

February 26, 2026

Coventry Farmers' Market Operating Committee
Special Meeting Minutes
In-person/Zoom

1. The meeting was called to order at 4:06pm.

2. Roll call

Board members present: Janine Coughlin, Barbara Barry, Bill Bailey, and Donna Titus

Board members absent: Anne Marie Charland and Cathy Mitchell

Town Staff present: Heather Neal, Melissa Tremblay, and Jana Roberson

3. Adoption of minutes - Barbara motioned to approve the minutes from the August 28, 2025 meeting. Donna seconded and the motion carried.

4. 2026 Season Planning

Farmers Market Certification - Market managers attended the Farmers Market certification meeting on February 24, 2026. Commission Hurlbert addressed the audience and highlighted that Connecticut has 217 farms and 85 Farmers Markets and 20 farm stands that are certified. He shared that \$900,000 was redeemed in the Farmers Market Nutritional Program (FMNP) and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) for 2025. Certification is important for CFM since it serves as a bridge to the DoAg and other local markets where administrative, legal and marketing advantages are at our finger tips.

Market Managers will reach out to Coventry's Social Services department to discuss how the FMNP and SFMNP programs are rolled out and how we can collaborate.

The CFM website domain has now been moved to BizTech's hosting system and has a new layout.

The CT Farmers' Market Association, a newly formed 501c3 organization, offers networking opportunities that intend to spark collaboration and share knowledge. CTFMA advocates for those to share successes and struggles and how we can learn from one another. The CFM Committee decided to support this organization with a donation of \$500.

The themes for the market season will be forwarded to Laura Stone for inclusion in the Town's upcoming Spring newsletter. It was also discussed that there should be a blurb about matching FMNP/SFMNP funds to aid those that qualify for assistance via sponsorship of the market. End Hunger and Sustainable CT also provide grants that will be looked into for matching.

It was reported that \$11,000 has been raised thus far for sponsorships. The sponsorship application will be forwarded to the Committee to assist with recruitment.

CWPM - \$5,000; Homestead Fuel - \$500; Bartlett Tree Service - \$3,500; Cropleys - \$150; and Renewal by Andersen - \$2,500

Potential Sponsors - Verizon - Barbara and Bill will contact them.
Sheffield - Donna will contact.

The Friends of the Market bags have arrived and are red this year.

Full-time vendors applications received, as of today, 15 out of 47; and 101 guest vendors applications have been received with 55 returning and 46 new vendors.

Tardiff Farm is expected to apply. When they do, the Committee will be notified.

Misfit Spices and Wildwood Granola have been invited to be full-time vendors.

We invite all Committee members to put feelers out for dairy and seafood vendors. Barbara will contact Mountain Dairy, Stearns Dairy Farm.

It was decided to have (4) food trucks at each market to have a variety of offerings. The American Smoke & BBQ Food Truck recently applied and will be added to the line-up.

860Kombucha recently sold and a new kombucha company out of Ellington will join the market.

There are only 4 music spots left to schedule for the season.

Bartlett Tree Service recently performed work at the field trimming limbs and cabling trees for safety purposes.

A hot spot has been requested to support POS transactions from the DoAg. Heather will contact them to see if we can obtain 2.

Parking lot - Heather will contact John to see if he is interested in painting the field this season.

Cameras were installed around the outside of the barn and will be actively monitored once the WIFI is turned on.

Royal Flush will provide port-a-potty service again this season. Melissa will check to see if they would be interested in sponsoring the market.

North River Landscaping will mow every other week during the market season.

There has been no update regarding the fire police about returning for the season. We may have to pivot quickly to find a company to provide this service.

Jana will reach out to Spectrum to cancel service unless they can give us a really good deal.
Jana will contact Frontier to explore the cost of a second line.

A draft postcard was presented. Changes will be made to increase the font size for socials on the round image on the front cover.

Local antique stores would like to collaborate with the market. How can they get involved?

Market managers have met with Cherie (new finance director) to establish appropriate account codes. It was reported that the market had several expenses last year but did profit in the end.

Melissa will inquire if Cropley's would be willing to provide rock at a discount for the parking lot.

The Best of CT, sponsored by CT Magazine, is in its second round of voting. CFM took out an ad this year to promote the market.

Market managers will meet with Coventry Public Market to discuss how we can collaborate. There are 6 CFM vendors that sell products at their market.

Jana will work on the permit for use of the road that leads into the state forest and the BMI music event permit.

6. The next meeting - March 19th at 4pm

7. Adjournment - Chair Coughlin adjourned the meeting at 5:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Neal
Co-Market Manager