

**Fruit & Vegetable Growers Advisory Committee**  
**MMA Boardroom, Epping**  
**29 MARCH 2017**

**In attendance:** David Wallace, Ben Apted, Alec Berias, Vince Doria, Anthony Mould, Mark Maskiell, Robyn Stewart, David Whitchelo, Matthew Elliott, Jenna Patan (Minute Taker)

**Apologies:** Kirsty Harvison

**Confirmation of Minutes from Previous Meeting:** The Advisory **CONFIRMED** the Minutes from 7<sup>th</sup> December are a true and accurate record of the meeting

**CHAIRMANS WELCOME**

The Chairman thanked the current committee members for their contribution last year and welcomed Robyn Stewart as the new attending MMA Board Member.

**MATTERS ARISING**

- **Ring Road Speed Limit:** The MMA are undertaking a body of work to ensure traffic management concerns with the forklift crossovers to the south of the site are appropriately managed. This will likely involve new lighting for crossovers and a single lane only past the warehousing.
- **Casual Stands Food Handling Certificates:** The MMA do not want to create a barrier of entry for tenants entering the market. The Department of Health and the City of Whittlesea Health Officers do interact with the tenants who are cutting and preparing food. No additional certifications will be required.
- **Site Cleaning:** A new scope has been prepared which includes a weekly scrub of all stands. The scope also includes an initial deep clean without compromising the slip rating of the floor. The lower vents and walls will be cleaned this week, with the higher vents scheduled to be completed next month. The Advisory **NOTED** that Forklift air filters are collecting more impurities according to the maintenance repairers and **REQUESTED** that the Cubic Bins are resealed and plugged to ensure minimised leakage.
- **Dust Testing:** The testing conducted by the MMA and Alex Fraser shows that it is currently within the Australian Standards, however more sample testing will be undertaken from the vents on the trading floor as part of the scheduled cleaning. The advisory **NOTED** that the forklifts in the warehouse leave behind significant amounts of rubber and that a new compound of tyres should be investigated.
- **Pallet Dumping:** After the successful trial, the MMA have installed 14 pallet cages available for use around the market for plain pallets. All market tenants are welcome to use them as a drop off point, as well as an exchange program. The MMA has seen a dramatic improvement since the installation of the additional sites.
- **Forklift Storage:** All Line marking work have been completed, including new numbering. Majority of bays have already been allocated which is a positive result.
- **Forklift Highways:** The advisory **NOTED** that the completed works are still not sufficient for the forklift highways (southern one noted as the worst). The MMA is investigating changes to Traffic Management within the Breezeway, where the forklift highway will be extended and closed to only Forklifts during trade.

**MARKETING**

- **Green Grocer National Brand Program:** FMA and CMAA members participated in a workshop on 23 February to review member and consumer research findings (over 600 interviews were conducted across Australia) and to determine next steps for the feasibility study for a national greengrocer branding and marketing strategy.
- **Green Grocer Skills Training:** The reference committee comprising of representatives from Department of Education, Melbourne Polytechnic and industry (including MMA), met on 8 March 2017 to review greengrocer survey findings for the proposed Certification 2 and Certification 3 in Greengrocery. The next workshop scheduled for today which will explore the composition of each unit of study. First intake is on track for September 2017.
- **Steritech:** On 16 March 2017 the Minister of Agriculture announced the Victorian Government would provide funding to Steritech to construct a fresh produce x-ray treatment facility at the Market. As Steritech only use the treatment on selected product lines in their Queensland facility, having a local facility will help to reduce the costs to growers who require this service to export.
- **Pathways to Export Forum:** Scheduled for 3 May 2017, to be conducted by Austrade to assist growers who wish to export. There will be industry participants available to talk to and it will be open to all market tenants.

- **Student Placement Program:** Northlink are running Student Placement for RMIT & LaTrobe where local businesses can engage students to work on a particular business need / project (ie: Introduction of a new accounting software package). Two larger Wholesalers are piloting the program next month with the intention to make the program available across the market.

## OPERATIONS

- **Public Holidays:** In addition to the current notifications via email / sms / tv screens; there will be a 12 month rolling calendar available which includes all changes to trading hours post public holidays.
- **Children in the Market:** The MMA will continue to run registered days during the school holidays (with the exception of Dec / Jan due to the increased movements in the market). Details regarding the upcoming school holiday dates have been released to the market and kid sized vests will be available.
- **Access Card Renewal:** The common expiry date is 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The MMA conducted a validation process in March 2017 prior to sending invoices to the market. The MMA does not require a new card to be issued and are anticipating approx. 9000 access cards will be renewed.

## OTHER

- **LED Lighting Upgrade:** The EOI published on 22 Dec 2016 received 24 submissions. 5 were shortlisted and invited to participate in a closed RFP. All accepted the invitation and prepared submissions before it closed on 21 March 2017. The project has a payback period of approx. 2 years and will deliver annual energy savings of approximately 40%. It will require MMA Board approval this month, followed by Ministerial sanctioning.
- **CCTV Upgrade:** The scope was formulated to best utilise current coverage/infrastructure whilst adding surveillance to identified blind spots. Testing is to be conducted this week. There are now approximately 40% more cameras on the site.

## GENERAL BUSINESS

- **Truck Curfew:** The initial weight restriction of 4.5 tonnes was lifted as it limited the ability of many small, local businesses to access the shortest and safest routes. The truck curfew trial has now ended and the curfew will remain from 10pm to 6am daily for trucks weighing more than 16.5 tonnes.
- **Dandenong Market:** The MMA confirmed that no Planning Permits have been issued and no formal approval given to proceed. Council have advised they are awaiting on additional information from referral authorities.
- **Extension of the Ring Road:** The advisory NOTED the extension is critical to the success of the market. The MMA understands that that the Labour Government does have it on the development agenda and a budget might be allocated in May 2017. Northlink Link is an advocacy group representing Melbourne's northern region. They are leading a delegation to Canberra to lobby Federal Ministers to release Federal Funding to expedite major works impacting the region.
- **Billing Procedure for Damage to Market Property:** The advisory NOTED that tenants are concerned about a 'one size fits all' pricing procedure when Market property is damaged. The Advisory REQUESTED that when bills are issued, itemised expenses and a labour component should be included.
- **Market Management (Financial Report):** The MMA clarified that the rent charged was outlined in the original licence and has not changed. The MMA also NOTED that the "\$16M loss" relates to the depreciation charge for the asset. Holding costs for West Melbourne that were not previously expected were incurred for the full financial year as well. This was not to the detriment or at a cost to the current market tenants.
- **Toilets:** The Advisory REQUESTED that all toilets have a minimum of two hand dryers installed.
- **Prayer Rooms:** The Advisory NOTED that there was one at West Melbourne and that there are serious welfare concerns for Market Users during prayer times because they are currently stopping in the trading floor and around trucks in the parking area. The MMA is trying to find an appropriate space; but due to the requirements (direction, wash facilities and height) nothing within the existing facility has been deemed appropriate. Store Holders with upstairs space have been approached.
- **Market Fresh Schools Program:** The Advisory NOTED that the Market Fresh Schools Program were turned away from Geelong, as the council enforced the requirement that all pre-cut fruit needed to be sterilised before being served to primary school students. The MMA is unaware of such requirements and will investigate.
- **Market Hours:** The advisory NOTED that the MMA should consider deregulation of the market because current tenants and buyers have varied needs and that 90% of trade is pre-order collection. Deregulation would ensure that current time pressures are eased and that a better work life balance could be achieved. The MMA noted that there is no common consolation on what the view of the market hours should be. The MMA will continue to monitor and review trading patterns.