

Minutes of

## **Downtown Waterville Farmers' Market Association**

### **Annual Meeting**

January 9, 2008

The meeting began at 6 pm.

**Members Present:** Sarah Smith (Grassland Farm), Michelle Neville (Tangled Oak Farm), Clayton Carter (Fail Better Farm), Bob Perol (Diversity Farm), Fred Nassar (Eagle View Gardens), Todd Murphy (Trees to Please), Ernest Ames (100 Acre Farm), Becky Morse and Trish Rowe (Pudleduk Family Farm), Angelo Pirri (Sherman Farm), Don Kenerson (Kenerson Farm), Joanne and David Gorey (A Page-N-Thyme), Tom Roberts, Lois Labbe, Jack Cozart, & Courtney Page (Snakeroot Organic Farm), Shannon Haines (WMSt), Michael Scholz (Albion Bread Company), Bob Lovelace (Brighton Farm), Hanne Tierney (Cornerstone Farm), Mark Guzzi (Peacemeal Farm), Mark Rollins and Reginald Heald (Heald Farm).

**1. Treasurer's Report:** Clayton reported that in 2007:

Starting Balance \$3,326.87

Total Income \$8,795.00

Total Expenses \$4,604.06

Gross Income \$4,190.94

Ending Balance \$7,517.81

Clayton added that our finances are in good shape, and that we have plenty of money going into 2008. Since we have so much left over, we are in good standing to be able to give back to the community. He also mentioned that hosting so many musicians throughout the season added up into a larger than foreseen amount, but that we were able to absorb the expense.

**2. Steering Committee elections:** Officers were elected as follows:

Chairperson: Fred Nassar, Eagle View Gardens, [frednas@adelphia.net](mailto:frednas@adelphia.net)

Secretary: Courtney Page, Snakeroot Organic Farm, [courtney.page@gmail.com](mailto:courtney.page@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Clayton Carter, Fail Better Farm, [failbetterfarm@gmail.com](mailto:failbetterfarm@gmail.com)

Asst Treasurer: Raini Perry, Raini Ridge Farm\*\*, [info@rainiridgefarm.com](mailto:info@rainiridgefarm.com)

Market Manager: Jack Cozart, Snakeroot Organic Farm, [jack@snakeroot.net](mailto:jack@snakeroot.net)

At Large #1: Sarah Smith, Grassland Farm, [grasslandfarm@hotmail.com](mailto:grasslandfarm@hotmail.com)

At Large #2: Michelle Neville, Tangled Oak Farm, [tangledoakfarm@yahoo.com](mailto:tangledoakfarm@yahoo.com)

At Large #3: Bob Lovelace, Brighton Farm, [brightonfarm@psouth.net](mailto:brightonfarm@psouth.net)

\*\* Since Raini was unable to attend the meeting due to her work schedule, her position as Assistant Treasurer is pending her acceptance of the job. Nobody thought that she would mind continuing the job from 2007.

**3. Marketing and Promotion:** A committee was formed to plan the proposal for Marketing and Promotion of the Market in 2008.

Members are:

Jack: [jack@snakeroot.net](mailto:jack@snakeroot.net),

Hanne: [hanne@cornerstonefarm.us](mailto:hanne@cornerstonefarm.us)

Ernie: [ernestames@hotmail.com](mailto:ernestames@hotmail.com)

Trish: [pudledukfamilyfarm@yahoo.com](mailto:pudledukfamilyfarm@yahoo.com)

Michael: [albionbreadcompany@mac.com](mailto:albionbreadcompany@mac.com)

Mark G.: [peacemeal@midmaine.com](mailto:peacemeal@midmaine.com)

and Clayton: [failbetterfarm@gmail.com](mailto:failbetterfarm@gmail.com) (who joined after accepting responsibility for the 2008 budget proposal).

The committee is scheduled to meet on Wed, Jan 23 at 6 pm at the Waterville Main Street Office.

Many ideas for promotion were discussed throughout the meeting, I will list these at the end of the minutes.

**4. Market Manager's Report:** Hanne presented the 2007 Attendance Report in the form of a spreadsheet, which showed the market attendance per day and per member for the whole season.

Hanne commented that as we could see from the spreadsheet, attendance was good in 2007. There was a consistent number of vendors from week to week, following the expected trend of low attendance in the beginning and end of the growing season and better attendance in high summer. There were a few vendors with low attendance, which can be expected for seasonal crops like apples, corn, berries, etc. It was pointed out that spotty attendance for less-seasonal vendors hurts the Market, and that in some other Markets there are rules that allow the Market to vote out members with low attendance records. When accepting applicants we will be able to ask if they plan on attending regularly, and what priority attending the market is for them.

Hanne also pointed out that we should strive as a group of people to become the community that the DWFM was portrayed as in the most recent issue of Farmers' Market Today; that we need to work well together and therefore any problems that may arise should be explored before we accept an applicant into the membership, so everyone will benefit if all opinions are voiced. In the event that there was a problem at Market, both Hanne and Clayton had copies of the Market Rules & Bylaws with them for reference. All Market documents are available online at: [www.watervillefarmersmarket.org](http://www.watervillefarmersmarket.org).

**5. By-Law Amendment proposal:** The proposed amendment to Article 7, Section 3 of the DWFM By-Law passed unanimously.

It now reads:

Article 7, Section 3. In the even of liquidation or dissolution, all remaining assets in the Association's treasury shall be donated to one or more non-profit association that works to benefit local agriculture or community food distribution. The specific beneficiary of the Market's assets will be determined by a general vote. The sum of the donation will be any monies remaining after all debts and other obligations of the Association are satisfied.

**6. 2008 Budget:** Clayton volunteered as Treasurer to write up the Budget proposal, and joined the Promotion Committee to coordinate all the expenses.

In 2007 we spent \$1200 less than the Budget since the company that we ordered canvas bags from shut down. We will also be gaining income when application fees are received.

The grant that we received from MaineGeneral in past years is not confirmed for 2008, Shannon expects to know by the end of January.

**7. Member Capacity Cap:** We decided not to limit the total capacity of the Market. Once all the applications (new and returning) are in we will know what the market needs for 2008, and will accept new applicants accordingly. The physical space of the market is less limiting than the customer base, so we can grow when we feel that the public demand is not being met.

**8. 2008 Deadlines:** We made changes to allow everyone more time to prepare for the opening of the 2008 season.

*We changed the Application deadline to **March 15, 2008.***

The New Applicant Meeting is set for Tuesday, April 1 at 6 pm, location TBA.

Shannon will snail mail applications to all 2007 members since we changed the deadline.

Opening Day will be May 1st and Closing Day will be November 20th.

**9. Email Newsletter:** We have 120 subscribers to the newsletter and phenomenally positive feedback. The only complaint is that some people can't make it to market on Thursday, and they would like to see us there on a Saturday or Sunday. The weekend days are also best for the City of Waterville in terms of having the space to spare for us in the Concourse.

**10. Member feedback:** Mark G. pointed out that since we are a young market it would be beneficial to spend all the money we can on promotion, especially this year since we have the funds and don't know if we will continue to be granted so much financial flexibility from Maine

General in the coming years. He also pointed out that better signage around town will help draw more customers who might be inclined to visit the market if it is easier to find, eg: more specific directions and permanent signs pointing the way.

Hanne mentioned that having extra people in the Market creates a hassle for the Market Manager. It would be helpful to have a logistics person to coordinate special events and save the time of others.

It also came up that it would be nice to get a survey of our customer base-how many people come to Market, how many are regular shoppers, where they are coming from,etc. Perhaps we can hire someone? Becky volunteered her free time at market to do surveying. The Promotion Committee will figure out some details to this idea.

## **11. Other**

Adding a second day of the week: weekend days are best for customers that have given us feedback, also easiest to coordinate with the City. Mark R. will email poll the membership to assess interest. Mark G. suggested that before making such a significant decision we should do a lot of research and have a concrete plan and formal proposal to discuss at next years Annual Meeting.

Indoor Winter Market: Lots of pros and cons to this: less visible, more comfortable, easier access for elderly and others who don't like being outside in the winter, its nice for meat vendors to be outside in the winter since it's easier to keep the meat frozen, the weather wouldn't be as much as a factor in terms of cancellations, etc etc. We decided that the topic needs more discussion and that we would have better insights after a season of Winter Markets outside, as planned. We will discuss it again at the April New Applicant meeting so that we will be able to print the 2008 brochure with Winter Market information.

## **Promotion and Marketing Ideas**

Permanent Signs around town, near the Interstate ramps and on all the major in roads: 23, 100, 201, etc. Shannon will talk to the City to see what potential there is before the Marketing Meeting on Jan 23.

More PR and posters/brochures at Thayer, Colby, Thomas. All patients at Thayer leave with a brochure?

Mini-Promotions like Tractor Day, Education Day, Cooking Demos, Veggie of the Month, Grain to Bread, other informational and interactive activities (that hopefully won't create a safety/liability problem).

A Community News and Recipe Shareboard--a place for postings, brochures, Market Events listings, other stuff.

The McDonalds strategy: Hook the Kids! Maybe partner with the library for activities?

*---Submitted by Courtney Page, Secretary*