

## **Friends & Farmers Board Meeting – June 7, 2017**

**Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm**

**Present:** Roy Sletson, Jeremy Bean, Meg Weidenhof, Michael Pipe, Chris Rand, Sara Carlson

**Staff:** Stacey Budd

**Visitor:** Mark Maloney – Greenmore Gardens

### **Recap of Sunday's Vendor meeting:**

Roy discussed the plan to have Linda Stewart pursue a gathering of vendors to see how they can collaborate to continue to operate the OLM. At this first meeting, two vendor types were present – those interested in retail and those looking to wholesale. Conversation revolved around it being easier to continue the online market with a one-dimensional selling to individuals. Roy offered assistance to support vendors as they explore their next steps. Jeremy emphasized that we support the transition of the market but will assist in making it continue. He indicated he hopes the conversations going forward show us some new possibilities that we haven't considered.

Discussion followed regarding the implications of a perceived “failure” of the online market. The board debated the challenges of our online transactional market versus store space engagement. Roy is optimistic that the OLM can continue beyond the grant, but wants to see the board pass policy changes in order to make it sustainable.

Sara discussed the on-boarding of vendors in the early stages of the market. It was established so that there was room at the table for everyone to sell. Discussion followed regarding our need to get vendors on board with new policies. Meg mentioned the importance of creating a clear/concise proposal for vendors. It was discussed meeting with vendors to get their buy-in for policy changes. Sara stated all of this will depend on the individual's willingness to sit in a collaborative space and to engage in new ideas.

Roy suggested the following policy changes:

- Variable mark-up to determine final pricing (requires removal of member pricing)
- Buy in case units if our facilities ever change
- 5% charge to vendors when we pick up at the Boalsburg market

Other items discussed were changing the grant allocation to pay for more labor hours. In addition, adjusting the delivery fees was also discussed. Michael stated that a grower buy-in and management of the OLM may bring new life to business. Changes need to be made soon in order to hand over a more sustainable operation.

Jeremy suggests to take these ideas to an OLM committee and build a business plan and policy amendment.

Discussion moved to communicating changes to vendors and how do we continue to offer straightforward conversations and better education. It is important to focus on building relationships so we have solid partnerships to help us stock the shelves of a future storefront.

It was discussed the we have had new vendors express an interest in getting onto the market. The board stressed the importance of open conversations with new vendors. We need to state

what needs to be done in order for the market to go forward. Set a precedent up front. Enacting a market vendor fee was discussed.

Roy was charged, with the help of two other board members, to present five things we can enact now and five things to implement by October. Discussion followed and it was determined to hold another board meeting on Wednesday, June 21 to finalize the first five policy changes.

### **OLM operations:**

Stacey presented a quick recap of the OLM operations since Alicia's departure. She noted that Adam has jumped in and has done a nice job getting up to speed on all the nuances of the market. She noted we still need to grow our volunteers numbers to help over the summer months.

### **OLM market position:**

Chris and Michael have fleshed out a description for the manager position and will make sure it is posted promptly. Conversation revolved around whether we should make it a full time position to attract the best applicants. Places to post the position were noted (Reddit, Craigslist, FB/Twitter, PASA, PVCA) Jeremy reminded the board that Adam's interim contract expires on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Motion:** Michael motioned to extend Adam's contract until July 15. Second by Chris. All in favor.

### **OLM Grant:**

Jeremy said we need to resubmit the grant budget to the USDA. Jenn Landry's suggestion to hire a part time position, instead of payment to her to administer the grant, was discussed. It was noted that \$3,000 of available monies has not been allocated. Sara suggests with the short duration left in the grant that Jenn sees it out instead of bringing someone new in.

Discussion moved into the July 4<sup>th</sup> market period. After discussing options, it was decided to not hold the market during the cycle that falls on July 4<sup>th</sup>. It was noted to make sure to communicate it early through Diana.

### **Elk Creek Fundraiser:**

Chris gave the board an update on the Elk Creek fundraiser. It will be held on June 18<sup>th</sup> – Local of the Menu branding. Tickets for a Buffet dinner at Elk Creek is priced at \$30 adult \$15 children. It was decided that anything above expenses will be donated back to the co-op, along with \$1 for every selected beer purchased. Casey and Chris have been securing food donations from OLM vendors. Ticket sales are on an Eventbrite site. Current sales are slow, but will pick up close to the date. Diana is making a flier to distribute to our OLM customers and to be posted around town.

### **Committees:**

Jeremy discussed the establishment of an OLM committee and the desire to build a more robust communication committee. He inquired who from the board is willing to be actively involved in the committee. It was mentioned that we need someone willing to be on the committee for a duration for consistency and momentum. Jeremy mentioned he would talk to Casey to gauge her interest in this area.

### **Odds and Ends:**

It was noted we added volunteer coverage to our policy.

A brief discussion occurred regarding the need for a SafeServ certified individual present at market distribution. Stacey stated she would talk to Kevin Kassab and report back to the board. Jeremy mentioned the proposal from Dr. Amit Sharma and Sarah Rucker for prototyping an online platform for food distribution. They have an interest in working with the OLM team.

***Roy motioned to adjourn the meeting. Chris seconded the motion. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.***