July 29, 2020

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

Call to order:

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

Roll Call:

Eric Trott, Erica Pagliuco, Katrina Weaver, Barbara Barry, Janine Coughlin, Joe Martin, Jamie-Lynn Fontaine, Michelle Pesce, Jean Nelson (arrived at 8:35am)

Adoption of Minutes:

The minutes for the July 26 meeting were not available and will be adopted at the next scheduled meeting.

Review and follow up to Committee/vendor meeting on July 26:

Amanda forwarded updated financials for the Committee review. The details reflect the trend which the expenditures are outweighing the revenue. This will be monitored.

The Committee reflected on the fact that there is support from the vendors to pursue the impromptu sales in the field. It was recognized that there may need to create a different approach or support between the farmers vs. other producers. It was underlined that the vendors need to take a much stronger approach with marketing and the use of social media to connect with their customers.

It was noted that the CSA’s are not being promoted as much from the vendors. This could be strengthened.

It was discussed that it may be helpful for successful vendors who are using good social media/marketing practices to share how they go about their business which could inspire other vendors.

Some ideas were discussed about how to engage or mentor vendors who can share good marketing practices with others to help the overall wellbeing of the Market. Cross marketing ideas were discussed. Adding samples from one business to include in the products of another is a simple idea – farmer with non-farmer vendors could work together on this concept. A contact list of the vendors could be shared with the vendors to help inspire this idea.

Who or what outside support and guidance from sources to assist the vendors with their marketing and using social media was discussed. It is clear that the support needs to come from an entity that knows and understands the vendor.
A discussion occurred about preparing for the ‘in field – impromptu’ sales this Sunday. Erica share a discussion outline to assist with moving this concept forward.

One idea is to start the impromptu sales occurring with customers who have bought products on line. The open sales to a customer who has not purchased items on line could be offered in a week or two. This could be accommodated during the slow times where there is a lag in the pick-up times.

Other considerations include: a sign large enough to be viewed by a vehicle is needed for the sales, 3-5 items can be offered, up to 60 seconds limit per transaction, a display that allows easy viewing, cash sales are preferred – but Square sales could be supported, vendors need to send info regarding products to Erica to have them advertised on social media, customers and vendors will need to wear masks for the transactions.

A discussion regarding Kiefer’s Kettle Korn selling products that the business is not producing. She has previously been asked to remove the items that are not produced by the business, including: Italian ice, raw corn, sodas, bottled water. Our Market is a ‘producer only’ market. The duplication of products and the complications that occur with that has become more of an issue with the online orders. The number of products available is quite large and duplications make the list even larger for customers to wade through. This has been a comment from the customers. They will be asked to stop selling Italian ice, raw corn, sodas and bottled water.

Soleil Bakery is offering the sale of pies, which is a duplicate of Granny’s. Soleil will be asked to stop selling the pies.

The idea to add food trucks and other vendors was discussed. A grab and go, pre-order scenario would need to occur. Bozrah’s market was referenced – they have a food truck rotated week to week and they are a drive-through market and it is done via pre-order process for pick-up at their market. This matter will be investigated further and will be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

Next Meeting:

August 4 at 8:00am via Zoom

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:42 a.m.
Respectfully submitted,

Eric M. Trott
Director of Planning and Development