

NFM Regular Board Meeting 4/25/2018

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Nashville Farmers' Market Board was called to order by Board Chairman Frank Cardenas at 9:32 am on April 25, 2018.

In attendance were Board members Frank Cardenas, Margot McCormack, Priscilla Norman, Brian Copeland and Tandy Wilson. A quorum was present. NFM Staff members present were Tasha Kennard, Charles Kizer and Mary Self.

Also in attendance were Susan Jones from Metro Legal; and vendors Tim McKinney, Beth Piper, Oscar Flores and Ed Smith.

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.

Chair Cardenas opens the floor for public comments. There being none, he moves to next item on the agenda.

Chair Cardenas calls for approval of March 28, 2018 minutes. Motion made, seconded and approved.

Financial Overview & Fee Waivers

Executive Director Tasha Kennard reports on the NFM FY18 Financial Overview & Analysis, as of March 31, 2018.

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 mid-year review, looking at actuals and projections for the fiscal year, the Market is in a position to use funds received from the State of Tennessee for lease amendment to balance the FY18 budget. That is being coordinated with Finance Department.

As of March 31, 2018 the Market earned \$1,048,513 in revenue collections. Year-to-date revenue collections are ahead approximately \$100,000 at this time and are projected to total \$1,338,494. These projections are based on meeting monthly revenue goals for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The Market's expenses for the same time period total \$1,316,833 per the attached BAR. Year-to-date operating expenses are below budget by approximately \$100,000 at this time and are projected to total \$1,845,615. That is below budget.

There are no fee waivers to report at this time.

The attached analysis is slightly different to the BAR due to the timing of invoices processed and the closure of books on a monthly basis. The reports help to demonstrate the NFM actual performance compared to monthly revenue and expenses projections.

In other news regarding finance, NFM has its scheduled Budget & Finance Committee meeting on Wednesday, May 23 at 4:15 pm in the Council chambers at the Courthouse. NFM is on the last day of hearings. ED Kennard and Chair Cardenas will provide an overview of the operating budget and Capital Improvement request.

In additional news, the NFM has been included in the Planning Department's recommended Capital Improvements budget. Metro Planning Commission committee met last week to review and consider the recommended plan, it is being submitted on April 27th to review in the Mayor's Office for the Mayor to prepare his CIB for Metro Council review. Around May 15th, he will file his recommended CIB with the Metro Clerk. Between May 16 and June 14, the CIB will be sent to Metro Council, will go through a variety of committee meetings and public hearings, and by June 15th as required by Metro Charter the Council will adopt the 2018-19 CIB. After that, Metro will begin working with departments on those projects as appropriate. In years past, the NFM has had some progress with requests and recommendations and been included in some. The Planning Department has gone to great lengths to improve their processes and their transparency in how this works.

As of now, the NFM has submitted three projects for the 2018-19 CIB. That included additional funds, \$2.5 million, to complete major renovations to the facility, not just the Market House. Also submitted is a request for neighborhood market infrastructure looking at collaborative projects with Conexion Americas and Southeast Regional Park that is being planned in Antioch. Finally, a request was submitted to expand our culinary incubation center, to be able to provide more classroom workshop and space at the Market.

The neighborhood market infrastructure request was for \$150,000 in FY19, \$200,000 in FY20 and \$250,000 in FY21. The culinary incubation center request is for \$50,000 for planning and design in FY19, and design-build in 2020. Those two programs have been recommended by the Planning Commission as planned by the Market. The \$2.5 million request has been recommended as planned if funds are available. They are A and B ratings.

In addition, the Department of General Services also entered a Capital Improvement request on behalf of the NFM for additional modifications. That is projects identified during planning by GS and NFM staff for modifications to the loading dock and waste center that need to be completed. Their request is for almost \$1.2 million. That is a recurring request, has been made for two consecutive years. It has now received an A rating from GS and been recommended as planned.

NFM management will track the process of all requests and keep the Board informed. This is a very high priority for the next few months. It will be known when the Mayor announced his CIB.

Friends of the Nashville Farmers' Market Presentation

Ed Smith reports and updates on the group. They received news that they have received their 501c3 from the IRS. They have created a Board and Bylaws, refined their mission, defined memberships.

Mr. Smith read the Mission Statement: Friends of the Nashville Farmers' Market is a non-profit organization of volunteers dedicated to supporting the mission, operation and growth of the Nashville Farmers' Market.

Specific objectives are: to support the NFM through raising public awareness and advocacy of its mission; to encourage volunteer involvement and engagement with the NFM through assistance at events and other special projects; and to request and/or accept donations through individuals and organizations interested in supporting the NFM.

FOFM tries to keep it very simple, to collect funds and have paid memberships, but primarily wants to remain a volunteer organization. They do need funds to operate so their goal is to solicit some paid memberships.

FOFM Board members are: Shane Clohesy, retired IT professional; Kerri Regan, director of training at Ingram Books; Eric Schmeller, professor of English and History at TSU; and Staci Trimm, events coordinator at JW Marriott. FOFM is looking for a financial person to serve on the Board.

Carrie and Stacey have taken on the role of volunteer coordinators for the group and met along with Ed with NFM staffer Kay West to discuss volunteer needs through the year. The Strawberry Jubilee will be the first event coming up and there are 8 volunteers signed up.

NFM has requested a volunteer to work the EBT Fresh Savings booth on a weekly basis, and there are some retired members interested. It is a big commitment. They can also cover the FOFM booth and NFM Info booth as long as they are all in the same place.

People interested in becoming members can go to the FOFM website and Facebook page, or at the gmail address. There will be membership documents. A membership drive mixer is planned for June 3, 2-4 p at the Picnic Tap. There are 154 people interested and 24 going. Membership paperwork will be distributed. Paid memberships of \$25 will get a t-shirt, a membership card will provide discounts from merchants---10%, free fountain drink, etc. There are 13 participating merchants. There will be mixers throughout the year. People can also sign up just as a volunteer.

Also on June 3 is Picnic on the Patio, with a focus on vendors in the Market House. The picnic basket that will be the point of purchase for the event is displayed, it will be filled with food provided by restaurants and vendors in the Market House, sourced by the farmers in the sheds. There will be cocktails, passed apps and cornhole from 6-6:45. At 6:45 some welcoming remarks, at 7 there will

be dinner in the picnic basket, also a bottle of wine from Natchez Hills. It will take place on the 7th Avenue patio. The price is \$150 for one picnic basket with a menu from Market House merchants. There will be live music. Tickets will be on EventBrite. Picnic tables can be reserved for \$500 and get six seats/3 baskets. The event was inspired by the Caroline and Tony Galzin, who purchase food from the NFM and picnic in the park.

Mr. Copeland suggests it be marketed to dating apps. He also suggests a blanket option for families, to do a family basket and a blanket. Mr. Smith cautions against taking on too much for the first year.

Mr. Smith also wants to thank Eric Woodard from Picnic Tap who designates FOFM as his beneficiary for events he is doing at the Market. He donated \$460 today through the St. Patrick's Day and Night Market event, opening of the Bier Garten patio. He has been a big supporter.

He is also meeting with Friends of Bicentennial Mall to talk about collaborative efforts and researching Kroger's community rewards program to become a designated charity for shoppers. Mr. Copeland says Amazon does the same.

Ms. McCormack asks if Picnic on the Patio attendees can take their basket to the park. ED Kennard replies they cannot take an opened bottle of wine to the park or consume it there.

The Board applauds Mr. Smith and FOFM for their work.

Market House Renovation RFQ

ED Kennard reports that the RFQ has been published and went out April 19. There has been a pre-bid meeting but the process is still in the Q&A portion of the RFQ. What that means is that anyone interested in submitting a proposal for the renovation of the Market House loading dock and waste center can submit questions to the procurement office. Those questions are public. The response is called an amendment. Once that process is closed, the NFM has until May 1 to accept applications. The RFQ has been a long time in the making. Everyone involved in creating the RFQ has opted to require small and veteran-owned business inclusion. It is a 20 % small business enterprise, or service disabled veteran owned business. The goal is 20% inclusion from those categories of businesses. Charles Kizer, Elizabeth from General Service and ED Kennard are on the evaluation committee. After the process closes on May 1, they will meet about 10 business days later to select a proposal. In the interim between the 1st and 6th, the team will vet the proposals to be sure they are all qualified under the requirements for bidding. If not, a decision will be made to re-solicit. The goal should they get the proposals they require it so award a contract in early June and work to begin with that company to develop a timeline for demolition and renovation. Phase 1 is the demolition and renovation planned to be on loading dock side. The Museum is scheduled to open the first or second week of October. The project team has also communicated that the surface parking lot should be available by then, significantly delayed by the original summer ready goal. Once the north side is complete, the south side demo and reno will begin, and relocation of the waste center. There will also be new retail space on that end. There is a design in place and

applications will be taken for those spaces. ED Kennard passes the plan around the table to the Board.

Executive Director's Report

- **Strategic Plan:** There is a printed Grow Together Plan document in the Board packets. Feedback from the Board has been incorporated in this draft. ED Kennard points out some of the additions and refinements to the plan. Progress of the plan and achievement of goals will be tracked as outlined in the Marketing & Reporting Outcomes slide. NFM staff will meet to discuss and be sure the goals are achievable. There will be quarterly outcome reports. The NFM has to be flexible and adaptable, particularly situated in such a fast-growing corridor. As Mr. Copeland has requested for numerous years, the NFM goal is to publish an annual report, with the first being at the end of FY19.
- **Merchant Recruitment and Retention:** Mary Self reports that to date, the NFM has received 148 merchant applications, with 46 new and 102 returning. There are lots of calls about becoming a merchant. Farmers and merchants are preparing for the first Festival of the season, Strawberry Jubilee, taking place May 5th 10 am-4 pm. Hours have been extended on all festival from 10-2 to 10-4. There will be live music, children's activities, a cooking demo from Crystal Luna-Bogan after the Mayor's remarks, strawberry sampling, children's strawberry eating contest, and a Strawberry Cake Contest. The FOFM volunteers have been very helpful. ED Kennard notes that the bad spring weather has caused some delays in strawberry production. Ms. McCormack notes that as a long-time board member it is very encouraging to have so many applications. ED Kennard notes that Ms. Self is doing a good job working with merchants to find dates other than Saturdays since they are full. She is hopeful there will be substantial growth on the other days in the Sheds. A recent resident survey done by the Mayor's office on various services offered by Metro showed the Market received a 64% approval rating, one of the highest of any area measured. Chair Cardenas notes that parking issues probably docked some points. He asks about foot traffic on Sundays. ED Kennard says there is currently no way for NFM staff to measure that, but there are data collection tools available for a cost.
- **Neighborhood Market Program:** Vanderbilt Farmers' Market is June through October and will kick off June 7th. A contract will go through Susan Jones. It is hoped that construction on the Medical Center Plaza will be complete this year. It is a great opportunity for NFM merchants to get in front of another audience. NFM and Conexion Americas are in the final stages of communication and coordination to set up in the Casa Azafran Park that is nearing completion. Rain has delayed some of that construction. There will be a mini-Market for the grand opening with NFM farmers. The goal is to do an every-other-week Market on Wednesday afternoons starting the second week of June through the end of October. Trevaca Urban Farm

has offered to anchor that market. Typically NFM requires vendors at the neighborhood markets to also retail at NFM. Treveca does not have the resources to do that so they have asked for a waiver, which ED Kennard recommends. Several NFM farmers want to participate as well. That market will be permanent through Metro Parks. Land was purchased by Conexion Americas, developed by Metro Parks and funded by Conexion. It will be returned to the Metro Parks system when construction is finished. The Market will be a partnership between Metro Parks, Conexion Americas and NFM. The goal is to replicate the model with community organizations at the Southeast park in Antioch.

- **Upcoming Events & Workshops:** Kay West asked that the schedule be distributed in the Board packet. There are some recurring events, as well as an event with Tennessee State Museum.
- **Elimination of Styrofoam:** The new policy has gone better than expected. Restaurants have been audited. One restaurant is struggling with the transition and ED Kennard is meeting with them. The other restaurants are doing very well. Ed Smith found a vendor to help create some special pricing on materials to get a contract price and has been successful. It is based on volume so all vendors are encouraged to sign up. There has been a great response from the community. The information was published on Earth Day as a social media post. Charles Kizer is rolling out the composting services. NFM began with six 64-gallon bins. The first two days a half barrel was filled but as time goes on, there is more participation and the goal is to have 10 bins. Gardens of Babylon has asked for four bins. It is Compost Company that has the Metro compact. Back of house is compost and front of house will be recycling and new containers will need to be placed in the Market House and sheds. The goal remains to be a zero-waste facility by 2020.
- **Extended Hours:** Friday April 6th extended hours went into effect, Sun-Thursday 8 am-6 pm; Friday and Saturday 8 am-8 pm. So far, as expected, the extended hours have been soft. It was discussed at the last Board meeting, it will take time to build awareness and build customer traffic. Some merchants have expressed concern, and some have expressed excitement for the opportunities. There will be additional programming with art installations starting in May. Also working with Metro Arts Commission and a Seed Library will be installed outside. There will be two photography exhibits. NFM is grateful to have support of FOFM for music and Gardens of Babylon will do some workshops.

Other Business

Chair Cardenas points out that NFM got a national nod as one of best food halls in the country. ED Kennard says there have been close to 200 applicants for the office coordinator job.

Adjournment

Chair Cardenas adjourns the meeting at 10:41 am. Next meeting of the NFM Board is Wednesday, May 23, 2018 at 9:30 am