

Naturally Meramec Consortium

Regional Meeting

April 30, 2020

Meramec Regional Planning Commission, 4 Industrial Drive, St. James, MO

6:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

**Call to Order and Introductions:** Mark A. Perkins called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Attendees included Anne Freand of Meramec Regional Planning Commission, Samantha Maddison of Meramec Regional Planning Commission, Christi Miller of Missouri Department of Agriculture, Alan Collins of Ozark Berry Farm LLC, Sarah Hultine Massengale of University of Missouri Extension, Peter Hofherr of St. James Winery, Tammy Bruckerhoff of Sugar Momma’s, and Greg Harris of Missouri Rock Island Trail.

**Staff Report:** Meramec Regional Planning Commission Staff provided an update to Naturally Meramec Consortium attendees on the upcoming events for Naturally Meramec. Mark A. Perkins reported that he has been pursuing new memberships via email and phone calls. 2020 Naturally Meramec Consortium Renewal Memberships are also being requested via email and phone calls. As of April 30, 2020, the Naturally Meramec Consortium consisted of 96 members. The Naturally Meramec website has approximately 1900 likes. Instead of Speed Dates, the Naturally Meramec Consortium Buyer’s Survey was created that will be sent to all Naturally Meramec Consortium members. A Speed Date event will be held utilizing Zoom. A Business Survey was created in response to COVID-19 for all Naturally Meramec Consortium members to fill out. The Missouri’s Meramec Region Food Hub Feasibility Study will be completed by the end of May 2020 and presented at the June Naturally Meramec Consortium Regional Meeting for approval. Meramec Regional Planning Commission Staff and Naturally Meramec Consortium will begin a Strategic Plan in July or August of 2020 for Naturally Meramec.

**Presentation:** Christi Miller, Program Manager, from Missouri Department of Agriculture made a presentation on “Missouri Grown”. Missouri Grown is a program of the Missouri Department of Agriculture. Missouri Grown connects producers to consumers and consumers to agriculture. There are five key elements included with Missouri Grown: Marketing, Membership, Farm to Table, Education/Outreach, and Agritourism. Christi noted that a copy of the presentation will be sent to Mark Perkins for distribution to the consortium after the meeting.

**Announcements:** The Naturally Meramec Consortium attendees were able to make any announcements about their business and discuss any upcoming events. Peter Hofherr of St. James Winery announced that St. James Winery would be opening back up to the public in the next week. Tammy Bruckerhoff of Sugar Momma’s asked for everyone to keep up to date about Hermann, Missouri activities in response to COVID-19 by utilizing the website of [www.visithermann.com](http://www.visithermann.com). Sarah Hultine Massengale of University of Missouri Extension gave an update on the farmers markets in the Meramec Region. She also provided information about infographics about how to shop at farmers markets, what vendors are at farmers markets, and information about u-pick operations and community gardens. Alan Collins of Ozark Berry Farm LLC announced that blueberries and blackberries will be available to pick by June 13, 2020 and elderberries will be available to pick by August 2020. Reservations will be recommended.

**Next Meeting:** The next Naturally Meramec Consortium Regional Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

**Networking:** After the meeting, Naturally Meramec Consortium attendees were able to network with other attendees.

**Adjournment:** Mark A. Perkins adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.