

**MCFARM Annual Meeting
Minutes for January 17, 2009
Multi-Purpose Room / Potter Valley Unified
9:30 am – 3:30 pm**

I. COMMENCEMENT

MCFARM President, Mimi Booth, called the meeting to order at 9:37am. MCFARM Officers present: Mimi Booth, President, Angela Harney, Office Manager, Jenifer Elmer, Secretary, Keith Feigin, Treasurer, Joanne Frazer, Vice President, and Tom Gervase, Member Representative. Attendance at meeting- 32 individuals of which were 25 voting members.

II. WELCOME

Mimi began the meeting by welcoming Associate member to their Annual MCFARM meeting. She stated the importance of having sufficient members present to conduct MCFARM business. A brief summary of the diverse micro climates included within the membership followed. The Association is blessed with diversity, from inland farms and ranches to coastal growers, providing a multitude of products. Three coast markets are now established. The Farmer's Market was formed by growers in Potter Valley.

Mimi stated that Tom Gervase would be in charge of the meeting's voting process. Keith Feigin would be the time keeper. To ensure that the meeting proceeds smoothly a time limit of 1 minute per opinion was suggested. All participates are encouraged to join in the discussions, but only members are allowed voting privileges; one vote per membership. Both Mimi and Angela have waved voting rights for this meeting. The tone of the meeting was discussed. All opinions are to be respected. This year there will be several tough issues addressed; these decisions will be made cooperatively. The Bylaws will be discussed, and approval of documents by the members sought. Robert's Rules will be followed during the meeting.

III. APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AGENDA

Gordon Brown moved to approve the proposed Agenda. Motion was seconded and carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

Several minor changes were suggested from the previous minutes. Claudia's name was misspelled, as well as Cindy Wilder's. Mimi Booth also noted that she was not the one who suggested blogs on the website. There was a suggestion for minor corrections in punctuation. These corrections will be made by lining out the error, with the correction typed above them. Jack Booth moved to accept the minutes from last year with corrections made as suggested. Motion seconded and approved.

V. REPORTS

Vice President, Joanne Frazer reported on the success of the grant, which has now ended. It is the intent of the various markets to continue many of these activities. The Farmer's Market posters were more expensive than anticipated, but they have been very beneficial. A summary of the Farmer's Market Report and the grant successes were detailed. Some of the provisions of the grant included: Green Bucks, vouchers for seniors, weekly ads in local newspapers, Spanish speaking liaisons, and stipends for low income families. Scott has hired Mexican bands to perform during the Ukiah Market. Jennifer Elmer has provided many informative articles in support of the farmers market in the various local newspapers. Part of the grant was used to purchase equipment and to educate customers on market products available, as well as location and times that the markets are in local areas. The grant provided for education about recycling, as well as music on market days. A survey of customer suggestions was conducted at each market site; the results were on displayed during the meeting, and are available to any interested members.

Erica Kane presented information on the surveys conducted within the '08 grant; each market was surveyed for feedback. This information will aid the market managers to determine where best to spend their money. Mimi acknowledged the benefits of the grant and stated the MCFARM is one of only 18 counties to receive one of these grants in the U.S.

One of the objectives of the survey is to determine which MCFARM practices are working and which are not. Another aim was to create customer support for local growers. Requests were made for more variety of produce and crafts. An increase in staples such as grains, fish, baked goods and seafood were suggested. The survey also noted that customers have requested lower prices, to enable lower income families to purchase organic foods. A possibility of work exchange and green dollars were suggested. The bands, music and dancing were enjoyed.

Concerns from the Vendors included: fair distribution of space, a concern that some voices were not heard, and a suggestion for shorter Annual Meetings. There were suggestions that provisions for scholarships be available to allow members (or Market Managers) to attend conferences. Erica presented a brief summary of each market and their success as well as area for growth. Marbry Sipila will keep these responses to the Market Survey. Vendor suggested that permanent signs be displayed all year long.

Scott Cratty gave an update on the Winter Market. Ukiah's market has had a successful season and was fun. Some customers were lost through inconsistent market days and closure during the holidays. It is beneficial for the market to stay open year round, to build customer involvement. MCFARM doesn't pay for itself, but may generate sufficient income in the future.

Jennifer Lyon, Market Manager reported on NCO's \$3,000.00 grant. Some of the

specifics include: Food Security, and free market space (16 vendors). Some of the local produce growers have increased their winter income with greenhouses. There are several winter markets now open. This presents an encouraging sales opportunity.

Cindy Wilder, Booneville Market Manager, reported on winter conditions at several local Farmer's Markets. Booneville has an outdoor space. Anderson Valley is using the Grange when the weather is bad. Ukiah's Market has a protected space.

Mimi noted that the dates and times of the various markets are set by the By-laws. Some markets have different needs. More flexibility may be required to meet the need of each market.

Mimi requested a suspension of Robert's Rules for the introduction of three individuals. These are the candidates who are running for office in this year's election: Alex Andria - Treasurer, Marbry Sipila - Vice President, and Tom Gervase - Member Representative.

Mimi also thanked spouses and family members for their support. All past Operational Committee members were asked to stand.

VI. FISCAL REPORT

Angela Harney (Office Manager) reported on MCFARM, which had a fantastic year. (A slide-show was presented) Enthusiasm was at an all time high. 800 Volunteer hours were logged. Angela used an overhead project to present charts detailing the various financial stats. These charts including: 2008 Gross Sales (which exceeded \$1 million), Stall Fees delineated by area markets, 2008 MCFARM Advertising Report, 2008 Annual Budget and Income, 2009 Proposed Budget, and Market Operating Funds. (Fiscal Report included with these minutes) The current books will be closed after this meeting.

Mimi Booth clarified the difference between Ag and Non-Ag membership. There are 755 members currently. There is increased cost in Insurance and Health permits. Emailing members will decrease office expenses. The secretary is paid \$75.00 per meeting to take minutes. Mimi logged 11,040 miles this past year. It was suggested that Mimi be given a stipend for her MCFARM mileage. Angela proposed that an office assistance be paid at a rate below hers, as this will help save money.

VII. ADVERTISING REPORT

The website is not being utilized to its potential. More current information is needed, including promotional items for sale. Word of mouth has been the most successful means of increasing participation and local involvement. Posters have been more successful than running ads.

VIII. VOTING

Angela provided ballots to determine how to spend excess monies. There were 8 options to be prioritized. Priorities were voted on from most popular to least: Pay gas/travel for OC members; Market Mgr commission increase; Promotional Opportunities; Addtnl. 1.5% to Market Operating Funds; Purchase necessary supplies, tools and equipment; more surveys; Farm Conference; Add money to Contingency Fund; Ads in Press Democrat; Ads for smaller markets

MCFARM accounting books will be closed after this meeting.

Michael Krzywozychi moved to pass the budget. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed.

(BREAK FOR LUNCH - 12:15pm – 1:15pm)

IX. DISCUSSION AND VOTING ON BYLAW CHANGES

Mimi Booth called the meeting back to order at 1:15pm. Joanne suggested sharing information without formal agenda. Mimi noted that the proposed changes in the by-laws would not be simple. The intent is there, but there is a need for additional language. A 2/3 vote of the membership is required to change the current bylaws. Tom will determine the actual needed votes to pass the proposed changes. Changes to the bylaws will be a two year process.

It is the membership's intent to eliminate disharmony. All comments will be respectfully accepted. Robert's Rules will be temporarily suspended to allow for more informal discussion. The officers are not voting during this process

One of the goals is for MCFARM to have no unspent money at the end of the fiscal year. This is due to the "Not for Profit" status on MCFARM.

Voting commenced. The current language remains unchanged on Articles I – Name and Location; and also II - Purpose.

Under III – Membership, language remains unchanged. Only members may sell at the Market, this is a State requirement. From conversations with vendors, there is a need to delineate Agriculture sales from craft sales. MCFARM will strive to limit the craft portion of the market to under 25% of stall space. The question of Ag members who also offer crafts was addressed. If the craft is related to the Ag product it is okay, but craft must not predominate. Non Ag crafts will be located outside of Ag area.

Cindy in Willits has used different guidelines from other markets. There was some concern from major producers about who made these decisions. In Humboldt, growing members have charged more for market space to supporting members.

The Operating Committee receives free membership. There followed a discussion about stipend for travel and time instead of free membership. These decisions will be made at next year's annual meeting.

Scott asked what date the vendors needed to notify local managers concerning required space, as there have been some conflicts over space. The rules are adequate, but not always followed. Mimi suggested deletion of space dimension in the bylaws. It is important to communicate with Managers early in the season about space needs.

Bylaw V. The Governing Body does not provide for proxy voting. In V. A. 4. the words "and farm apprentice / volunteer" was added after "or an employee" to be included as a representative for an Ag Member. This added provision was approved by members. A vote followed regarding a "proxy" representation. The vote was 11 opposed and 3 advocating. No proxy voting privileges are included at this time.

OTHER BUSINESS

John Ford moved to incorporate Willits and Ukiah Saturday market into MCFARM. Discussion followed. Yvonne Hall suggested that vendors should have opportunity to decide whether they wanted inclusion in MCFARM. Winnie asked about adding or accepting Winter market. Mimi suggested promoting winter markets and various markets times and places on the website. Clarification of length of Managers tenure will be addressed in the Operating Manual.

SUGGESTIONS:

Some vendors want earlier time in Gualala to incorporate the "Pay & Take" crowd; Donna said the Community Center didn't want the overlap in events. Scott Cratty suggested adopting planting list of crops to provide wider variety and avoid duplication

GOALS for next year:

MCFARM to be fair and above board
Get out and visit Farms
Research management styles
More volunteers
Quality people making decisions

ADJOURNED: Yvonne Hall moved to adjourn. Seconded and approved at 3:27pm.