

## **NFM Regular Board Meeting 5/23/2018**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Nashville Farmers' Market Board was called to order by Board Chairman Frank Cardenas at 9:34 am on May 23, 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, Mary Self and Kay West.

Also in attendance were Susan Jones from Metro Legal; USD County Executive Director Lanny Morris, and vendors Rob Williams, Tim McKinney, Jim Odom, Liz Madaris 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.*

USDA Farm Services Agency County Executive Director Lanny Morris requested and was granted time to speak. He is based in Springfield TN and covers Robertson and Davidson Counties. He wants to inform the Board of the County Committee election cycle which is ready to begin. He distributes pamphlets that describe the system of County Committees that oversee FSA programs for farmers and ranchers in their communities. There is a public election; Davidson County is represented by 2 members, Robertson 3 members. The election will be on the western side of the district. He distributes the list of eligible voters. Nominations will be made by June 15<sup>th</sup>, ballots will be mailed in November, ballots are submitted and counted in December and members and alternates take office in January. He encourages all farmers to run for office and to have more inclusive representation. He asks that people contact him with questions.

ED Kennard asks how often they meet and where. Mr. Morris replies they take place in the USDA center in Springfield. They are authorized for monthly meetings though they typically meet every other month, depending on the farming cycle.

Jim Odom of Natchez Hills Winery requested and was granted time to speak. He introduced their new director of sales and branding Liz Maderis who is replacing Adam Acampora.

Chair Cardenas calls for approval of April 25, 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 April 30, 2018.

She notes that in the future, Board members will receive the packet electronically and it will be projected during the meeting. 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. The NFM will not be requesting a subsidy from Metro Council or the Mayor's office.

As of April 30, 2018 the Market earned \$1,104,937 in revenue collections. Year-to-date revenue collections are ahead approximately \$100,000 at this time and are projected to total \$1,304,919, a little further ahead than what was projected last year.

The Market's expenses for the same time period total \$1,458,128 per the attached BAR. Year-to-date operating expenses are below budget by approximately \$100,000 at this time and are projected to total \$1,831,909. Revenue is outperforming and expenses are being held tight.

The staff is working very hard on occupancy, and all the efforts from past years are paying off. There is also a substantial increase in revenue from the Grow Local Kitchen and in Special Events. On a typical basis, the GLK is rented a minimum of 26 days per month in day shifts, and as many as 29-30.

There are no fee waivers to report at this time.

The NFM Budget Hearing before Metro Council Finance Committee and other council members is today, May 23, 2018 at 4:15 pm at the Courthouse Council Chambers. ED Kennard invites all Board members to attend.

### **Executive Director's Report**

- **Staff update:** The NFM has hired and the offer has been accepted for the Office Coordinator position. Allison Koon comes from the Extension Office, highly recommended by farmers and NFM merchants who know her. She will start on Thursday June 7<sup>th</sup>, and begin training. The Finance Department has approved the posting of the Marketing position. That will stay live for applicants for 7 days and hopefully NFM will have someone in the job within 45 days.
- **Capital Projects:** ED Kennard reports there is a lot of activity. RFQs have gone out for the current loading dock and the waste center renovation. That has closed. An evaluation team has met and are in the final stages of awarding a contract. One has been selected and hopefully a contract will be in place the second week of June. A timeline has been shared that begins the planning, ordering of materials. Construction is slated to begin in the fall and will start with the interior reset of the International Market. A temporary wall will be built beyond International Market so the construction on the loading dock will not negatively impact operations in the Market House.

The waste center will then be moved and new retail space created. The work should be concluded sometime in February/March of 2019.

Charles Kizer reports on lighting and that he is still waiting on another quote to come in. There will be security cameras added but he is required by Metro policy to meet with another company. He hopes to have all the documentation in the next two weeks so he can move forward and have a better lighting system in the parking lot and security cameras.

ED Kennard says the lighting improvements are in response to merchant requests over the years for better lighting in the parking lot but that the Market is required to match the lighting that will be installed in the Museum lot. The security cameras will be an \$80-\$100,000 investment for the NFM coming from the capitol funds that will also have an alarm system. The NFM is working with Metro ITS and it will require a significant upgrade to technology to what is currently in the Market.

Chair Cardenas asks about the February 2019 completion of renovations and how the Tennessee State Museum is progressing. ED Kennard says they are targeting an October opening and Turner Construction is communicating with staff. Staff is also communicating with Museum management. A date for completion of surface area parking has not been shared. The timeline has been changed from July to likely October. Conversation continues on that shared lot and how it will look. The goal is to maintain as much free parking as possible.

Ms. McCormack asks what the construction project is on the other side of the Museum. ED Kennard replies it is the State Archives & Library. The Master Plan originally included the Park, the Museum, the Market and the Library. Only two of those were opened in 1995, and the Museum and the Library are the final two. The locations of those were also changed, and they were placed as anchors in the most northern section of the Park. The projected date for the Library is 2019. That project took the merchant parking that was there in October 2017, and that parking was moved to the charging station lot on Harrison where it remains.

- **Strawberry Jubilee Recap:** Mary Self reports that despite the rain the Farm Sheds were full, all activities went on as planned. There was a record number of strawberry cake entries at 14. Ms. Self and Ms. West say that the FOFM volunteers were invaluable and indispensable to the success of the Jubilee. They helped with strawberry sampling, the cake contest and the cooking demo. The demo was done by Grilled Cheeserie's Crystal Luna-Bogan, with her sous chef Mayor David Briley. The Mayor was very comfortable in the venue and has volunteered to do the cooking demo for the PepperFest. ED Kennard says the Jubilee was a huge success. Vice Chair Norman also adds it was a tremendous success despite the rain. Over 8,000 quarts of strawberries were available that day and many sold out. The farmers are pleased to be able to start their summer stay here on such a big day.
- **Merchant Recruitment and Retention:** Mary Self reports that to date the Market has received 160 applications, up 12 from last month, and they continue to come in. The sheds this month have 65 new merchants and the remaining are returning, which is a significant number. She has been reaching out to applicants to assist them and make sure they have the required documents and how to be a vendor. Currently the sheds are 90% booked on Saturdays and she is working to help farmers find other options. She is working with Tandy on his idea for a new program for

chefs to shop the Market on Friday mornings. It will be launched on June 8<sup>th</sup>. There are 54 new farms that have applied.

- **Neighborhood Market Program** ED Kennard reports that the Vanderbilt Market will begin in June and that the Plaza construction is finally complete after four years. A final planning meeting has been held with Renata Sota from Conexion Americas for the Azafan Park market. It is a great opportunity to serve that community. Trevecca Urban Farm has asked to anchor that Market, as well as Tennessee Artisan Honey. They can have their materials translated into Spanish. This market will be smaller because the park is quite small. The Market will be on the pavilion and sheltered. That market will be every other week in the first year and run through the end of October. There will also be an opportunity to tap into the people who use their commercial kitchen, Mesa Komal. The rate will be lower, \$15 a day. It looks like the park will open in June and there will be a mini-market season that day and then the Market will begin the next week or week after.

Susan Jones reports she has the Vanderbilt Market agreement which has an amendment to older agreements rather than an all new agreement.

- **Upcoming Events & Workshops** ED Kennard reports that Gardens of Babylon is having an Indigo dying workshop this weekend and an indigo seedling giveaway. ESPN is coming Saturday to shoot Pigskin, John T. Edge's program with Kalil Arnold. The Clemson Alumnae Prowl & Growl was held last week in the Market House, a very successful event with 250 people. There have been multiple school groups touring the Market. A group of executives from AllianceBernstein will be touring Nashville attractions the next few weeks and will be coming in groups to tour the Market. A Lunch & Learn, a partnership with the Tennessee State Museum will take place June 21<sup>st</sup> in the Farm Shed and Make Music Nashville will also take place June 21. Picnic on the Patio has been moved to June 24<sup>th</sup>; the NFM simply did not have staff to produce this event. The Market Kitchen, the demo held the first and third and Saturday of the month in the Farm Sheds, is fully booked through November. There will be two special Market Kitchens on June 30<sup>th</sup> and September 29<sup>th</sup>; Tandy will do June 30<sup>th</sup> and Margot will do the September one. They take place in the GLK inside the Market House

Community Farm Day is June 30<sup>th</sup>. There will be many activities as always, among them, a Cobbler Contest. International Pepper Fest is September 8<sup>th</sup>, Turnip Greens Festival November 3<sup>rd</sup> and second annual SipTN November 10<sup>th</sup>. That is the festival schedule through November.

There has been some excellent media coverage in Nashville Lifestyles, the Tennessean, the Scene and on television. Ms. Cheap wrote a great piece "13 Things to Know About the Nashville Farmers' Market." Television shows are increasingly interested in shooting at the Market and the NFM is working with NCVF for New Year's Eve and they have asked for a five-year agreement. That may require a conversation with the Board.

A number of different organizations have approached the Market about doing different projects here that are a little outside the box. Several restaurants are interested in the retail space that will open up in the former waste dock area.

Chair Cardenas asks how many people are on the email distribution list. ED Kennard says over 8,000 active emails and a 20-25% open rate, with very little bounce back.

- **Other Business**

Picnic Tap is launching 'free range beer' so people can carry their beer around the Market property. He has a temporary permit now and will be getting a permanent permit. Jim Odom reports they are working with TABC to get their free range wine. Other merchants have helped get the message out, particularly Batch and Gardens of Babylon. This is a big step for the Market and ED Kennard thanks Susan Jones for her hard work and Eric and Jim for their tenacity.

Farm City Coffee has opened and their baked goods arrive this week, all local and independent vendors who have been Market vendors.

The Art at the Market program is proceeding. There is a working relationship with Metro Arts Commission called Building Better Tables. A reception is taking place June 1 at Lentz Public Health Center. They will be installing pieces around the city and possibly some interactive pieces. Myles Maille and Todd Greene want to do a piece here as well.

Ms. McCormack expresses how much fun meetings are now, and how great it is to hear such positive news and progress. Chair Cardenas thanks the staff, Board and FOFM for their hard work.

Ed Smith of FOFM invites Board to the FOFM mixer on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at Picnic Tap. At their Board meeting they voted to award cash prizes for cooking contests. They are figuring out a way to allow people to donate on line and they are now part of Community Foundation. The majority of funds coming in will go back to the Market.

With no other business, Chair Frank Cardenas adjourns the meeting at 10:36 am.

The next Board meeting is Wednesday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 9:30 am in the Nashville Farmers' Market conference room.