

SJFM Coop Project Steering Committee Minutes

01 March 2009
12 – 2 pm
RIAC/FSN Office

Present: Lori Greene (*Co-Chair*), Devon Crosby (*Project Liaison*), Kathleen Parewick (*Co-Chair*), Oz Rabinowitz, Dan Ficken (*Secretary*)

Observing: Sarah Hansen, Inbal Bahar

Regrets: Emily Doyle (*Project Liaison*), Jeremy Carter, Colin Greene (*Treasurer*), Zainab Jerrett

Consulting Team: Kristie Jamieson

Agendas and other materials for the meeting were distributed.

1) Agenda

A “Vendor Survey” item was added to the agenda under Business Arising, and the “Coffee” item was removed from the Other Business section.

2) Minutes for Approval

Inbal asked to have clarification on page two in terms of volunteers. She says it should say that there should be 1 or 2 senior volunteers to help the Market Manager out.

Moved that the minutes of the 22 February 2009 Steering Committee meeting be accepted as presented.

Oz/Sarah – Passed

3) Business Arising

A subcommittee was formed for an Agrifoods proposal for the conference to be held in April. Kathleen, Kristie, Dan, and Oz agreed to have a teleconference with Crystal Anderson during the week. Promo for the conference was briefly discussed as well.

[**Action:** Design promotional material for April event – **Sarah**]

The non-coop background research update was not ready to be discussed at this time.

It was noted that there is an MBO meeting being held on Monday at 3pm.

Sarah read out the job description for the Market Manager position. It is a very in depth description and the job has a very busy workload. It would be considered a full time position. Further discussion has been deferred until next week.

Discussion ensued on the Letter written to Councilor Gerry Colbert. The city seems very supportive of this season's outdoor vending opportunities (vending trucks, tables, etc.). They want an estimate of the number of regular attendees at the market, as well as a number of the regularly attending producers. It was estimated by Sarah that about 750 – 1000 people regularly attend the market each week, and about 4 – 6 farmers regularly attend with more vendors expected this year overall. This will be included in the letter, as well as the possible exploration of legalities of tent positioning outside the building. It was suggested that up to 6 vendors could be given space outside, as long as it does not disrupt the path taken by the users of the adjacent baseball diamond.

[**Action:** Adjust letter to G. Colbert and send – **Kathleen**]

The public Farmers' Market meeting originally scheduled for the International Food and Craft Fair event on the 14th has been rescheduled for probably the following week on the 22nd, which is on a Sunday so as not to compete with the upcoming FEAST event held on that Saturday. Instead, FM presence at the IFCF will be an educational/promotional FM booth manned by one or two people to distribute info and give surveys. It should be found out whether there is wireless internet access at the Holiday Inn so a laptop with a slideshow and the Market website can be running. The public meeting will probably be held at the Lion's Club Chalet.

A by-law session for the FM will be held on the 28th of March as well.

[**Action:** Promote FM meetings on the CBC Morning Show – **Kathleen**]

There is need for a generic display board to have at the IFCF and other such public events. The board should have an adjustable space on it so that updated news and upcoming events can be easily posted on it. A bookmark can be designed, or a magnet if there is minimal cost, to direct people to the FM website.

The vendor survey was next discussed. Lori is currently updating the survey and distributing it to all of the vendors. There are about 140 – 150 vendors so far, including the casual or one-time vendors and we are hoping for responses from about 75 – 80 people to obtain a representative sample. A deadline of Thursday night at midnight was established to give Lori time to sort through and interpret the responses by next week. The surveys will include a description of coops for the benefit of the people taking them.

[**Action:** Distribute and collect surveys, interpret the results – **Lori**]

4) Update Report from Consulting Team (Kristie)

Kristie commented on the results of the consumer survey. She read out all the key results, which generally lended to the coop structure in a positive manner. There were 245 responses overall, and generally the responses were overall very positive. The farmers' survey is going slower however because it was harder to get in touch with them than the consumers were. There will be a report and presentation given by the CT on the recommendations that come out of the surveys on the 15th of March.

5) Farmers' Market Canada Trip Report (*Sarah and Dan*)

Sarah gave a slideshow that showed their trip to St. Catharines, as well as her side trip to London. She showed the FM's from both cities. The London market is enormous, has its own specialized building and maximally utilizes all of the space within. Many restaurants in town have even closed up shop and moved into the London Market permanently. The St. Catharines market is much smaller, but still open three days a week, and has a very simple but very effective specially built building for their purposes as well. It was requested that if other people had pictures of FM's from other places to send them in so we can compile a bigger slideshow.

Dan commented on the fact that many of the people at the conference had already been approached by the CT in terms of gaining info in coop structures. However, interestingly, the manager for the Drummondville market mentioned that although only 10% of markets in Quebec were actually coops, many had formed an unofficial *coop solidarit *, meaning that while they were not actually registered coops, they acted as if they were.

Sarah mentioned of the Impact Study, which she recommended that we try and get a copy of. There will be summary versions available for free and we will receive about 100 of them at some point in the future. A notable result coming from this study was that people spend about \$1.3B at FM's per year in Canada, so they are very profitable enterprises that fill a much in demand consumer niche.

6) Other Business

Lori collected receipts from Dan and Sarah for trip reimbursements.

It was recommended that there be a business card-sized SJFM ad in the IFCF brochure for the 14th.

[**Action:** Make an ad for IFCF brochure – **Devon/Oz**]

Krista has approval for a Service Canada application she filled out to hire a full time summer student.

NAACAP have added the SJFM to their Green Team application to help with rain barrel assembly and distribution for community gardens, and to give out educational material at a booth at the SJFM.

Sarah mentioned the need to hire a Market Manager ASAP, since the SJFM will be starting up soon and it needs to be well organized in advance. Kathleen suggested that next week's agenda be amended to include Market Duties.

Lori brought up the issue of Food Safety to be mentioned in the Marketing Booklet.

[**Action:** Add Manager Grant and Food Safety to next week's agenda – **Kathleen**]

7) Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the RIAC office on Sunday 08 March 2009 at 12:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

[*Oz – Passed*]