

Mendocino County Farmers Market Association

2024 Annual Meeting

Sunday March 3, 2024 via ZOOM

Minutes Draft (Not Approved)

1. 10:20 Call to Order/Welcome/Ground Rules – Michael Foley

Board President Michael Foley explained to use the Zoom chat box with Julie Apostolu for all secret ballots. Otherwise, other votes will be by voice vote. Please use “raised hand” within Zoom reactions to be recognized for discussion.

2. Introduction Of Operating Committee – Michael Foley

Operating Committee members introduced themselves:

Michael Foley President & Willits Market Manager & Green Uprising Farm

Julie Apostolu Association General Manager & Fort Bragg

Amanda Fairall Vice President & Redwood Valley Market Manager & Fairall's Farm Foods

Christine Wagner Mendocino Market Manager; Gloria Harrison Treasurer & Laytonville Market Manager & Bee in My Bonnet plant starts ; Scott Miller Secretary & Scott's Sharpening Service;

Angela Harney Office Manager (of 24 years)

3. Introduction of Attendees – All

The following members introduced themselves to each other:

Garrett and Bonnie Dinyer

Steven Bramble

Ece Buke

Yesim Ford

Casey O'Neil

Rick Beal

Deborah Knoles

Ling Su

Mary Caudle

Jo Galbreath

Ben Wolff

Tammy Chandler

Melissa Arana

Paul Sousa

Reza Ghanadan

Kelan Daniel

Yiping Hseih

Jessie Taaning

Galina Arlov

Kelan Daniel

Ona Rynearson

Grant Fischer

Guests:

Matt Dougherty- Mendocino Ag dept

Bebing/James Locke (McEwen Family Farm)

4. Approval of Agenda – Michael Foley

General Manager Julie corrected Item #11 to read: California Nutrition Incentive Program
Agenda approved unanimously with the correction.

5. Approval of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes Michael Foley

Minutes of 2023 Annual Meeting approved unanimously.

6. Presidents Report – Michael

Sales were up over previous 5 years as well as stall fees which is an indicator that the vendors are doing better also.

The replacement of the Ukiah Market Manager required President Michael to cover that market, in concert with GM Julie, until recruitment and selection of our new Manager Autumn.

7. General Manager Report – Julie Apostolu

GM Julie concurred with President Michael's characterization of the Sales and Stall Fee up tick for 2023. She also commented that the Ukiah Market lacked organization which she assisted the new Manager Autumn to implement.

GM Julie reported that it has been very busy responding to inquiries from individuals as well as businesses.

8. Market Managers Reports – All Managers

Julie of Fort Bragg – It's been an amazing bustling markets. The new city manager is a big supporter of the Market and has authorized the use of the gym at anytime the Market needs it during inclement weather. Julie is also working a 40 hr/week job and having Christine take over the Mendocino Market has been a relief. There will be a new sourdough vendor at the Mendo Market this year. The Market will be promoted to tourists through the visitor accommodation community in the next year.

Gloria of Laytonville – Reported the local grocery store, Giegers, has closed increasing attendance at the Market. The local feed store has helped take up the slack by opening a Farm Stand of local produce from home gardens.

Casey O'Neil commented that this is a super sweet thing as the home gardening folks might be incubated into a larger role in the community food economy.

President Michael announced the Farmers Convergence on March 19th at Ridgewood Ranch.

Amanda of Redwood Valley – Reported it was a good year due to new vendors and consistency in vendor attendance but still looking for more vendors. EBT was up.

Autumn of Ukiah – Thanked vendors for their patience as she learned the ropes. In the next year she intends to cultivate a relationship with the City and have the Market incorporated into City events. She looks forward to growing as a team.

Michael of Willits – Reported the Market is doing well but it is still trying to catch up to 2020 – the Covid year. The Market has good Ag vendors and a steady 10 vendors at the Grange each week. The old Rexall Drug store has sold, so Michael is exploring using the new pavilion in the City Park as a new outside location for the Market this Spring/Summer.

9. Office Manager & Treasurer Report – Angela Harney & Gloria Harrison

**See MCARM Website for: 2023 Book Keeping Summary; Vendor Gross Sales 2023; Stall Fees 2023 and the Proposed Budget 2024.*

OM Angela noted that a Climate Scientist at the Caspar Community Center recently noted that one way to combat climate change is to buy local at Farmers Markets.

a. 2023 Bookkeeping-Available upon request to Office Mgr.

b. 2023 Gross Sales/Stall Fees

Angela reported 2023 gross sales of approximately \$1,390,000 which is a 8.6% increase and 60% of that was in Ag sales. 2023 is the highest ever!!

Angela added that Stall Fees amounted to \$94,000 Highest ever!!

WIC 8640 is almost double that of 2022.

MCFARM has 91 paid memberships accounting for \$4550.

Stall Fees have basic cost of \$7.50, of that \$3.50 is for Market Maintenance, and \$2.00 goes to the AG Dept.

Market Managers receive approximately 50% of the Stall Fees for their service of organizing and running the Markets.

c. 2024 Proposed Budget – see website for complete budget breakdown

Projected Income of	\$100,314
Projected Expenses of	\$100,314
Leaving a surplus of	\$0

Other notable highlights: General Manager pay \$7200; Office Manager Pay \$7000; Officer Stipends in total \$800; All Market Manager's pay in total (estimated, based on stall fees collected)\$48,400; Contingency funded with additional \$889, bringing total Contingency Fund to \$8171; Total Operating Funds for the Markets \$27,805- Breakdown: Fort Bragg \$8626, Laytonville \$2644, Mendocino \$2483, Redwood Valley \$1151, Ukiah \$8378, Willits \$4522.

Bonuses for Market Managers, General Manager & Office Manager (if in good standing), if MCFARM has a net profit at year end (75%) and fund Contingency Fund (25%).

d. Motion to Adopt 2024 Proposed Budget- VOTE

OM Angela noted an additional \$200 allocated for the RV Market, gifted from FB and Ukiah markets. Bonus for Market Managers and Staff was allocated if MCFARM has a profit at year end, as noted at the bottom of the budget spreadsheet. She noted that everything is on the MCFARM website for vendors to examine.

A vendor questioned how to obtain all the fees paid for the 2023 season.

GM Julie answered that each Market Manager should have all vendors and the fees they have paid for the season at that Market.

A vendor questioned if there was a formula for the extra money allotted to RV Market.

OM Angela replied that it is a subjective determination.

President Foley called for a vote on the 2024 Proposed Budget Motion for approval by Gloria and seconded by Steve Bramble
Approved unanimously.

10. NCO Report on Market Match &EBT – Allegra Foley

Allegra reported Market Match for 2023 amounted to about \$107,000. Mendocino has a \$30 match where as the match is \$10 across the state. So we are doing well in Mendocino County. However there is a major THREAT to Market Match as the Governor has proposed a \$35M budget cut to the program. This goes to the legislature on June 30th. There is a site: Save Market Match.org that has multiple ways for individuals to help retain Market Match. She stressed that this would not affect 2024 season.

Gloria stated she contacted Supervisor Haschak who stated that the BOS had sent a letter to the legislature in support of Market Match. Casey commented that Market Match makes a huge difference in sales.

Jessie requested promotional materials to distribute at her booth. She was directed to the website SaveMarketMatch.org for materials.

11. C-NIP California Nutrition Incentive Program – Julie & Michael

GM Julie observed that there is lots of political activity on-line. The \$35M cut to CNIP is the State match for Federal dollars, so the state would be turning away Federal dollar with this cut. She further stated that she has an EXPLAINER for Market Match on her table and is collecting peoples stories in support of Market Match.

President Michael observed that there is a lot of initiative for local food on the CA.gov website. Gloria commented that she has worked with the Ecology Center for years and they are all over this issue and that we didn't need to panic.

12. WIC Acceptance at Banks – Michael Foley

Michael observed that a number of vendors have had trouble cashing federal WIC checks. He encouraged those vendors in the program to confront your bank. Community First is accepting the checks. You must insist with your bank to accept federal WIC checks as well. And get enrolled in the WIC program, if you are not, it makes it easier. GM Julie will put a link to the WIC application on the MCFARM website.

13. Mendocino Dept. of Agriculture – Matt Daugherty

Matt stated this was his 10th year with the Dept and he has not worked this program in a while. The Ag Dept is an enforcement agency basically. They are just making sure that what you are selling is on your CPC and that egg sales are compliant as well as scales are up to date with the weights and measures seal. He admitted the new CPC application is tedious but it can be altered easily once completed.

The lack of an Ag Commissioner slows Dept functioning down and encouraged farmers to contact their BOS supervisor to encourage them to fill the position. He encouraged Market Managers to maintain a separation of AG and Non-Ag.

14. Environmental Health Dept. Updates – Michael and Amanda

President Michael exclaimed that EH fees had increased EXTREMELY. MCFARM fees went from \$0 to \$600 Cottage Food permits went up also, food trucks tripled reported Garret Dinyer.

At a EH Stakeholders meeting that Michael and Amanda attended EH explained the BOS mandated that EH be self supporting with fees, no General Fund dollars to EH. EH has proposed a payment plan of March, April and May for submitting the annual fee. President Michael recommended interested parties get in the BOS ear regarding fees, reporting only Haschak and Mulhern were supportive. Stay aware of a Notice of the BOS agendizing the Fees for reconsideration.

15. Officer Election Opening / Nominations for President & Treasurer & Coastal Member Representative – Michael

Officers nominated are not required to be Ag Vendors, however only Ag Vendor may vote. Jessie Taaning nominated Gloria Harrison for Treasurer
GM Julie nominated Michael Foley for President & Reza Ghanadan for Coastal Member Representative.
Ona objected proposing that all members who have paid fees should be able to vote.
GM Julie observed that the organization must abide by the current By-Laws and proposed to put the issue on the Agenda under Announcements #17.
OM Angela read out the responsibilities of the three offices.
GM Julie sent out a private poll
GM Julie announced the slate was unanimously approved.

16. Reminder: NEW 2024 Membership/Vendor Applications Due April 30 – Julie&Angela

Angela encouraged all vendors to submit applications by April 30th.

17. Announcements

The question: Shall the organization change the By-Laws to allow non-Ag vendors a vote?

OM Angela pointed out that a change of the By-Laws must be noticed for a vote at the next Annual Meeting of Membership.

It was decided that an Ad Hoc committee would be formed to explore changing by-laws to allow Non-Ag members a vote. Ad Hoc Committee members: Julie, Ona, Gloria, Angela, Michael, and Reza. They will meet and present any proposed By-Law change for a membership vote at the 2025 Annual Membership Meeting.

Ona announced that she and Rick Beal were West Company graduates.
Julie announced that Ona was exhibiting her art work locally.

Angela announced that a new MCFARM poster will be coming out; everyone agreed the artwork should remain only the text should change to reflect any new Market hours.

GM Julie suggested that the next General Membership Meeting will be hybrid, i.e. both in-person and on-line.

Adjournment at 1:07