

Subject: Minutes and a note

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From: Claire Ackroyd <claire.ackroyd@verizon.net>

Hey folks - if this is deemed useful, can you circulate it? If you tell me who does not have e-mail (and if I have addresses of newest members) I will snail mail as needed. Should I book a meeting place for January?? [See comment at end. -tr]

10/31/06

Very Belated Report From Secretary on April 1st 2006 Orono Farmers Market Meeting held mostly at Pat's Pizza. Since this is so absurdly late I will keep it short and try to focus on key issues. I apologize for being a poor secretary and urge you all to find a better one.

If there was a sign-up sheet I don't have it – but there were a lot of people present – surely enough to make all decisions valid.

ISSUES FROM THE APRIL 1st MEETING

Proposed by-law change – it was agreed that we would have a 'provisional member' status for new members for one year.

ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

NEW MEMBERS.

Ressler Homestead –after question about registering with state for dog treats, decided to accept as provisional member. Unanimous vote.

Mercer/Sheepscot Farm. – several questions raised. Will they be able to be at Orono market as well as Camden? Do they represent serious competition for existing members? Should this be an issue? Are there 'item eligibility' issues around materials they use (Canadian vs. Maine produced fertilizer, compost etc)? Is it an issue that they are not really 'local'? (Agreed that we already have a wide geographic range of vendors). Do they buy in? Plugs? Bulbs? Where is it reasonable to draw a line here? After much discussion of what some members see as essential to the success of the market (the wish to protect a core group of people who work well together) a motion was made to accept Sheepscot as a provisional member for Tuesdays only. Two opposed but 2/3 majority in favor.

Neville Family. Tom reported that this is a new, small farm. They need to get paperwork/licenses in order. All voted in favor of provisional membership.

Potential new member – Sarah Leavitt – has talked to Mark G. She wants to bring milk to the market. All agreed this was worth following up on.

LOCATION

All kinds of discussion around this – ended with promise from Claire to explore winter market location in town parking lot (she did this – and sent a report around – the town loves the idea and will do all it can to accommodate the market. This has since been agreed upon).

ITEM ELIGIBILITY. Huge topic.

Tom had a proposed list of item-by-item standards.

John B said let the market (customers) decide. Tom thinks this can lead to disillusioned and disappointed customers.

Meg said she has problems being required to use 'Maine' ingredients but supports the idea of labeling

Claire agreed on labeling. Thinks that customers make assumptions that are often wrong (eg. that all products are organic) and that we should try to inform them of exactly what they are buying so they can make informed choices.

Mark G pointed out that the current situation is very ambiguous, but that our mission is to promote and support local, wholesome food production, and buying in ingredients from out of state that could be bought locally does not serve this mission. Suggested that the steering committee take this up.

(I have a note that says 'Hanne has group forming'. Not sure what this means!)

REPORTS.

Julia – Treasurer. Reported that bumper stickers can be made for about \$.40 each for 1,000. Hanne said she would make a prototype.

More discussion on advertising possibilities. Julia wants bigger ads in Penobscot Times for special events.

Dates set for Taste of the Market

We did not address the question of a jobs list.

Follow-up on the question of annual meeting for Jan '07

Tom asked me to try to find a date for the winter meeting that would suit everyone – or at least get as many people as possible. Our by-laws call for a January meeting. Millie and Herb (both usually away in January) both seemed to think they could make an early Jan meeting. Someone else pointed out that the second Sat in Jan would be a winter market day anyway and that a meeting after that would make sense. Made sense to me. I will talk to the town about a meeting place and try to avoid the no-key fiasco of last April 1st meeting.