**OVFC Board Meeting**

**Minutes**

**Thursday, July 2**

**Via Phone Call**

In attendance: Cheryl, Marshall, Joanne, Kelly, Chris, Perri-Rae, Lydia, Ashleigh, Gregg

Regrets: Dwight, Sarah

Guest: Lynne Epps

**1. Administration**

The agenda was approved.

The minutes of the May 27 meeting were approved.

**2. Orders**

**June Sales** were $13,926.03 compared to $7483 for last year. 124 customers ordered from 32 producers.

There were 23 new sign-ups, 9 ordered and of those 3 paid their membership. 17 people who ordered in April and May ordered again.

Those who signed up and ordered found out about us:

1 – booth

1 – online

1 – Facebook

1 – news article

5 – word of mouth

1 order was placed in error. Ashleigh calls new members re: orders.

The test drive will continue as long as the Covid-19 emergency continues.

When people send in their payments to Joanne, they sometimes include comments which are mainly positive.

**3. Specific Delivery Day Improvements – Lynne Epps**

Lynne Epps introduced herself. In the early 2000’s a group of people including Cheryl and Lynne got together and met with people from the Oklahoma Coop. The result was the coop with the Oklahoma Coop providing the web software that we are still using. Due to the Covid-19 crisis, we have an opportunity to move forwards. In 2016 we moved to the Rankin Centre for delivery day. In March, due to the closure of the Rankin Centre, we moved to a warehouse owned by Alan Studd. This provides enough space for the time being, but is not winterized. Also the future of the Rankin Centre is in doubt.

Since our customer base has grown and assuming that orders remain at there current level, we need to purchase more stuff – coolers, crates, etc. As our sales grow, so will the delivery-day related expenses.

We are not the only game in town. If we do not change our model, we could start losing customers. Some ideas that need to be pursued:

* Deliveries more than once a month
* Store front
* flexible pick-ups.

The good things that we have are:

* large customer base
* good producers
* volunteers.

Lynne recommended that the board strike a committee to review the food delivery model and make recommendations to the board. This committee will consist of 3-4 members plus a board member.

**Motion:**  to strike a committee to review the delivery day. Moved by Chris, seconded by Gregg, carried.

Ashleigh will be the board rep. Lynne and Cheryl will participate.

**4. Short Term Needs**

* Inventory Assets and potentially sell some – An inventory was produced a few years ago. This will be circulated to the board.
* Register the OVFC with I Want to Help (Canada) to set up a Canada Summer Service Volunteer position – A volunteer should not do work a paid person does, but in our case can be used for research.
	+ Board to set priorities for volunteer
	+ Chris to contact Volunteer Ottawa (“I want to help”).

**5. Financial**

* Joanne stated that the report for the 2nd quarter 2020 has not been done yet. Revenue is out-acing expenses by a good margin. Are increased sales sustainable?
* Joanne applied for a grant from the federal government to upgrade our website. This grant closed since there were too many applications and we probably do not met the criteria.
* Regarding payments: we are asking people to pay electronically wherever possible. After some discussion, the board decided to looking into this issue further when the Covid emergency is over.

**6. Medium Term Issues**

* Establish an e-commerce/technology committee to review needs of OVFC users, producers and consumers including payment options – Kent Tubman has offered to make a presentation to the board on e-commerce website systems. The board accepted the offer and our webmaster will be invited to attend the presentation.
	+ Mashall to arrange the presentation sometime in July.
* Establish a Pick-up location to allow more frequent sales – Will be discussed in relation with other initatives. There was discussion about some sort of storefront.
* Develop working partnerships with other Community Groups and the Renfrew County Economic Development Office – necessary when applying for grants.
* Establish a marketing committee to increase excitement about ordering from OVFC – we need to set goals for customer satisfaction, sales, etc.

**7. Longer Term Sales & Marketing Strategy**

* Establish a committee to define various market segments, opportunities and competitors such as Localine, Mrs. Grocery and others – Mrs. Grocery has only 2 producers in the Ottawa Valley, but will be signing up more. The flat rate for Renfrew County is $10.00 per delivery.

Pizza Farm is using Localine and are finding it convenient.

* Empowered by the Ontario Local Food Act, look to build relationships with Local Food advocate groups such as Sustain Ontario, Nourish so that the OVFC can play a role in pilot projects run by these organizations – We should be sending people to relevant conferences. This is an opportunity to do more networking and marketing. A good contact is the local Ministry of Agriculture rep. OVFC is not part of the local food discussion and we should be. We should try to join Sustain Ontario and Nourish.

We need to improve our relationship with farmer’s markets.. We are in the same business. We can distribute information cards there. Some cards were printed a few years ago.

* + Joanne to distribute PDF of information cards.

**8. Respond to query from Hilary Belsher**

Lydia will contact Hilary and send her a list of active producers from the website.

**9. Next Meeting -**  Wednesday August 12, starting at 7:00 pm via phone call.