

MINUTES: Peekskill BID Board Meeting on Tuesday, June 2, 2015 at 5pm

In Attendance: Board Members: Gabriel Arango Jr., Sunny Cover, Monica Flaherty, Lou Lanza, Deb Milone, Sol Miranda, Jim Pinto, William Powers, Giovanni Stiefelmann, Kathie Talbot

Absent: Ken Laudon, Howard Copeland

In Attendance Non-Board Members: Jeannie Credidio (12 Grapes Restaurant, Co-Owner), Mary Foster (former Peekskill Mayor), John Sharp (former BID Board President & Co-Owner of Gleason's and Birdsall House), Nels Leader (Rep for Bread Alone), Mr. & Mrs. O'Brien (Owners of Healthway Farm), Michelle Croft (employee- Bread Alone)

Meeting Called to Order: 5:07 pm

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- a. Presentation by Mr. Leader on behalf of Bread Alone.

Mr. Leader requested the Board to reconsider welcoming Bread Alone as a continuing vendor at the Peekskill Farmers Market during its new season, Summer-Fall 2015 after their application being denied by the Market's Manager, Corinna Makris in a letter sent on May 4, 2015. Mr. Leader expressed disappointment as his family owned business has been at the PFM for over 10 years, and at being denied without written documentation or cause.

1. In response to Sunny's question regarding the PFM having another bread vendor besides Bread Alone, Mr. Leader admitted it may decrease his sales but that he welcomed competition.

- b. Presentation by Mr. & Mrs O'Brien on behalf of Healthway Farm.

Mrs. O'Brien expressed never been issued a written complaint or verbal warning from PFM Manager. Mr. O'Brien emphasized how their 25 year presence on the Market helped it grow, has supported the BID and brought more business to Peekskill. In addition, they assured many patrons can vouch for their character and products. They alleged that the PFM Manager went to other vendors "digging out any dirt" against them.

1. Michelle Croft said that in the 12 years she has worked next to Mrs. O'Brien, she has never heard her use bad language or any profanity toward anyone.

2. Sunny shared there had been complaints from other vendors and patrons. John Sharp confirmed on going complaints when he was President of the Board as well but admitted, "we didn't deal with it" (the previous Board and Exec. Director Jason Angell). He added that Corinna Makris has been a great Manager who has doubled or tripled the Market's earnings, and has expanded the Market's offerings and appeal.

3. Monica reminded the Board Corinna had expressed at May 5 Board Meeting that Jason and Corinna had discussed the complaints in the past, thus there's a tracking record which Corinna gathered for the current Board in writing as per our request.

4. Jay Stewart Damper, PFM patron and attorney brought by the O'Brien's informed that he and his wife come to the Market almost every Saturday since the beginning, and that they have never heard Rhonda use profane language. He added there should be competition at the Market - no exclusivity, and how the O'Brien's have volunteered their skills & efforts because they love Peekskill. Finally, he stressed on the lack of warnings or complaints; no cause for the O'Brien's

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to defend themselves, and that all complaints must be investigated, and that this new improved Market looks snobbish and not so much like a real farmers market.

5. Monica reminds us the guidelines support the Manager to deny any vendor without cause. Sunny adds that vendors have to prepare/plan for the Market so any denial should happen at the end of the season and not when a new season is about to begin. Deb suggests to solve the issue diplomatically, that there should be due process and to be mindful of supporting our Manager's authority. Sol reminds us that while Corinna's authority must not be undermined, at a meeting with Corinna, Bill & Sunny, she (Corinna) expressed willingness to welcome back Bread Alone and Healthway Farms. Sunny added that a thorough documented process was not followed with Healthway Farm and that the current Board did not know about the denial letters after they had been sent by Corinna. Deb suggested a possible probation for Rhonda. Pinto, new guidelines in place for the new season of the market should guarantee a clear/specific process. Kathie and Mary think Corinna is being thrown "under the bus" by the Board if the O'Brien's are admitted back. Sol says that though Corinna's authority must be supported, it can also be viewed that she threw the Board "under the bus" as well as she sent the Letters denying Bread Alone and Healthway Farm presence at PFM on May 4, one day before the May 5 Board Meeting, thus the Board not being aware. Lou responded that Corinna needs to be aware not running the PFM like her personal business.

6. Concerns about Bread Alone being in commercial markets such as groceries stores may have diluted their quality, thus, potential not Farmers Mkt quality and uniqueness -- according to John & Mary. Gabriel thinks their presence keeps a fair competitive market & offers choice.

7. The Board voted unanimously in favor of welcoming BREAD ALONE back to PFM.

8. Monica, Kathy and Gabriel voted against HEALTHWAY FARM being admitted back to PFM. The rest of the Board Members present voted in favor of giving them a second chance at the PFM following/accepting the new guidelines.

- Jeannie Credidio presents proposal on behalf of restaurant owners of North Division St between Central & Main to produce the JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL '15.
- Mary asks for the designation of a party or person in charge. Monica & Sol recommend 12 Grapes or Rich. Sunny asked for info on Beer selling and booths. Lou asked for a budget
- Minutes unanimously approved. (Deb & Monica made Sunny their proxy before leaving).
- Approved: for Exec. Director 0 to update laptop cap to \$1500, receive a digital camera and a parking space for \$360 per year.