

## **NFM Regular Board Meeting 1/25/2017 Minutes**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Nashville Farmers' Market Board was called to order by Board Chair Frank Cardenas at 9:30 am January 25, 2017

In attendance were Board members Cardenas, Priscilla Norman, Margot McCormack, Tyler Brown and Brian Copeland. NFM Staff members present were Tasha Kennard, Carolyn Sanders, Charles Kizer, Jackie Contreras, Rebecah Boynton and Kay West, and Metro Legal representative Susan Jones. A quorum was present.

Also in attendance were Ken Meter of Crossroads Resource Center, and vendors Beth Piper, Timothy McKinney, Saba Berhanu, Tammy Whitehouse, Glenda Knox-Carter , Shavone Holt, Lakendra Davis, Ted Smiley, Tony Hackney, Troy Smiley, Jack McDowell, Jane No, Matt Kerske and Carol Hagen.

Chair Cardenas read the following standard announcement.

*As information for our audience, if you are not satisfied with a decision made by the Farmers' Market Board today, you may appeal the decision by petitioning for a writ of cert with the Davidson County Chancery or Circuit Court. Your appeal must be filed within 60 days of the date of entry of the Board's decision. To ensure that your appeal is filed in a timely manner, and that all procedural requirements have been met, please be advised that you should contact your own independent legal counsel.*

Public comments were invited at the start of the meeting to ensure that anyone who wants to comment can do so prior to the Board discussing the business on the agenda. Vice-Chair Norman read the following standard announcement:

*Individuals, requesting to address the Board; will be limited three (3) minutes unless granted more time by the Board Chair. Each person authorized to speak is expected to state her/his name and address and the organization represented if any, and if the speaker reads prepared text, to provide a copy to Board staff.*

No public comments at that time.

Chair Cardenas asks for approval of 11/16/16 regular meeting minutes. Moved, seconded and approved.

### **Financial Overview**

Tasha Kennard points out that due to no Board meeting in December, the financial packets contains month end reports for November 2016 and December 2016. She will highlight the December month end report because it is most recent and most accurately reports current financial status.

Effective July 1, 2016 the NFM operating budget is \$1,952,700 which includes total revenue of \$952,700 and an operating subsidy of \$1 million. The operating subsidy utilizes funds from the State lease agreement. The Market's total expenses are not expected to exceed the operating budget.

As of December 31, 2016 the Market earned \$486,965 in revenue collection. Revenue collections are behind \$8,786 at this time due to past due accounts. The Market expenses total \$805,943 and is detailed in the BAR attached. Expenses are under budget by \$109,000 at this time and are not expected to exceed the operating budget. Revenue from NY's Eve event will hit January 2017 revenue.

NFM management has invoiced all past due accounts totaling \$11,560. Unpaid accounts will be turned over to collections on February 15, 2017.

There are no additional fee waivers to report at this time. Analysis reports are attached for review.

ED Kennard adds that it is the time of year when Metro department heads are preparing Capital Budgets which are due February 3 and Operating Budgets which are due February 10. These are the drafts of budgets that are submitted to OMB. Staff will be preparing those budgets. Last year the Market did 3-year budget proposals. Last year's proposals will be edited and submitted. It will come back to the Board at February meeting for thorough review, prior to any further presentation to Mayor's office and Metro Council.

### **Food Systems Development Project, Special Guest Ken Meter**

Mr. Meter thanks board for the time to speak. He has spoken at the Food Summit in early December four consecutive years and has met a lot of growers and has a sense of where food is in Nashville. The PIP project has hired him and his colleague Megan Goldenberg as consultants to do a food system assessment for Metro Nashville. It will include a 14-county area. He is in Nashville this week meeting farmers, chefs and other food people in the city. He will come back in mid-February for another week of interviews. They are doing quite a bit of research from public records to get data. By March 15 they will have a set of recommendations to give the Mayor. He is at the Board meeting to see how the Market operates but also has a question for the Board that he invites them to answer via email. How do Board members feel about the future of the Market and if there are special requests they have in that budget process that should be put into the work plan and budget that would help advance the work of the market.

### **2017 Call for Applications**

Program Manager Jackie Contreras reports that the revised 2017 applications are ready and in Board packets, along with application guidelines. The application itself includes a letter from ED Kennard and Contreras, along with merchant standards for each category which includes Farmer/Producer, Farmers/Producer Collective, Food Artisan, Craftsperson, Flea Merchant and Street Food or Food Truck

Merchant. It includes an application checklist for each category. She tried to whittle it down from last year's application and took it down from 15 to 14 pages. In the last couple years the application has gone out the first of February with a submission period through March; review are ongoing as applications are submitted with the goal of notifying merchants of spring placements after March 15 to prepare for peak season.

The application for renewing merchants is also included and is only two pages. Renewing applications will be accepted through March 1 and new applications until March 10. Staff will take the next 20 days to review and then roll out new peak season placement on April 1.

ED Kennard points out that Ms. Contreras worked hard with Carolyn Sanders to create the renewal application so returning merchants did not have to go through the very lengthy application process again, and to reduce areas where applications were requesting information that was not being used. Moving forward the process gets streamlined every year.

### **New Lease and Temporary Rate Recommendations**

ED Kennard reports that annually at this time staff presents a new Rates & Charges card, this one effective April 1, 2017. There are a couple of adjustments which are pointed out section by section.

Feedback from auditors that came in last year is that our payment policy be added to the rate card. It is at the top in bold and reminds everyone payment is due in advance and the convenience fee if credit or debit card is used

Rates have not necessarily been changed in Farm Shed 1 or 2. Saturday as well as Sunday-Friday rates stay the same in peak and non-peak season. In response to feedback from merchants, incentives have been added such as a 3-day bundle of Wednesday-Saturday-Sunday which offers a 5% discount to anyone participating those 3 days and does not require a lease. Also offered is a 3-day weekend bundle Friday-Sunday, but is not discounted

This year two breakout lease options are being offered. A single or two days per week lease option for 3, 6, 9 or 12 months which offers consistent placement for term of lease and permission to hang a double-sided sign over stall. Three or more days per week lease option for 3, 6, 9 or 12 months offers consistent placement, the ability to hang a double-sided sign over stall, overnight storage of coolers and displays and a 5% rate discount.

The South Alley is still a learning experience in utilization. The 10x10 fee is \$20 Sun-Sat but if someone were to buy out the entire 10x100' tent the fee would be \$150, and a three-day bundle \$375. This would be ideal for a flower grow for example. Or the same amount of square footage in the alley not under the tent.

The only thing changed in Market House Temporary rates is an increase in per day Sunday-Friday and the addition of a daily non-profit fee for \$25. Also added was Wednesday Winter Market table fee at

\$15. The Night Market booth fee has been lowered to \$30. Night Market is a great event for restaurants and food trucks but not so much for merchants so this is designed to be an incentive.

Grow Local Kitchen 2017 fees for the full 8 am- 4 pm shift remains at \$100. We've named an Evening Production 8-hour shift, 4pm-midnight and midnight-8 am. The fee for that has been lowered from \$100 to \$65. Discounts continue to be offered for 5 or more pre-paid full day shifts at \$85, which is same fee as Residents. Five or more pre-paid production shifts or resident shifts will be \$50. Cooking class/demos using GLK will be \$50, the use of mobile kitchen for a workshop of demo will be \$20 for 3-hours, and a Pop-Up dinner event for up to 75 people will be \$150.

No significant adjustments to Special Event areas other than Market House. It has gone up to \$2,250 per day from \$2,000. We have added some rentable items such as tables, pipe and drape, MH string lights and MH PA system, and a commercial film or taping fee.

The Food Truck rate has not changed from \$75.

There will be fines for overnight coolers and items if merchant is not renting multiple days.

ED Kennard requests approval from Board to put new Rates & Charges into effect as of April 1, 2017. Motion made, seconded and approved.

### **NFM Market House Rate Model Proposal**

This is included in the Board packet, some of which was sent to the Board to read prior to meeting. ED Kennard noted that the annual expenses associated with the MH are approximately \$1.1-\$1.2 million. The current rate model brings in approximately \$500,000 of annual revenue. Over the past four years, NFM management has reduced expenses and increased occupancy in an effort to earn additional revenue to cover operational expenses.

Currently the NFM Market House Rate Model includes 9 leases expiring in 2017 and 2018 with a base rate of \$9.63 per SF and 9 leases expiring in 2017 and 2018 with a base rate of \$11.79 SQ. Since December 2013 all new and renewing leases have been established with the \$11.70 base rate. Due to the high number of existing leases with the old base rate, the average base rate is currently \$10.63 SF.

The NFM uses a very standard BOMA to help cover utilities and common space load factor. A tenant has their usable lease space and then their share of common space. The base rate is then multiplied by their tenant load factor depending on the tenants equipment, electrical and gas needs and common space allocation. That total is divided by 12 to determine their monthly rate. The total revenue collections include the square footage rate, load factor and utilities collected. (several tenants are billed monthly for utilities).

The average MH lease tenant is 600 SF. The average load factor that is multiplied against their rate for utilities, shared space, etc. is 4, which is the highest load factor there is. The average base rate is \$10.63, the average annual lease cost is \$20,561.69 and average monthly is \$2,039.85.

If the base rate is correct, it should recoup the Market's cost for security, janitorial and utilities. We don't have the right base rate which is reflected in the numbers. If Market expenses are \$1.1-\$1.2 million and MH merchant revenue is a half-million we are way off. At previous meetings, the Board asked the Executive Director to research solutions.

ED Kennard took into consideration average market rate for Nashville which is growing rapidly but also keeping in mind that part of the NFM mission statement is to incubate new and small businesses. The Market is a government-managed facility and while it has to cover costs, it also wants to offer small businesses a place to grow and thrive.

What will be presented are several different options to improve the balance over a period of time, it will not be immediate.

ED Kennard is recommending that the information be reviewed and that the Board moves to approve a new rate model effective March 1, 2017 to improve revenue collections and to offset expenses associated with Market House facility and operations. She is not asking to approve it today but that the Board takes the options detailed in the proposal and at the February Board meeting approve a new rate model. It will also help the Market become less dependent on Metro subsidies. Not this year but in the future.

The rate model to be presented is based on two significant reports. In 2015, Colliers International reports the average rental rate per SF for retail in Nashville is \$21. In a more recent report from CBRE, the average rate per sf in Nashville in existing buildings in inner core is \$17 sf. New build, the average is \$38 per sf. In comparison the current NFM rate per sf is \$6-\$11 below average market value.

Mr. Copeland asks how many qualified applications are not approved due to space limitations in the MH.

ED Kennard says in the past the MH has opened applications for specific available locations. Most recently there were 8 applications for the end space beside Bella. Of the eight, seven were deemed qualified. But there is only space for one. At end of the meeting, staff will be requesting the NFM open up application process for other available lease space. The office probably get 5 requests a week inquiring if there is any available lease space, primarily restaurant requests.

Mr. Copeland says that means approximately 20 requests per month for available space which only matriculate to one new tenant. He says he is not necessarily looking at average costs as he is at supply & demand, referred to as absorption rate. He is looking at supply and demand and would like to see more hard data on number of applications.

ED Kennard points out there are three options for a new rate model.

**Option A** would stagger the roll out over a three-year period, increase the annual base rate to \$14 in 2017 and increase by \$2 annually in 2018 and 2019. After 2019, the rate may be adjusted by Consumer Price Index up to a maximum of 5% annually. For example, an existing lease expiring in 2017 or a new lease would be offered a base rate of \$14 per SF for first year of lease term; in second and third year of

lease term the base rate would on increase by \$2 per SF. Should the lease extend beyond 3 years, the rate may be adjusted by the CPI up to a max of 5% annually.

Year 1: 2017 all new and 2017 renewals at \$14 per SF would result in a Market House revenue estimate of \$600K. Year 2, 2018, all new, 2018 renewals and 2<sup>nd</sup> year step for existing, \$16 per SF resulting in Market House revenue estimate of \$800K. In Year 3, 2019, all new, 2019 renewals and 3<sup>rd</sup> year step for existing, \$18 per SF and estimated Market House revenue of \$980K.

**Option B** stagger the roll out over a three-year period, increase the annual base rate to \$13 in 2017 and increase by \$2 annually in 2018 and 2019. After 2019, the rate may be adjusted by Consumer Price Index up to a maximum of 5% annually.

Year 1: 2017 all new and 2017 renewals at \$13 per SF would result in a Market House revenue estimate of \$575K. Year 2, 2018, all new, 2018 renewals and 2<sup>nd</sup> year step for existing, \$15 per SF resulting in Market House revenue estimate of 760K. In Year 3, 2019, all new, 2019 renewals and 3<sup>rd</sup> year step for existing, \$17 per SF and estimated Market House revenue of \$965K.

**Option C** would stagger the roll-out over a one year period starting with all new and 2017 renewals in Group A (to be completed by end of June 2017), and then all existing leases in Group B (to be completed by November 2017). Increase the annual base rate to \$13 or \$14 in 2017 and increase by \$2 annually in 2018 and 2019. After 2019, the rate may be adjusted by the CPI up to a maximum of 5% annually, For example, an existing lease expiring in 2017 or a new lease would be offered a base rate of \$14 or \$13 per square foot for the first year of lease term. An existing lease expiring in a future year would be terminated for convenience on July 1 with a 90-day notice and offered a renewal with a base rate of \$14 or \$13 per square foot for the first year of the lease term. In the second and third year of the term, the base rate would increase by \$2 per SF.

Year 1, 2017. All leases would increase to \$13-\$14 per square foot with an estimated Market House revenue of \$600,000 to \$700,000. Year 2, 2018 all leases would increase to \$15-\$16 per square foot with an estimated Market House revenue of \$850,000 to \$940,000. Year 3, 201 all leases would increase to \$17-\$18 per square foot with a Market House revenue of \$1,000,000 to \$1,052,000.

Mr. Copeland asks how old the existing rates are. ED Kennard replies there are currently two rates in the Market House. The \$9.63 dates back to contracts developed prior to December 2013, and all the way back to as far as 1998.

Ms. McCormack adds that when she first got on the board, a little over 5 years ago, the Market was leasing space at bargain basement prices and that had been going on for almost 20 years.

Mr. Copeland clarifies that some rates go back as far as 1998 which is 18 years ago. He thinks it is important for next meeting to understand the difference between 1998 and 2017 and what things look like on a curve. The average home price in Nashville now is about \$272,000 and back as far as 2002 the average price was in the low \$100s.

ED Kennard explains that In option C, Group A would be merchants whose leases are set to expire in 2017 and new tenants. There are just a handful of tenants whose leases are expiring in 2017 but there is a potential for several new leases with existing vacant space and other areas identified as leasable space. Group B would be any merchant that has an existing lease that would expire in 2018 or 2019. There is only one lease that would potentially go beyond 2019. All but one of the \$9.63 rate merchants come to term in 2018, most in February of 2018. Whether it is done in 2017 or 2018, there will be a significant number of lease renewals or options for lease renewals in 2018. What NFM proposes for Option C is that they are offered a convenience termination to all leases that extend beyond 2017 and offer them a renewal at the new base rate at the same time. Essentially Plan C would terminate their existing contracts and put them on a new contract. Discussions have begun in legal and need to continue.

Susan Jones says all the leases allow for termination as long as they are given proper notice. They can then decide and some may decide they don't want to continue. If they opt to re-sign, then the new rates would be put in place.

ED Kennard says termination for convenience is listed in two ways, one on the older leases and the other on the more current version started in 2013. The old lease agreement requires a 90-day termination notice. There are two of those. All the other leases require a 30-day notice. The NFM is recommending a 90-day notice even if their lease says 30 days

Ms. McCormack asks if management feels everyone currently in the Market House would be able to accommodate the new lease structure or would there be merchants who have to leave. ED Kennard replies that for some it will be challenging because they have operated at such a low base rate for so many years, so there is a possibility some will not be able to renew.

Chair Cardenas asks how many meetings have been held with merchants regarding this. ED Kennard says there was a discussion at previous merchant meeting and there will be another at Merchant Meeting on Friday. There will be two more meetings after that. Management has been sharing with the merchants the disparity between what operations cost and what is earned for many years.

Susan Jones asks if there has been written communication with merchants about this. ED Kennard says no, but that they are aware of ongoing discussions, the agenda for board meetings is posted. Once the Board makes a decision, a communication plan will be put in place. That is why a decision is not being asked for today so that staff can get some feedback from merchants first.

Mr. Copeland asks for some narratives from merchants as staff gathers them with regard to this proposal.

The timeline for feedback will be one month. Susan Jones asks if the three options being proposed have been shared in writing by NFM staff. They have not. She suggests NFM do that with the caveat that the Board may reject, modify or accept one of the options. It would give merchants more information and she suggests staff do that extra step.

NFM management recommends Option C, with a \$14 base rate and a \$2 base increase annually and 5% CPI increase in all leases offered/renewed with terms beyond 2019.

ED Kennard points out that in looking at fiscal operations, something must be done and the Board cannot choose to do nothing. Not only to strive for financial self-sufficiency but because it is the right business practice. The NFM cannot continue to ask taxpayers to subsidize businesses that are very successful at the Market. The customer base has grown and evolved. All of the hurdles and challenges of the last couple years demonstrate a more consistent traffic flow.

Mr. Copeland asks for similar models to the Market as far as price, condition, location, and even taking out location. It's easy to say in Germantown new construction you'd be paying x amount of dollars but that is not apples to apples comparison. It is important to look at something more similar to the Market.

Ms. McCormack says the Department of General Services did that several years ago and compared it a lot to the Arcade and there was some discussion if that was fair. But there really isn't a comparable place unless you go to a mall.

Mr. Copeland points to Shoppes of Fatherland and Fresh Hospitality and thinks it is important we have their data that is more specific to apples to apples.

Ms. McCormack wants to be sure merchants understand what it means for the Market to be self-sufficient and that Council basically looks at this as Market merchants are being given taxpayers money to help them pay rent. It is important to go get that information to them and be sure they understand. It is important that the merchants at the Board meeting urge their fellow merchants to be at the meeting on Friday. What no one wants to happen is for the NFM staff and Board to be accused of actions that take merchants by surprise. Merchants need to take the responsibility to be educated and informed.

Tyler Brown says it is important that in the eyes of the Mayor's office and Metro the Market is moving and making progress toward financial self-sufficiency.

Ms. Jones emphasizes again the need for written communication and also suggests Channel 3 be invited to the board meeting where this will be discussed and voted on.

ED Kennard says she will work on the requests made by Board and legal and if there are any others, get them to her by mid-February.

She asks Board if they are comfortable with rates proposed to them. Mr. Copeland says he would like to look the figures over at length.

### **Merchant Lease Recommendations**

ED Kennard requests Board discussion of lease tenant applications for the available space in the Market House and says management is prepared with a recommendation. As a reminder, requests were made for priority baker, fish or meat market concept, and none of those were received. Eight applications were submitted for different concepts, seven came prepared to present at December board meeting.

There was not a quorum but applicants presented to staff and present board members and Rebecah Boynton video-taped them and distributed to the Board via email. The staff met and evaluated each application and narrowed that down to three preferred. The three are Taste of the Delta, Caracasville and City Farm Co. They are all residents in the Grow Local Kitchen and have demonstrated a commitment to and understanding of the Market. Upon further evaluation by the staff of operations and ability to finance, with a demonstrated record of success, staff does have a recommendation.

Ms. McCormack says she is aware the Market has been keen on a fish market and she spoke to JD, who used to be in the Market with Gulf Pride Seafood in the Jamaica way space and is at the Factory of Franklin. His perspective is that for a fish market to survive here there needs to be the ability to do wholesale business, which was proven by the failure of Wild & Local and Louisiana Seafood Kitchen. There's not enough traffic to sustain the business, it's just not big enough to have refrigeration, a cutting room and coming and going of trucks. She is not sure anyone would be able to make that go and suspects the same would be true of a butcher and a bakery, that the space is not big enough for the wholesale required to make a business work.

Ms. McCormack adds that as someone who saw the presentations in person, there were some very good ones and some not so good ones. She wants to see people who are serious and have a plan and a roadmap specifically for the Market and not assume because of their past success or reputation they don't need to prepare as well. Presentations particularly by Taste of Delta and City Farm were fantastic. Ms. McCormack notes it is very encouraging to have 8 applications and see how there is strong interest in our facility and that the three that staff recommended have ties to the Market and came up from the Grow Local Kitchen shows that it works. She says the Board also have to be very aware of financial stability and not to put people who aren't ready in places where they won't succeed. The NFM needs to be more responsible as landlords to be sure they can pay their rent and pay for the necessary build-out, to expect success for us and for the tenant.

ED Kennard says staff looked at menu concept, finance, ability to finance, readiness and expectation of success. With that the staff is recommending Taste of the Delta. It was a very difficult decision to select from three very qualified applicants. ED Kennard has talked about the rate model changes with Taste of the Delta. They have worked their numbers to be sure the new rate model is something they can manage and that they can finance the required build-out and meet the expectations of hourly operations. The space is 588 square feet and the lease will be positioned at the new base rate that the Board will choose and approve in February.

Chair Cardenas asks for a motion to approve awarding Taste of the Delta the space. Moved, seconded and approved. Ms. McCormack points out how hard they have worked at the Market and how long they have been committed to the Market. Tyler Brown also thanks them for their length of service at the Market and congratulates them and asks that the others who were finalists not give up.

Tammy Whitehouse asks to speak. She thanks the staff and the Board for their commitment and approval and says they won't let the Market down.

ED Kennard says the staff has also requested that City Farm Co and Caracasville be given priority when future restaurant spaces become available at the Market. Both concepts require existing or installation of hoods. They are very qualified and staff would like to keep them at the top of the wait list without having to reapply.

NFM managements requests approval of the lease renewal for Gardens of Babylon of a ten-year lease of 24,702 square feet at \$10 per square foot and up to a 5% CPI annual increase over the term of the lease. Management feels that the parties have come to a favorable agreement to both parties after many months of delays and hard work. Ms. McCormack says the Board appreciates GOB's patience and working so hard. Matt Kerske says GOB feels very positive about the new lease and partnership with the Market. Motion made to approve, seconded and passed.

NFM management requests approval for a call for applications for Market House concepts from February 1-March 1 2017. There are three leasable spaces suited for concepts that do not require a hood installation. They are 300 square feet (the corral by 7<sup>th</sup>), 250 square feet (corner beside Buttercake Babe) and 180 square feet (beside Bowl & Roll on Rosa Parks side). Qualifications include a concept that are the same as the applications for the last application.

Ms. McCormack asks what if someone wants to put in a hood. ED Kennard uses former Sloco space as an example. None of the previous tenants had a hood. It could have a hood installed, similar to permission given to Music City Crepes and Bowl & Roll that formerly did not have a hood, as did Bella Nashville. The decision is at the Board's discretion but ED Kennard reminds that the current HVAC can only handle so much, and is currently 85 tons beyond what the HVAC system can manage. There will be changes to the HVAC system, but going forward, decisions should take the current status into account. She also points out that the spaces are quite small.

Mr. Kizer says that when the current HVAC system was installed it was not intended to handle the number of restaurants currently operating in the Market House and adding another would not be wise.

Motion made to approve the call for applications, seconded and passed.

### **Capital Improvements Update**

Included in the report is a summary and timeline of capital projects, including merchant parking, NFM parking lot, restroom renovations, patio renovations, infrastructure improvements to the Market House, redesign of loading and waste docks, infrastructure improvements in sheds, grounds improvements and 2018-2020 Capital requests. Among the 2018-2020 capital requests will be additional funds for entrance/dock renovations, replacement of MH furnishings, replace/repair of GLK and Mobile Kitchen equipment, conference room technology improvements, Neighborhood Market Pavilions, sidewalk repairs, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue bus shelters, and kids educational play area.

ED Kennard reports that the Market House received equipment such as tables, pipe and drape and a commercial grade chef's kitchen from the former Convention Center as it begins demolition. The equipment is currently under tarps in the shed.

## **Special Meeting Request**

ED Kennard is asking for a special meeting for updating the Strategic Plan. She presents the timeline which includes facilitated work sessions with NFM staff and Merchant liaisons, facilitated planning sessions with NFM Board, stakeholder surveys, a draft of updated strategic plan at the February board meeting and NFM community open house for the feedback. The goal is to have presentation of the plan at the March board meeting and publish the plan in April. Jody Lentz and Kia Jarmon will be facilitators.

Motion made for Special Board Meeting February 8<sup>th</sup> at 9 am, seconded, approved.

## **Other Business**

Chair Cardenas asks the Board to consult the list of Board meetings for 2017 and their calendars. ED Kennard notes several possible conflicts but says those are up to the Board's discretion.

Mr. Copeland reports on ED review and says only one person has returned their form and reminds that it is due by January 31.

Kay West reports on Grow Local Kitchen and the residency program, renewing residents, new residents and new renters. She reports that the Conexion Americas partnership begins in February.

Susan Jones says the current Board bylaws require meetings once a month, but that can be amended to 10 per year for instance. An amendment request would need to be made in writing prior to the board meeting, then voted upon by the Board members.

Ms. Contreras reports staff is exploring applying for a grant that would give anywhere from \$50,000 to \$100,000 to promote farm products at the Market. The grant was just released.

ED Kennard says that the NFM is hosting a collaboration meeting among many markets, farmers, agencies and food groups to discuss other grants and that Ken Meter will attend.

Chair Cardenas highlights homework for the Board. Rate model feedback if any for Tasha, any feedback for Ken Meter send to Tasha, board meeting dates and the ED review.

Meeting adjourned at 11:14 am.