

Tennessee Association of Farmers Markets
Meeting Minutes, 01-10-19
Zoom

Board Members Present:

Charlotte Tolley
Hal Pepper
Tasha Kennard

Richard Gallagher
Joni Roberts
Kasi Haire

Steve Brehm
Channel Lemon

The meeting was called to order by Charlotte Tolley at 9:34 a.m.

Charlotte called for a motion to approve the Minutes. Tasha Kennard made that motion seconded by Steve Brehm. The motion passed.

Charlotte introduced Victoria Raschke to the board. Victoria knew several people and noted some new faces.

Charlotte stated that she is working on the contract for Victoria. Tasha offered to forward a contract to use as a sample for Victoria's contract.

Charlotte stated that Victoria will help with board meeting and elections and the conference.

Kasi Haire gave the conference update and stated that the TAFM annual meeting would be from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday and the banquet would be on Friday night. TAFM will share a hospitality suite with the Tennessee Fruit and Vegetable Growers. There was still room for vendors at the trade show, and Kasi asked everyone to send her contact information for any vendors who might be interested in attending.

Tasha said it is important to get invitation out to vendors, markets, and associated merchants. TAFM dues can be paid through conference registration. The revenue report from the conference will be sent out earlier than last year.

Charlotte asked whether the conference website was updated, and Tasha indicated that the most up to date schedule is on the website.

Kasi asked about table shifts at the conference, and Charlotte asked whether people were needed in the room or at the table. Kasi said it is good to have help during the class and man the table during the breaks.

Tasha suggested that an agenda for the annual meeting be sent out ahead of time to members. Elections will be the main task at the annual meeting. Charlotte indicated that Barbara and Victoria are using Little Green Light to email members. Barbara will send out nominations and membership information.

Charlotte said we have a banner stand, table cloth and rack cards. Tasha indicated that she was not sure where the rack cards are. Charlotte said the graphics for the materials are in dropbox.

Tasha said she ordered the table cloth ad banner stand last year. Victoria can help get rack cards printed. Kasi suggested that Victoria can create signup sheet for table duty.

The board began discussion about the Frank Trew Scholarship and Charlotte recused herself from voting because of the relationship her market has with the applicant. The two applicants were Chris Battle who has a new market and community gardens and is a new farmer. Sandy Watson has a market established in 2009 and has attended the meetings in Jackson and Unicoi. Joni Roberts asked if we had enough money to award two scholarships. Charlotte indicated that we only had funds for one scholarship due to funds needed for Victoria. Tasha recommended the person who has expressed interest in TAFM. Steve said that it would be good to reward past attendance. Charlotte suggested we read the requirements for the scholarship. Steve Brehm said that Chris meets the new market requirements for the scholarship and we must follow the guidelines. Charlotte called for a motion and Steve moved to award scholarship to Chris Battle and Richard Gallagher seconded the motion. All voted in favor with Charlotte abstaining. Barbara will write check to Chris Battle.

Charlotte said she will establish monthly meetings with Victoria to report what is going on. Victoria is not on the board email. Charlotte will add a TAFM email for Victoria (info@tennesseassociationoffarmersmarkets), so even when Victoria leaves, the email address will still be there. Victoria will work on social media to promote the conference. After the conference Victoria will reach out to people and address issue brought up at the conference. Victoria is paid 80%, through proceeds from the Specialty Crop Bloc Grant so she must focus on crops as well.

Steve Brehm asked about our financial status over a 5 year trajectory and indicated that we need to increase membership or income outside of membership to be sustainable. Charlotte will work with Barbara for detailed budget. TAFM receives money to pay for the conference but conference financials might be changing. Board members should have access to dropbox and if members need a re-invite, let Charlotte know.

Charlotte detailed that the grant is \$25,000 annually with \$21,000 for salary \$3,500 for travel and \$400 for branding the website (Little Green Light and web expenses). Charlotte suggested increasing membership, applying for grants and obtaining sponsorships. It would be good to work with person who is hired in Greer Gill's former position. It would also be good to increase markets listed in Pick TN products. Joni asked if we can do fundraisers. Charlotte indicated that TAFM sells merchandise and collects tax on those sales. TAFM can also solicit donations and sponsorships. It would be good to get a sponsor for the biannual meeting.

Steve Brehm noted that the conference expenses of \$1100 does not show breakdown and agreed that sponsorship for meetings would be good.

Charlotte said that TAFM is allotted \$1500 for the Pick TN Conference but not sure when TAFM receives the money.

Tasha had not seen Barbara's report and will send an email regarding conference expenses, which were for materials for the table and hospitality suite.

Charlotte noted that there was no line item for outreach in the budget, so she is not sure how Barbara has broken things down. There is an expense for \$500 sponsorship, but there is no indication where it went.

Tasha suggested we go through line items at the next meeting to see where we can cut costs.

Steve Brehm noted that there is nothing offsetting expenses.

Tasha stated that Pick TN does not give \$1,500. If TAFM owes more, they send invoice. They don't mix dues revenues and conference expenses. The conference expenses were room rental, food, banner and table cloth.

Charlotte was not sure how the number appears to be a gross number on the budget sheet.

The board discussed the next meeting and agreed to meet prior to the conference on Valentine's Day. Charlotte will get with Barbara to have a good picture on the budget. Victoria can help with treasurer duties for the new treasurer when Barbara retires.

Steve Brehm asked about the demise of the Fresh Savings program and any updates.

Tasha had asked for an update and was told that staff is not authorized to give updates on continuation of the program at this time.

Tasha believes that there is no plan to continue the program. Tasha, Charlotte and Steve Brehm discussed the idea of markets looking for private sponsors to keep the program going and issues of participation and branding so that customers will know what it is.

Charlotte mentioned that Barbara had contacted Amy Kone and Amy said she is not authorized to discuss Fresh Savings status; however, if other opportunities for funding arise, pursue them. Markets cannot use "Fresh Savings" because it is trademarked – must use a different logo and update tokens.

Tasha had pressed for an answer because she wants to know about reimbursement after December. Her market board is allowing the market to eat the cost on behalf of the customer. Charlotte had not heard of a December cutoff.

Tasha clarified that they never said program would end in December, but she does not get an answer regarding reimbursement.

Charlotte said Victoria had indicated that news was coming soon. TAFM data may help to support statewide or regional program for doubling programs in the future.

Tasha said that Fresh Savings offered a great thing to people who needed it. Markets learned good lessons on what did and did not work. Markets will be more effective in the future.

Hal Pepper gave updates about Farmers Market Boot camps on January 23 in Henderson, January 28 in Chattanooga, February 7 in Lebanon, and February 18 in White Pine. Email to go out again to promote the program. Hal asked if everyone received email. Joni indicated she received email with social media materials.

With no questions or other issues to be raised Charlotte moved to adjourn the meeting. Steve Brehm seconded, and Charlotte adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m.