

MOSCOW FARMERS MARKET COMMISSION



Jamie Hill
Commission Chair

~Minutes~

Amanda Argona
Staff Liaison

<http://www.ci.moscow.id.us/362/Farmers-MarketCommission>

**Tuesday
July 7, 2020**

4:00 PM

**Council Chambers
206 E 3rd St.**

The meeting was called to order at 4:03.

PRESENT: Colette DePhelps, Jenny Ford, Jamie Hill, Kelly Kingsland, Mackenzie Lawrence, Ryan Lazo, Kerry Morsek, Stu Scott

ABSENT: Renee Love

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Amanda Argona, Staff Liaison; Anne Zabala, Council Liaison; Kelly Jennings, Programs Coordinator

Welcome and Attendance

Chair Hill called the meeting to order. She invited new Commission member Ryan Lazo to introduce himself.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Mission of the Moscow Farmers Market

The Moscow Farmers Market celebrates life on the Palouse by providing the community with the opportunity to buy and sell locally farmed and/or created agricultural products (e.g., crops, meat, cheese, wine, etc.), distinctive handmade goods, artisan pieces, and original recipe cuisine. This venue is meant to encourage and support sustainable economic, social and environmental practices.

The Mission was read aloud by Scott.

2. Approval of Farmers Market Commission March 3, 2020 Minutes (ACTION ITEM)

Argona indicated that the correct date of the last meeting's minutes read as March 3, 2020 and not February 4, 2020.

Scott moved that the minutes from March 3, 2020, be approved as corrected; Morsek seconded. Motion carried.

3. Public Comment and Response to Previous Comments (limited to 10 minutes)

Members of the public may speak to the Commission regarding matters NOT on the agenda or currently pending before the Farmers Market Commission. Please state your name and address for the record and limit your remarks to three (3) minutes.

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

Scott offered two comments for the Commission's consideration:

- Given the tenor of the times, would it be appropriate to open the Speakers' Wall, to accommodate public voices and be inclusive in the community? Scott referenced seeing community members near 5th Street and Main Street on two separate occasions, with tables, who were being "shooed away" by businesses. Argona noted that the Speakers Wall is currently available to the community, but in a reduced capacity. In response to COVID-19 and as a show of support to downtown businesses, Bloom Café has been permitted to utilize their sidewalk café on their northwest wall. Argona referenced giving information to several members of the public who asked about options for tabling, but to her knowledge no one has used it yet this season.
- As the Moscow Farmers Market approaches a date where craft vendors would be permitted to return, will staff be doing an inventory of which vendors have side walls for their tents? Argona indicated there would not be an inventory, but all vendors that use tents will be expected to bring them to Market and have them on hand should they have a neighbor next to them.

REPORT Moscow Farmers Market Staff Report – Amanda Argona

Argona provided a report on the Moscow Farmers Market's modified operations and different contingency plans due to COVID-19. Various configurations and adaptations have been implemented.

- June 6 – Opening day had a single-entry point at 6th Street with no more than 50 customers in the Market footprint at a time. An estimated 1,064 customers attended, averaging to 213 customers per hour, or 3.5 customers per minute.
- June 13 – The single-entry point at 6th Street continued and staff allowed for up to 100 customers in the Market footprint at a time. An estimated 766 customers attended, averaging to 153 customers per hour, or 2.5 customers per minute.
- June 20 – The single-entry point at 6th Street continued and staff allowed for up to 200 customers in the Market footprint at a time. Staff determined to discontinue monitoring the number of patrons at 11:45 am as capacity never reached 200. The highest estimated capacity was 165 shoppers at one time. An estimated 1,343 customers attended, averaging to 269 customers per hour, or 4.5 customers per minute.
- June 27 – Staff determined that the single-entry point was no longer required, and it was likely that the 400 customer capacity allowed in the Market footprint that week would not be reached.
- July 4 – This was the first week that masks were required at the Moscow Farmers Market per the Mayor's Emergency Proclamation. Argona reported that she counted less than 50 people over the course of Market that were not complying with the proclamation. Staff also decided to count the number of patrons in the Market footprint on the hour, beginning at 3rd Street to 6th Street, which is different from traditional customer counts. The reason for deviation was due to only two staff members at Market. As staff walked the main thoroughfare and counted everyone they passed, the numbers are as follows: 59 patrons at 8:30 am, 84 patrons at 9:30 am, 114 patrons at 10:30 am, 84 patrons at 11:30 am, and 56 patrons at 12:30 am. Argona indicated based on her experience opening and closing the Market, it takes about five to seven minutes to walk from 3rd to 6th Street at a moderate walking pace. Her estimate is that the Market is seeing less than 1,200 customers per week and believes that the limited number of vendors is part of a myriad of reasons as to why customer numbers are down. Despite this, vendors have been extremely gracious with changing environment.

Argona invited questions from the Commission. DePhelps asked for clarification about the methodology used to estimate the number of customers. Argona responded that the numbers are solely estimates with the first month based on staff communicating the number of customers entering and exiting. She did concede that the July 4 counts only account for a very small time frame of Market and would need to be extrapolated for better estimates. DePhelps stated that she believes the numbers are higher than the estimates suggest. Kingsland spoke with vendor Deep Roots and they reported their sales were about 10% of what they usually sell. Kingsland said that the customer estimates and Deep Roots sales seem to correlate. Scott stated that the July 4th market attendance was likely low due to the holiday and the long weekend, with people getting out of town. He asked Argona how the Market may be affected by the extension of the mask and socially distancing order. Discussion ensued about whether masks are required at Market, education and enforcement from staff and Police Department, providing free masks to patrons, and additional signage about the requirement. So far, the observation by staff has been a high compliance amongst patrons. DePhelps inquired if having the mask order in place mitigated staff concerns about continuing to return Market to a semblance of fully operational. Argona indicated she is cautiously optimistic.

Lazo was generally curious about patronage at the Motor-In Moscow Farmers Market. Argona discussed that the number of sales for the first week was between 135 and 145. There are fewer customers using the online storefront than she expected and it doesn't seem that the Motor-In Moscow Farmers Market is siphoning off a large number of patrons from attending the downtown Moscow Farmers Market. Kingsland asked whether vendors were using Local Line exclusively for Motor-In Moscow Farmers Market or have other pick-up locations. Argona indicated that some vendors are only participating in the City Hall pick-up point, but that vendors are welcome to have other pick-up locations under the Motor-In Moscow Farmers Market storefront. She referenced Pullman, and a location in western Washington, as well as home locations for points of pick-up.

Argona continued her report and addressed the return of other vendor categories, the specific requests they may need to accommodate upon their return, ideas she has received from vendors for sanitation procedures, entertainment and programming cancellations, and other reduced operations. Argona observed that not having other vendor categories in the Market has been eye-opening and challenging to create a fair competition atmosphere.

Argona ended her report by stating it is absolutely her intention to continue to adapt in ways that keep the market open for as long as possible. It is possible the downtown Moscow Farmers Market could shut down if it is no longer safe to offer, but the Motor-In Moscow Farmers Market will continue.

Hill commended Argona for what she's accomplished with the Market this season, especially with the unique obstacles COVID-19 has presented. Hill has received positive feedback from the public about both the downtown Moscow Farmers Market and the Motor-In Moscow Farmers Market.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

UPCOMING EVENTS / MEETINGS

1. Proposed Items for Future Agendas

Commission members may email Amanda Argona (aargona@ci.moscow.id.us) to propose future agenda items for discussion.

2. Next Meeting

Farmers Market Commission next regular meeting is **Tuesday, August 4, 2020, at 4 p.m.** at Moscow City Hall, 206 E. Third St., Moscow, Idaho, in the Council Chambers.

ADJOURN

Scott moved to adjourn. Kingsland seconded. Meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

