July 22, 2020

Coventry Farmers’ Market Operating Committee
Special Meeting Minutes
Via Zoom video conferencing

Call to order:

The meeting was called to order by Nelson at 8:05 am.

Roll Call:

Eric Trott, Erica Pagliuco, Jean Nelson, Katrina Weaver, Barbara Barry, Janine Coughlin, Joe Martin, Jamie-Lynn Fontaine

Adoption of Minutes:

A motion was made by Barry and seconded by Nelson to adopt the minutes of July 22, 2020 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Preparation for Committee/vendor meeting on July 26:

Barbara mentioned she met with several vendors on Sunday and reported that all are looking to attend Sunday’s meeting. Also, some have seen increased sales as of late and some the opposite. But, many still want an in-field Market and miss the impulse buying of the customers. Others are grateful that the operation reduces risk. She stressed the need for the vendors to do their own marketing to better enable the Market’s success.

The Committee was asked if there is a need to revisit the decision on having an in-field operation. Janine agrees with the decision, but understands that on-line ordering has its limitations and challenges. This prompted the discussion on possible sales to customers from their cars while maintaining the reduction of vendor/customer contact. There is a potential to expand opportunities for ‘in-vehicle’ sales for additional products from a vendor that filled an on-line order. This can be opened to all vendors to enable the impulse buying and improve overall sales.

It would be important to continue to utilize the appointment process and perhaps space the timing of the pick-up slightly differently to maintain good vehicle flow and cueing. Social media platforms can be used to share news about available products and up-to-date info on items that would be available from the vendors. The use of a whole dollar price, no cents, and cash only could help streamline the operation. Pre-weighed or sized products could simplify the situation as well.

A discussion occurred about including food trucks at the Market. It will be necessary to keep the same approach as what is expected of the producers. A ‘grab and go’ approach must occur to avoid lines. This could be put into motion as well.
Other vendors could also be added to the mix to expand the products offered. This will be explored further and can be put into motion.

The agenda was discussed at length and it was agreed that the following talking points will be included: Farmers’ Market vs. Country Fair models; In-field Market operations and logistics; Safety and risk reduction; Next steps: improved marketing and visibility; expanded sales opportunities; Food trucks and other vendor inclusion; Creative collaboration and adaptation; Other ideas to consider.

Jamie reported that Hale will be offering tours by appointment and small group/family tours will be available on Market days.

Next Meeting:

July 26 – at the Market field with the vendors.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric M. Trott
Director of Planning and Development