



1
2
3 **MINUTES**
4 **Public Market Advisory Commission**
5 **Tuesday, February 2, 5:30 pm**

6 1. Call to Order

7 The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m.
8

9 2. Roll Call
10

11 Members Present: (5) D. Barkman, D. Black, S. Brines, P. Pollack, G. Service.

12 Staff Present: (1) M. Notarianni

13 Guests: (0)

14 3. Approval of Agenda

15 4. Special Presentations

16 5. Public Commentary – Agenda items only (3 minutes per speaker)
17

18 G. Thompson: Your first paper handout is a bar graph of market operating expenses. I
19 tried to assemble all of the regular, recurring expenses: I tried to remove one-time
20 payment to contractors, so I could find a consistent trend. Unfortunately, the trend is
21 consistently upward, at about \$7,000/year, and it starts around 2000, when Parks took
22 over operation of the market. There is a little bit of confusion between what is
23 represented by fiscal and calendar years, etc. The next graph is income for the market,
24 which is a little more regular. Since 2004, there's been a steady gradual decline. That
25 maps reasonably well with my visual interpretation that there aren't as many vendors as
26 they sued to be. My concern is that primarily in 03 it took a large jump—the large fee
27 increase, but since then, there's been a decrease. Vendors may be leaving the market
28 because they feel the fees are too much. The ominous part would be if that should repeat
29 itself in 2010. Obviously I don't know 2010 data until the end of market season this year,
30 but it is an ominous trend: an upwards spike followed by a decline. Income from the
31 market represents items the market actually sells; I've taken out things the market does
32 not sell like revenue from the DDA. If anyone has any detailed questions, I'd be happy
33 to answer them at a future date.
34

35 L. Vasquez: I wanted to ask the Commission about what is going to happen now that
36 Community Services Administrator Jayne Miller is leaving the City, who will have
37 jurisdiction over the market and the market commission, or whether the City will not hire
38 anyone to replace Jayne—and what that means for this Commission in particular. I am
39 happy to point out a publication, Edible WOW, which highlights several market vendors:

40 organic farm Renaissance Acres, Pilar's Tamales. You can find Edible WOW on
41 Facebook, and it is great to see vendors from our market-particularly organic growers-
42 highlighted in this way. Perhaps you could link to items like this on the Market's
43 website. There are also a number of cooking classes happening in the Kerrytown Shops,
44 and vendor Peter Stark will be offering a class about cooking with organic vegetables and
45 organic herbs.

46

47 6. Approval of Minutes

48 a. Meeting of January 5, 2010

49 7. Commission Business

50 a. Old Business

51 (1) Quarterly Financial Report

52

53 P. Pollack: We've been discussing a format for a quarterly financial report, and this a
54 draft of one for us to review.

55

56 M. Notarianni: One question I'd been asked to address is expenses and revenue for the
57 Farmers Market specifically, in comparison to that of the Public Market, which I've tried
58 to represent here. Various line items in the expenses include staff time, materials and
59 supplies, utilities, the municipal service charge (a bundling of City administrative fees),
60 and contract labor (the inspector). The vast portion of the revenue is the fees the vendors
61 pay-70%, 22% is money we receive from DDA, and approximately 4.5% is rentals from
62 the market space.

63

64 P. Pollack: Any questions for Molly? If you remember, one of the original motivations
65 for this financial report was a question that came up at the public meeting last spring,
66 questioning how much of the revenue of the market came from the vendors, in
67 comparison to how much went out. Were we understanding what was taking place, so
68 that the revenue from increasing fees were going to the vendors; activities in the Farmers
69 Market itself, rather than the general public.

70

71 S. Brines: How is the determination "negligible" worked out, and as the market is used
72 for more uses, wouldn't that become non-negligible? Perhaps it could be represented as
73 some percentage of utilities.

74

75 D. Black: We should possibly a formula that could factor in some of the utility, etc usage
76 of the Sunday Artisan Market.

77

78 P. Pollack: Ultimately, we want to make sure the rental rates are equitable between
79 Farmers Market and non-Farmers Market uses.

80

81 b. New Business

82 (1) New Vendor Discussion

83

84 M. Notarianni: I received two applications this month: a food cart vendor who hoped to
85 sell sausage and lemonade, and a vendor who hoped to sell mushroom kits and cultivated
86 mushrooms.

87

88 (2) Spring Public Meeting: March 8, 2010

89

90 M. Notarianni: Items on the agenda include a discussion of 2010 season schedule in the
91 Farmers Market and Public Market, an update on possible changes to the vendor
92 application and inspection form, and a general question and answer period.

93

94 P. Pollack: I have a few additions: some introductions at the beginning, a discussion
95 about physical facilities of the market as well as physical improvements in the Kerrytown
96 area, a general topic of advertising and promotion, and a report from the Outreach
97 Subcommittee.

98

99 M. Notarianni: The meeting is scheduled on March 8, at Cobblestone Farms, from 6-8
100 pm.

101

102 8. Reports and Communications

103 a. Market Manager

104

105 M. Notarianni: No vendors have been inspected in the past month. Saturdays at market
106 throughout the month of January have been vibrant and busy!

107 New tote bags area available for sale in the office, as are free promotional stickers.

108 Seasonal banners are being re-installed in the market, alerting shoppers that we are open
109 year-round. CTN has created a promotional segment focusing on the market, which will
110 air throughout the winter. New signs are being created for the market, and bird screen has
111 been installed. A small "certified organic" sign has been designed, and are being printed.

112 With the onset of the winter season, I am intensifying my promotional efforts.

113 Advertisements continue in the Observer, Ann Arbor Chronicle, & West Side News. I am
114 working with a very excited and qualified volunteer, to revive the oral history project
115 over the upcoming winter months. I have been selected as a mentor for another SE
116 Michigan Farmers Market Manager, to share my experiences with EBT over the past
117 year. Finally, one new vendor was admitted to the market in the last month: Black Oak
118 Farms, with certified organic pork.

119

120 b. Related Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Task Forces

121 (1) Outreach Subcommittee

122

123 M. Notarianni: The bulk of what has happened in the past month is my working with the
124 City's volunteer coordinator, to figure out how to best coordinate and utilize volunteers at
125 the market.

126

127 (2) Policy/Procedure Subcommittee

128

129 P. Pollack: We actually have a few documents that are still in draft form, one of which is
130 a draft vendor application form for 2010. We've been working on refining language a
131 little bit, and actually have it here today electronically, to preview. Similarly, the vendor
132 inspection report has been updated. The current Operating Rules-Chapter 8 and 31-were
133 adopted by the previous Market Commission in the second quarter of 2007. Our group
134 began work in January of 2008, including a market vision statement and a commission
135 mission statement. We had a public meeting in March of 2008, and we had a work
136 program that involved thinking about Seniority and the operating rules. The seniority
137 discussion evolved to a point where we decided to let the topic for another year (in
138 January of 2009). In January as well, we started to think about the language in the rules,
139 and have been continuing to work on that in Subcommittee. We'd like to make the
140 language more clear: things we could do ourselves, rather than requiring City Council to
141 change the physical operating rules.

142

143 M. Notarianni: The process of collecting anonymous gross sales data at Farmers Markets
144 is quite common. Does anyone have any thoughts on this?

145

146 D. Barkman: There are lots of expenses included in the cost of doing business for
147 vendors that are not immediately visible. Maybe we could track and publish the day's
148 attendance.

149

150 M. Notarianni: My main purpose in collecting this information would be having a little
151 more data about how the market is going, for example: do special events actually
152 increase sales at market, or just increase traffic?

153

154 S. Brines: I do think this practice is pretty common at other markets.

155

156 D. Black: Any information you could collect from any vendors willing to participate
157 would be helpful!

158

159 D. Barkman: The main goal of the updated application is simply to get more information
160 from vendors.

161

162 (see attached documents)

163

164 D. Barkman: I recommend requesting yearly application updates, so we can be sure to
165 have vendors' most recent licenses on file.

166

167 P. Pollack: Could you please separate the new information by colour for posting online?
168 It would be helpful to state in the cover memo accompanying the application that new
169 information being requested.

170

171 M. Notarianni: The goal of the updated inspection form is also to collect as much
172 information as possible from the vendors. The form is merely a guideline for the
173 inspector-but he uses his knowledge and expertise during the inspection, and isn't solely
174 guided by this form.

175

176 P. Pollack: When we get the report from the inspector, he is simply making observations.
177 The role of the inspector is not to make judgments. In the rules of the market, the Market
178 Manager is tasked with making the evaluation of the inspection. Could there be a
179 summary of comments from the manager, after having a conversation with the inspector?
180 Although I don't prefer boxes to check off, there could even be a section for you to select
181 "complies," "complies with modifications," or "does not comply." Then the inspection
182 report can be compared with the application and the rules. This is asking for a
183 conclusion, which is not the inspector's job.

184

185 M. Notarianni: I think that is wise. It would also be important to allow the inspector to
186 revisit the situation, should new information about the vendors' practices become
187 available.

188

189 c. Items from Commissioners

190

191 S. Brines: There is a 2010 Local Food Summit on March 2. You can get more
192 information at localfoodsummit.org. There are also a few other summits: an urban food
193 summit at the University of Michigan Dearborn campus on February 19, as well as the
194 statewide Michigan Good Food Summit, on February 25.

195

196 d. Transmittals/communications received

197

198 M. Notarianni: One communication was received, from the market manager of a farmers
199 market in Urbana IL.

200

201 9. Public Commentary – General (3 minutes per speaker)

202

203 G. Thompson: I don't believe there is much advantage in trying to separate the Farmers
204 Market from other uses of the Public Market. The enterprise fund goes with the facility.
205 You have income like parking-and I find it virtually impossible to allocate that parking,
206 because it belongs to the site.

207

208 K. Sidney: I have been looking at City audited financial data for the Market, trying to
209 find trends. In 2003 there was only \$80,000 in fees, and in 2004 it jumped to \$150,000:
210 that is because in 2004, they started to include, as revenue, the money the DDA collects
211 for that parking lot. That didn't used to be there, and it is higher in 2004 because they
212 went back 2 years, so it was retroactive. One of the things that concerns me, when I take
213 out the parking money, is your revenue is dropping. I recommend you do a revenue
214 analysis, so you can find out where that drop is. One of the things that has happened with
215 other Parks programs is that they have raised fees, thinking they will close their budget
216 gap, but what actually happens is that people stop using the facility. Personnel fees are
217 also increasing. In the early days there was a part time person, and now there is a full
218 time person as well as a part time person. I also broke out the City overhead charges: IT
219 and Municipal Service Charge. In the old days, IT was included in the Municipal Service

220 Charge. I think the market is going into deficit again: you have declining revenue and
221 increasing expenses. I am concerned that raising fees is just going to make it worse.

222

223 L. Vazquez: I wanted to provide a little correction to the history Peter gave of the rules
224 and revisions. At the very last meeting of the previous commission in 2007, the majority
225 of that commission had voted to rescind its support of the rules revisions that Jayne
226 Miller then went ahead and got promulgated by City Council. It was basically a vote of
227 no confidence in Jayne Miller's ability to manage. Looking at the proposed application, I
228 think it's good that you get ahold of partnership and incorporation papers, and get a copy
229 of those. I would suggest that you change the wording to state that the products
230 SHOULD, not MUST, meet MDA regulations. The addition of the source of ingredients
231 and materials is a good idea. I have a question: who will ensure that proper licensing
232 and certification is in place? I am going back to the example of perennials. The MDA
233 has a few different licenses: one is a plant nursery license, the other a plant dealer
234 license. A plant nursery license is meant to ensure the person growing the perennial
235 grows them from seedlings, or origin. The plant dealer license allows someone to take
236 perennials from another source and then to sell them at farmers markets, potentially. The
237 distinction needs to be clarified to ensure that the folks bringing perennials to our market
238 have the proper license. If they have a plant dealer license only, then there is a violation.
239 I would say that posting the application online is a good idea, and think you might get
240 some feedback from the public. The prepared foods section of the inspection report
241 needs some more work, specific to baked goods.

242

243 10. Adjournment

244

245 The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

246

247 ***Note: In response to pending City Hall/Courts and Police construction, Market***
248 ***Commission meetings have been relocated to the 4th floor Board Room of the Ann***
249 ***Arbor District Library, and will occur on the first Tuesday of each month, at 5:30 pm.***
250 ***PMAC meetings will be rebroadcast on CTN at 10:00 AM on Thursday, 5:30 PM on***
251 ***Friday, and 3:00 PM on Saturday.***

252