

## **NFM Regular Board Meeting 12/20/17 Minutes**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Nashville Farmers' Market Board was called to order by Board Chairman Frank Cardenas at 9:31 am on December 20, 2017.

In attendance were Board members Frank Cardenas, Margot McCormack and Tandy Wilson. A quorum was present. NFM Staff members present were Tasha Kennard, Mary Self, Carolyn Sanders and Kay West.

Also in attendance were Metro Legal Susan Jones and NFM vendors/merchants Beth Piper and Tammy Whitehouse, and Yomi Ojo and Ken Hartlage from OMB. Chairman Cardenas read the following standard announcement.

*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.*

Public comments were invited at the start of the meeting to ensure that anyone who wants to comment can do so prior to the Board discussing the business on the agenda. Chair Cardenas read the following standard announcement:

*Individuals, requesting to address the Board; will be limited three (3) minutes unless granted more time by the Board Chair. Each person authorized to speak is expected to state her/his name and address and the organization represented if any, and if the speaker reads prepared text, to provide a copy to Board staff.*

No public comments requested.

Chair Cardenas calls for approval of November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017 minutes. Motion made, seconded and approved.

### **Financial Overview & Fee Waivers**

Executive Director Tasha Kennard asks that the members of the Metro Finance Department in attendance introduce themselves. Brandon Hess was promoted and new people are in his place.

Ken Hartlage, Finance Manager in Finance Department, been there for 12 years. He introduces the department's new analyst for the Market, Yomi Ojo. Mr. Ojo has a background in banking and a Master's Degree. Originally from Nigeria, he moved to US in 2015. Was in Johnson City for school and just moved to Nashville.

ED Kennard reports on the NFM FY18 Financial Overview & Analysis, as of November 30, 2017

Effective July 1, 2017, the Nashville Farmers' Market's operating budget is **\$1,952,700** which includes total revenue of **\$1,238,000**. Based on a just completed mid-year review, looking at actuals and projections for the fiscal year, and meeting with OMB and the Finance Director to review those new projections, the Market is in a position to use funds received from the State of Tennessee to balance the FY18 budget. That is good news and the Market will not have to go to Metro Council to ask for a subsidy.

They are fine-tuning the numbers and updated projections will be presented at the January Board meeting. As an aside to that, based on the trend of expenses for the year, the plan is to re-set the budget for expenses, lower it slightly to be sure the Market is coming in under budget, versus right at the budget in case there are any surprise expenses. And then recalculating revenues based on the response received from the lease renewals, which has been very positive.

As of November 30, 2017 the Market earned \$511,089 in revenue collections. Revenue collections are ahead approximately \$20,000 at this time due to collection of outstanding payments and processing of event rental income.

The Market's expenses for the same time period total \$738,917 per the attached BAR. Expenses are slightly above budget by approximately \$30,000 at this time. That is one reason for the readjustment.

There are no fee waivers to report at this time. The analysis is on the back of the page that shows actuals and forecasts. After the meeting, that will go to OMB.

No questions from Board.

### **New Year's Eve**

ED Kennard points out that 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenues are already closed and will be closed through January 2<sup>nd</sup> at minimum, possibly through January 5<sup>th</sup>. They will attempt to open as early as possible. This is for security and event staff trailers. That causes a bit of a challenge for merchants and parking. Market management is working with vendors for solutions but parking will be tight for the next two weeks. Visitors are encouraged to ride share. On weekends, the State lots are open and available. The contract has been signed and returned. The rental contract is \$40,000 this year, an increase of \$21,000 from 2016.

Kay West reports on other details. The NCVC has been invoiced for payment and that is expected before December 31. The Market House is hosting the Gold Circle Party, a change from last year's event which was a free open house. Tickets to the Gold Circle Party are \$250 and they sold out at 500 tickets. Doors open at 6, checking in through the Rosa Parks B&C/Picnic Tap entrance.

Set-up begins at 4 pm December 30<sup>th</sup>. All vendors with the exception of Natchez Hills will be closed; they will be doing tasting, not selling. There is a new security company working the event. There will be a cash bar, catering, some seating inside and a special viewing area outside on the Mall.

Shed 2 will be tented starting today, and that shed will be used for craft services and a dining hall for the production crew. Starting December 30<sup>th</sup>, busses will be parked along the fence line, and as of December 31, the parking lot is rented by NCVV.

Ms. West has two laminates and a parking pass for each Board member who wants to attend.

ED Kennard reports that the Market and NCEC have compromised to allow the Market to remain open until 4 pm December 30<sup>th</sup>. The Market will be closed on the 31 and the 1<sup>st</sup> and re-open on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The closing dates have been communicated for a couple of weeks on the Merchant 411 via email and paper copy. Per Market Manager Mary Self, Shed 2 merchants were surveyed last Saturday about who will be retailing the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> and the following weekend. All Shed 2 merchants will be placed in Shed 1 for both weekends, and can move into Shed 1 starting today at 2 pm. It will be very full. On Tuesday the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Shed 2 merchants will move back into Shed 2. ED Kennard says this is an excellent compromise and accommodates merchants and visitors.

Ms. McCormack asks how busy it is this time of year. ED Kennard replies that the softer time of year at the Market is typically between the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of December and the end of February. There is less consumer traffic. There are lighter crowds in the shed and less farmers through the cold weather. Many merchants use this time of year to take time off and visit families.

### **Marker House Lease Presentation Schedule**

ED Kennard reports that two of the three applicants for the Sweet Stash space scheduled to present at the December Board meeting are traveling. The original paperwork had the Board meeting scheduled for December 27 and when it was changed to the 20<sup>th</sup>, they could not change their schedule. They have been rescheduled for the Board meeting on January 24<sup>th</sup> and there will be a total of four presentations at that meeting, possibly more. The Board should keep that in mind for their schedule. Each has been asked to limit their presentation to 7 minutes to leave time for Q&A afterwards. ED Kennard will schedule video to be made of the presentation. There is good diversity of product mix among the applicants and she expects it will be a difficult decision.

Management is also in the process of issuing renewal requests for the 9 leases up for renewal in 2018. A renewal letter has been prepared highlighting everything that was passed last April, rates and operating requirements. She has heard from 7 of the 9 of their eager intent to begin the renewal process. Letters should all be out by the end of the week. Those presentations will occur in the February meeting. If anyone is prepared sooner than that, she will slot in the January meeting to avoid a very long meeting in February. They will not each give a 7-minute presentation, but the renewals will be presented so the Board knows about their renewals and so merchants can share anything they are planning about their concepts.

Ms. West reminds that the February meeting is scheduled for 9 am with an hour-long session attached to the end of the regular Board meeting.

Ms. McCormack says that the staff has done a great job, particularly after another tough year. She lauds the hire of Mary Self, the resilience and perseverance of merchants. She feels a palpable good vibe at the Market and it continues to get better and better. She believes it has been a good year.

### **Executive Director Report**

In the Board packets are 2018 dates about the meeting schedule. There are three changes. The February meeting is at 9 am, and the November/December meetings changed to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday from the 4<sup>th</sup>. There is also the schedule for the quarterly Merchant Meetings in the Market House which the Board is invited to attend, and the Merchant Advisory Committee which meets every other month.

At the January meeting, the Board will receive the schedule for 2018 special events, festivals, workshops, kitchen demos. ED Kennard has met with Kay West and Mary Self. She asks that the Board mark Sunday June 3<sup>rd</sup> for the Sunday Supper, and the Farmhand Dinner on September 26<sup>th</sup>.

Mary Self reports on the Winter Market which is about one month in. She invites the Board to visit the Wednesday Market downstairs. It has been full. The Saturday Market has also been going well and she is still receiving applications and working those approved applicants into spaces in the sheds as able.

ED Kennard says this is the third year to have Night Market year-round, and it has been rebranded as Shop Sip Give for November through March so far. The NFM is partnering with a local non-profit or community organization to participate and promote. Room in the Inn was November, Second Harvest was December. Others are already scheduled.

ED Kennard and Mary Self have been gathering bids on the website redesign. They have two quotes so far and waiting on the third and looking forward to the redesign before peak season begins. They are also evaluating systems to create an online merchant applications as well as online merchant payment options. The whole process will be shared at the January Board meeting. It will all be shared with the merchant community at the January Merchant meeting on January 26<sup>th</sup>. We will share all rate changes at that time. It is primarily geared to temporary Shed merchants but there is a lot of information to share.

Reporting for Charles Kizer, ED Kennard reports that two fans have been installed in the Market House and fans in Farm Shed 2, which is a first for that shed. The lights are up on the patio and all issues will be resolved by NY's Eve. Management has met with Finance and gone over the Capital Improvement projects and are hopeful all will be approved and they can submit for RFPLs by end of week.

Tammy Whitehouse of Delta 61 asks to speak about music in the Market. It was discussed at the last Board meeting which she missed due to illness. Her concern is that until all of that comes to policy of some type, how do vendors respond to less than friendly neighbors who may not be following the policy. She has had customers complain they cannot hear their names being called for orders. As a merchant, what can they do until policy is put in place. Chair Cardenas asks if that policy has been finalized. ED Kennard responds not yet and adds there is a specific issue that Delta 61 has brought up. Market management has addressed it several times and not received a favorable response from the staff at the vendor in question. It has been taken to ownership who is not there on a daily basis. They assure the Market staff they are addressing it but it is not being addressed in a quick enough way and they will be spoken to again. A new music policy is in the works and it is a challenge. In the meantime. ED Kennard advise Ms. Whitehouse to keep reporting to her and they are documenting all complaints.

There being no other business, Chair Cardenas adjourns the meeting at 10:05 am.

Next Board meeting is January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 9:30 am.