

**Pike Place Market Constituency
General Assembly Meeting Minutes
July 21st, 2026**

Attendees:

In person:

Skip Knox
Jeff Barnes
Cory Hutton
Rachel Ligtenberg
EJ Griffin
Brandon der Blatter
Chris Weaver
Gina Karaba
Emily Pike
Jonathan Berner
Austin Godwin
Bob Braun
Graham Marmion
Janis Jordan
Xanna Vegsondvaag

Online:

Haley Land
Alex Rasmussen
Karen Berner
John Kelso

Opening

Bob Braun opened the Pike Place Constituency General Assembly meeting on July 21, 2026, reviewing procedural details including Robert's Rules of Order, voting rights, and Zoom participation. The agenda and previous minutes were approved without objection. Member comments on non-agenda items were invited.

A participant reported on the May Market Historical Commission meeting clarifying that prepared foods are only permitted at the Market Front, with Pike Place Street restricted to non-prepared foods, affecting certain vendors. The Pike Place PDA now requires farmers to display farm names more prominently. Bob Braun invited Haley Land to ask about election runner hours and voting times; Janis Jordan later provided clarification. Janis announced Austin Godwin's appointment to the Market Historical Commission and the resulting vacancy in the member-at-large position, introducing a special election and encouraging nominations via email. She outlined the annual election schedule, confirming election runner availability that evening and Friday at Flower Row.

Election

Nominations for chair, vice chair, PDA council representative, and members at large were called and closed. Janis explained the candidate forum format and agreed to set up chat spaces for candidates not currently on the board. Austin Godwin was appointed timekeeper. Chair candidates Jonathan Berner and Bob Braun introduced themselves. Bob reflected on his five to six years as chair and vice chair, emphasizing modernization and even-handed meeting management. Jonathan, a market seller since 2018, highlighted his service as member at large and vice chair, aiming for calm, productive meetings. Graham Marmion asked how candidates would prioritize participation and fulfill duties. Bob emphasized adherence to the agenda with full member participation unless time constraints arise. Jonathan stressed structured participation, redirecting off-agenda issues to public comment or future meetings.

Chris Weaver asked Bob to summarize accomplishments; Bob cited back office improvements, PDA acknowledgment for equipment and IT support, and advancing the Constituency's online presence, stressing inclusivity. Jonathan highlighted establishing the listening committee, evolving into the engagement committee, and the successful February open house, underscoring the Constituency's role in electing PDA Council members.

Haley Land inquired about candidates' relationships with the PDA. Bob described meetings involving chair, secretary, and PDA executive staff focusing on

Constituency issues. Jonathan noted ongoing collaboration with PDA staff and a desire to build on positive relations.

Regarding support for farmers per the 50-year master plan, Bob advocated fostering open relationships and facilitating supportive committees. Jonathan emphasized encouraging farmers to voice needs directly and creating a welcoming environment. Chris Weaver asked about alternative meeting times for farmers. Austin rephrased the question to ensure fairness; Bob affirmed creating space for farmer participation through regular or special meetings and polling. Jonathan supported alternative communication methods like letters or surveys. Janis opened the floor for questions before moving to Vice Chair candidate introductions.

Emily Pike introduced herself, citing a decade in the Market District, committee work, event planning, public outreach, and efforts to build PDA relationships despite barriers. Graham asked how she would prioritize participation; Emily cited leadership of the Engagement Committee and streamlining hybrid meeting protocols. Haley inquired about streamlining; Emily detailed orientation scripts, Zoom instructions, and potential hybrid moderators.

Austin asked about skills gained through committee leadership; Emily shared increased confidence and advocacy enabling broader civic engagement. Haley asked about underemphasized Master Plan aspects; Emily viewed it as a broad guide with opportunities to influence future strategies. Janis called for final questions before introducing Chris Scott for PDA Council representative.

Chris Scott introduced himself as a long-time market resident and activist with over 16 years of involvement and seven months on the Council Deep. He highlighted achievements including the Merchants Association office, night markets, and an upcoming Day of the Dead event. Graham asked how he would prioritize participation; Chris emphasized collaboration. Haley asked about losing or persuading votes; Chris reported no losing votes and referenced the 7 Sabre issue as a disagreement handled without formal opposition. Haley inquired about council relationships and meeting frequency; Chris mentioned regular contact with some members and upcoming social events. He confirmed communication with other council members. When asked how he would represent differing constituency views, Chris said he would consult his conscience, seek committee and assembly

advice, and convey prevailing opinions. Regarding loosening street closure restrictions if farmers and legacy businesses left, Chris would require empirical evidence before advocating changes, otherwise supporting the current program.

Janis introduced candidates for members at large: Jeff Barnes, a two-year market employee and store manager from Boise, emphasizing community voice; and Corey Hutton, a Seattle resident since 1998 with small business support experience, committed to listening and promoting local engagement. Graham asked how they would prioritize participation; Jeff emphasized community outreach and awareness, Corey stressed listening and soliciting feedback, especially from farmers. Alex Rasmussen asked what market aspects they valued and wished to preserve or improve. Jeff valued neighborhood feel and camaraderie but noted communication gaps. Corey valued market energy, independence, and history, suggesting better neighborhood integration and wayfinding. Janis asked how they learned about the position and motivation. Emily Pike introduced Jeff; Corey cited growing involvement and inspiration from leaders. Haley asked if they were running against each other and Jeff's prior knowledge; Jeff confirmed it was the first meeting but prior awareness, Corey explained the initial frustration leading to joining.

Bob Messina asked about other advocacy involvement; Jeff mentioned work with PDA and King County Metro on ORCA cards, Corey noted five years with Central Seattle Streets for All. EJ Griffin asked which transit service they would be; Jeff chose Metro 2 line, Corey Metro 8 bus. Janis announced candidate questionnaires and ballot distribution; Austin clarified questionnaire completion status. Janis explained voting procedures, ballot submission options, and a supplemental measure to rename the Executive Committee to Operations Committee requiring membership vote. She abstained from voting to maintain integrity.

Allied Arts Beer and Culture Event

Allied Arts beer and culture event participation; Austin Godwin described co-hosting a panel at the Folio Library focusing on SDOT's application to the Market Historical Commission regarding Pike Place Street. The event, tentatively August 13 or 27, would involve promotion, volunteers, and planning participation. Christine Vaughan asked about constituency participation and representation on the

panel; Austin said participation would be outreach, planning, and volunteering, with panelists proposed from PDA, SDOT, merchants, and Seattle Streets Alliance. Bob Braun noted constituency members' main role as audience with Q&A opportunities. Janis called for a motion to support co-hosting and appoint a point of contact. After discussion, the motion to support co-hosting and appoint Austin as point of contact was seconded and adopted by acclamation.

Committee Updates

Bob Braun moved to committee and PDA updates. Chris Scott reported on Farmers Market (FAM) board meeting: capital improvements levy fund grew to \$468,000 from late tax collections and interest, available for market infrastructure. Gina Karaba noted funds target infrastructure projects. Christine Vaughan explained levy/bond funds require tied projects; auditing resumed post-COVID. FAM manages revenue declines carefully, noting a farm income gap partly due to Market Foundation subsidy absence last year. A City grant supports farm revenue via preschool CSA. Discussions with the new executive director aim to restore subsidies supporting farmers and the market. FAM actions included approving employee medical/dental coverage, roll-up gate replacements, glazing upgrades for a new café tenant, mural design funding pending Historical Commission approval, and building automation system upgrades. Lease reviews for several tenants were conducted in closed session. Alex Rasmussen reported SP&P committee took July off, expecting an August FIFA activities report. Gina Karaba updated on Sip and Savor program funded by cup sales and recommended attending wayfinding sessions addressing signage challenges for non-English speakers.

Chris Scott requested a Seattle Center field trip report. Gina described challenges with retractable bollards: high cost, maintenance difficulties, pedestrian sensitivity, and security concerns. Emily Pike added the demonstration focused on older bollards soon to be replaced by improved models. Gina noted manual bollards' security issues and damage risks from vehicle impacts. Emily offered tour leaders for a future presentation.

Austin asked about PDA Council farm subsidies; Christine clarified the Fund for Farmers provides direct flood damage grants, while the PDA's CSA

program purchases produce supporting farmer market presence. Expanding Produce on Pike is a strategic goal to strengthen the downtown farmer's market, potentially adding a second weekday, complementing day tables. Christine noted day tables suit flower farmers due to margins and product reconstitution. She expressed concern about South Lake Union Market advertising as the downtown farmer's market, overshadowing Pike Place's long history. Gina mentioned inaccurate promotional claims by South Lake Union and removal of a phrase calling it "the new soul of Seattle." A participant expressed desire for more local and organic food offerings, noting low Wednesday market turnout despite incentives, hoping for increased advertising. Gina shared farm meetings discussed winter pavilion use for produce sales, offering shelter and better access. Another participant emphasized the importance of accessible organic produce downtown. Christine explained organic certification costs deter labeling despite organic methods, challenging program growth. Emily Pike proposed adding this topic to a future agenda, seconded and approved.

Austin Godwin updated on Market Historical Commission (MHC) meetings: June 24 approved Jax Fishbot's beer and wine addition; Tamara & Co proposed a new artisanal food business in Zone 2 street level. July 8 approved Christopher's Lamp's retroactive signage move and the Night Shift event with noise and vendor guidelines. Bob Braun asked about Sip and Savor continuation; Austin confirmed through September. Christine asked about an art walk beer garden; Austin confirmed one near Rabbit Box seating, staffed by Rolling Bay Music Club due to liquor licensing. Skip Knox questioned commissioners' review of minutes; Austin said the commission is fully staffed and engaged, with detailed discussions in use and design committee meetings less accessible to the public. Skip expressed concern about MHC oversight and urged commissioners to prevent business delays. Austin noted frustration over delayed minute publication due to Department of Neighborhoods review. Bob Braun and Christine explained the process requires department approval before posting. Janis moved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes, accepted by Bob Braun. Alex Rasmussen congratulated Austin on his new role and noted he would be missed.

Jonathan Berner reported no Merchants Association updates from Conrad but noted an invitation-only social networking app for merchants is growing.

Haley Land announced a July 30 hybrid Merchants Association meeting to recruit craftspeople for input. Gina expressed interest but noted a conflict; Haley explained the group seeks a small civic-minded craftspeople group and invited select individuals. Christine suggested the meeting is for craftspeople only and recommended contacting Conrad for constituency assistance. Jonathan emphasized the invitation-only nature to maintain order and encouraged direct contact with Conrad.

Public Comment & Closing

During member comments, Haley raised concern about premature suspension of candidate questions at a recent election meeting; Bob Braun acknowledged the comment for future consideration. Gina reported difficulty accessing Operations Committee Zoom meetings due to website issues and requested more visible Zoom links. Bob explained efforts to transfer website management to PDA IT for improved accessibility and online dues payment. Jonathan noted monthly reminder emails contain hard-to-find Zoom links and suggested using full URLs. Austin thanked the group for the opportunity to serve as officer at large and affirmed continued involvement.

Corey Hutton asked about in-person voting location; Jonathan confirmed Flower Row near Soundview Cafe, historically for flower vendors. Austin encouraged volunteers to staff the Operations Committee booth during voting to assist existing volunteers. Bob Braun invited further comments.

A participant shared their recent experience joining the Constituency, describing challenges with the traditional membership process requiring mailed letters or board contact. They suggested implementing an online membership form with credit card payment options, including Apple Pay and Google Pay, even with a small processing fee. Bob Braun asked how the process could improve; the participant reiterated the need for online forms and digital payments. Jonathan responded that the organization had approved these changes and was working on implementation, acknowledging delays.

Bob Braun adjourned the meeting, thanking all participants and specifically acknowledging Janis Jordan.

