

**From:** Ron Jepson

**Sent:** January 20, 2021 9:05 AM

**To:** [clerk@hamilton.ca](mailto:clerk@hamilton.ca)

**Subject:** [\*\*\*\*POSSIBLE SPAM]To be read at Thursday's GIC meeting

To : Chair and Members of General Issues Committee

I am a veteran stallholder of the Hamilton Farmers' Market. My family has operated a stall on the Market for close to 100 years. This last year has been a struggle for all due to the unprecedented circumstances resulting from the Covid19 pandemic.

Covid19 has tremendously impacted all businesses, including all stallholders at the Hamilton Farmers' Market. The initial lock down that was imposed in the spring by our government authorities was the beginning of a very difficult business year. Attached please find a graph representing the Weekly Customer Visits to the Market for the calendar year 2020. Please note the significant decline over 2019.

At the onset of the pandemic, we were invoiced our monthly rent, at a discounted rate of 25%. This covered the period of April, May and June 2020. We fully expected this reduced rent to continue throughout the summer months, into September 2020 as the pandemic continued on.

In December of 2020, a letter from the Market Manager was sent to all stallholders, advising us that the City of Hamilton decided to not allow any rent relief for the 2020 year. As such, the entire 12 months of rent is now expected to be paid in full.

The Federal and Provincial governments have provided funding to municipalities to help with Covid19 related issues. Carmen's Group has been given \$625,000. Spectra has been given \$2,000,000. Should the vendors at the Hamilton Farmers' Market not be given some assistance?

Furthermore, I would like to emphasize the void created by the resignation of Eric Miller, the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Hamilton Farmers' Market. His resignation was due to "the avoidable crisis forced upon the Hamilton Farmers' Market during the pandemic". This man was truly devoted to the well being of the Market and now, due to poor decision making, we have lost him. Truly a sad day for the Hamilton Farmers' Market.

Finally, with regard to the 2020 financial results of the Hamilton Farmers' Market, I understand that there is a deficit of \$176,000 being reported for 2020. At the November 2020 shareholders' meeting, financials were presented by City Staff that included costs that the Market Board of Directors had not approved or consented to. If the Market Board is responsible for creating the annual budget, should they not be included in the decision making with regard to changes or further cost allocations?

I, like many other vendors, have dedicated my life to operating a business at the Hamilton Farmers' Market. In fact, in December 2013, I personally made a delegation to City Council asking for the creation of a Board of Directors to successfully guide the Market. I feel a deep sense of attachment to the

Market and have a passion for the success of the Market. I trust that you will assist me in helping the Market succeed.

**Please reconsider your decision. The stallholders need your help.**



Ron Jepson  
Jepson's Fresh Meats