



Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority (PDA)

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**OPERATIONS & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**  
Meeting Minutes

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Thursday October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
PDA Conference Room

**Committee Members Present: John Finke, Patrick Kerr, Theresa Alexander, Jackson Schmidt, Ann Magnano, David Ghoddousi, Gerry Kumata**

**Other Council Members Present: Gloria Skouge, Bruce Lorig**

**Staff Present: Carol Binder, James Haydu, John Turnbull, Teri Wheeler, Noa O'Hare, Scott Davies, Matt Holland, Brittney Farrow, Kateesha Atterberry, Sue Gilbert Mooers, Jeff Jarvis**

**Others Present: Nancy Hutto**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by John Finke, Chair.

**I. Administration**

- A. Approval of Agenda  
The agenda was approved by acclamation.
- B. Approval of September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Minutes  
John Finke moved approval of the September 10, 2009 minutes, Gerry Kumata seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- C. Announcements and Community Comments  
Nancy Hutto commented on the compost issue. John stated that no decision was to be made today, but the committee was gathering information. Nancy went on to say she wished to add to her comments from the earlier meetings. The farmers were not at the meeting because they had suffered from an early frost this week, the farmers are struggling each year. Between frosts and flood they are barely making it and having to haul out their compost would be a great burden. Nancy stated that she was there to represent them and although they are not here today, they were interested and involved in the discussion of this issue.

**II. Compost Program Discussion**

James Haydu introduced Jeff Jarvis, the manager of the Facilities Department, who reviewed the history of the compost program and described how it works. Jeff stated that in the mid 1990's there was a large increase in the number of farmers bringing flowers to Pike Place Market because it was a more profitable product than produce. In the 1990's the waste was put into the garbage, and due to the total garbage volume the PDA had two large dumpsters on Pike Place. The dumpsters were unsightly and smelly. In addition, the PDA developed the larger recycling plan, so that much trash was moved to the recycling corral, but the flowers and food waste stayed in the garbage stream.

Theresa Alexander joined at 4:11 p.m.

When the volume increased steadily Nancy Hutto and Judy Duff recommended composting the farmer waste and the PDA found a green recycling company and started the tote program in 2002. Originally the PDA staff swept up all the waste each night and put it into the totes for pickup in the mornings. Eventually the program shifted to where the staff distributed the totes to the stalls, the farmers would fill them during the day and then the staff would line them up on the street for pickup. Over the years the volume and cost have increase such that we can have up to 40 totes picked up on the street on the busiest days, at an annual cost of approximately \$65,000.

Theresa Alexander arrived at 4:11 p.m.

Jeff went on to describe the daily process and stated that most of the labor cost was moving the totes around. Another issue was the pickup and timing of it. When it the totes are not picked up by 8 am it becomes a big noise and traffic problem. He stated that the pick up noise was a problem for the residents. Jeff stated there was enough space to place that many totes except for on the street, when they were full or empty; and mentioned that there would be no space for these totes at the new recycling area on Western Avenue.

John asked if the farmers brought out the totes to the street, Jeff answered that the PDA staff moved and lined them up at the bottom of Stewart Street. Jeff also noted that often people would forage through the totes in the evening as the farmers often dispose of whole flowers as well as the stems and leave for the evening and the PDA staff was left to clean up the mess.

Bruce Lorig asked why the farmers brought an unsalable product. Theresa Alexander responded that because they had to get up very early to pick the flowers that they did not have time to strip or select which ones to bring.

John reiterated that the main expense of the current compost program was the cost of labor and pick up, Jeff confirmed that this was correct.

Bruce Lorig asked how many farmers brought flowers to sell, then roughly computed the cost to be about \$7 a day. There was a further discussion about cost and passing this \$7 along to the farmer who were the primary beneficiaries of the service.

John inquired about the plans to move all the recycling off the street. Jeff described the plan for when the recycling center would be moved down to Western Avenue. He stated that the PDA relocated the large cardboard baler down there and moved the materials down via the Fairley elevator. The merchants would be required to bring their garbage to an area in the arcade near the elevator and extensive merchant training, buy in and participation would be necessary. John questioned if the new plan would require additional staff participation. Jeff responded that it would take additional staff for the new recycling program and resources would be appropriately reallocated.

James then gave a report that addressed questions and comments from prior meeting. He had prepared a handout and reviewed it. The information gathered indicated that King County did not have regulations prohibiting composting on farmlands in the county, whether or not they were in a flood area. In addition staff contacted the land owners of several of the farmers who had stated their landlords prohibited composting. This was found not to be the case after speaking with those landowners. Staff also contacted resources who would help educated the farmers about composting. Nancy Hutto stated that King County has no Ag extension fund in their budget and these people may not be available next year. Theresa Alexander stated that several farmers were from other counties such as Snohomish and Pierce and we should look into their regulations regarding composting on the farmlands. She also asked how facilities wages increase by such a large amount in the time period of the report. Ann Magnano stated that Skagit County was in a very prevalent flood area and they encourage composting and educated farmers on the benefits, as it adds to the quality of the land.

Bruce stated that a lot of good information had been collected but not enough to allow the Council to make a decision. John replied that this information was in response to Councils request and it was not

intended to come to any conclusions or decisions today and Council would like to ask staff to follow up with some options and recommendation before then next farm season.

Ann stated that it was not the role of the committee to come up with options, and this was the appropriate way to handle the discussion and decision.

John summarized his understanding that there was no legal prohibition to composting, the cost to the PDA was escalating and was trying to move the garbage and recycling off the street, and a number of farmers were able to take back their compost from other farmers' market venues and could conceivably do the same at the Pike Place Market. John requested that staff come back with a few recommendations that would work for everybody.

### III. Property Management

#### A. Residential Property Management Report

Coyle distributed the residential vacancy reports and stated the vacancy is well within vacancy projections. He described how to read the report and also went over a separate report for the Livingston Hotel, which has had many units under construction, but that work is complete and we are turning the units in groups of 5-6 and renting them out under the new rates. Coyle described process for renting up and the different restrictions for the different buildings. Theresa requested rent rate to be on report and Bruce requested full names of buildings rather than abbreviations.

#### B. Closed Session Closed Session (RCW 41.30.110 [c])

The meeting went into closed session at 4:45 p.m.

- i. Review of Lease Proposals
- ii. Review of Delinquency Report
- iii. Vacancy Report
- iv. Current Lease Negotiations

Closed session ended at 5:05 p.m.

#### C. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval of Lease Proposals

John Finke moved approval of the leases proposed in closed session, David Ghodoussi seconded

For: John Finke, Bruce Lorig, Theresa Alexander, David Ghodoussi, Patrick Kerr, Gerry Kumata, Ann Magnano

Opposed:

Abstained:

The lease proposals were approved unanimously

#### D. Staff Reports

John Turnbull reported that tenants were being moved around in the third level Downunder in order to make space for the renovation work. Tenants were using vacant space to store their inventory as they moved things out of the way to allow Turner access to complete the pipe replacement, electrical runs and ductwork. So far things were working well on level 3, some adjustments would be necessary to the work schedule for level 4 so it would not be problematic around the holiday season.

In Phase II ways of keeping businesses open were being looked into because construction would be much more invasive than Phase I. Vacant spaces would be kept open to allow temporary and permanent relocation of tenants. Pike Place Chowder would be greatly affected as a large electrical vault would be placed in the space that was their current kitchen space. Other tenants affected would be talked to one on one and worked with as issues arose. Theresa questioned if the Preschool would be getting their funding to complete their renovations and that it would be irresponsible of the PDA to allow the Preschool to be housed in a space that was not up to code.

**IV. Items for Consent Agenda**

John Finke recommended and all agreed that the leases would be put on the consent agenda.

**V. Concerns of Committee Members**

Patrick stated that he was concerned about the Preschool funding issues and does not want to put it off. He stated that a half million had already been spent on what was going to be over a million dollar project. The Council needed to take a position now on the issue rather than putting it off. Theresa noted that she felt that Council should form a position today and stated that more money for this project would not be available from the PDA. John stated that by the end of the month the Market Foundation would know if they were awarded an allocation of tax credits and that that factor would significantly influence this discussion and that it should wait until that factor was known. Patrick reiterated his position that putting it off was not the correct action, but was unsure of what could be done today. John stated that the Council would address these issues soon, but knowing about the tax credits was a critical component of any possible solution.

**VI. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m. by John Finke, Chair.

Meeting minutes submitted by:  
Anita Neill, Executive Assistant