change to liability insurance requirements to which Ms. Kennard responded in the affirmative. Mr. Brown asked if it was necessary to make the change if all current merchants already carry liability insurance to which Ms. Jarmon responded that the savings could be beneficial. Mr. Brown

asked how we will respond to if not all current merchants find space in the new set-up to which Ms. Kennard responded that we will work hard to accommodate all current merchants. Ms. Jarmon asked what the current mix is but Ms. Kennard did not have an immediate answer. Ms. Jarmon requested we treat all merchants with grace.

Motion to require all approved eligible merchants to accept EBT was deferred until February meeting.

Motion to expand collective maximum from 4 to 8 was passed unanimously.

Motion to waive liability insurance for non-food merchants is contingent on approval from Merchant DOA.

Ms. Jones emphasized that this waiver cannot apply to any merchants operating out of a mobile unit.

Other Business and Public Comments

Ms. Kennard reviewed new initiatives taking place including 2016 GLK Residency program, workshop series, and special events.

Ms. McCormack commended the market on the efforts put forth to be a warming station and shelter. Ms. Jarmon referred to the recent meeting of the Codes, Fair, and Farmers Market Committee at NFM and Ms. Kennard reminded everyone that the next community meeting will take place in late February and will ideally continue on a quarterly basis.

Crystal Bogen of the Grilled Cheeserie spoke on The Grilled Cheeserie's experience as a market merchant over the last 3 months. She requested a 3 month extension of their lease. Ms. Kennard explained the feedback received from Market House merchants regarding food truck participation at the market.

Motion to extend Grilled Cheeserie lease deferred to Market Management.

Ms. Molly Berliss stated that GLK appeared to be an excellent opportunity to generate new revenue.

Mr. Flowers of Flowers Farms asked if the 10x10 space external to the sheds will be available or eliminated to which Ms. Kennard responded that it will be eliminated as rental space but may be a point of flexibility in the future. Mr. Flowers requested direct sunlight.

Monchita asked what the new layout will look like inside the market house for temporary merchants to which Ms. Kennard responded that no changes are currently planned. Ms. Jarmon said we will focus on maintaining a diversity of product.

Mr. Baudinot inquired how the ability to water product inside sheds will be affected. Ms. McCormack stated that this will be a challenge and Ms. Kennard said it will be necessary to put operational standards in place and to learn as we go.

Ms. McCormack stated that we will work together to create a harmonious outcome.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50am.