



Pike Place Market Preservation & Development Authority (PDA)

Info@PikePlaceMarket.org • P: 206.774.5225 • F: 206.786.7317

PIKEPLACEMARKET.ORG • 85 PIKE STREET, ROOM 500 • SEATTLE, WA 98101

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Press Contact:

Emily Crawford, Communications and Marketing Director

Tel: 206.774.5278

Emily.crawford@pikeplacemarket.org

Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority Announces Departure of Executive Director

SEATTLE (August 3, 2017) – The Place Market Preservation and Development Authority (PDA) Council announced today that Ben Franz-Knight will be stepping down from his role as Executive Director, effective October 27, 2017.

PDA Council Chair Matt Hanna said the Pike Place Market was well-served by Franz-Knight's vision and leadership, and the members of the council wish him well on his future endeavor with the local project management firm, Shiels Oblatz Johnsen, Inc. (SOJ).

"It is with a mixture of sadness and gratitude that the council announces Ben's departure from the PDA," said Mr. Hanna. "Since 2010, Ben has inspired us with his dedication and passion for the Market and its unique character. His leadership ensures the Market will continue to thrive long into the future."

During his tenure at the PDA, Franz-Knight supported the continued growth of hundreds of small businesses, facilitated a major renovation of the Market, guided the growth and expansion of the farm program, and supported a growing population of low-income residents.

Most recently under Franz-Knight's leadership, and led by the PDA Council, the PDA completed a vision for the Market held for over 40 years with the realization of the MarketFront.

"After seven years as Executive Director of the PDA, I will be leaving the Market at the end of October to pursue an exciting opportunity with Shiels Oblatz Johnsen, Inc.," said Ben-Franz Knight, Executive Director of Pike Place Market PDA.

"It has been my greatest honor to work with the Market community, the PDA Council, Market Historic Commission, Market Constituency and our numerous stakeholder groups, including the Friends of the Market, the Pike Place Producers, and the Office of the Waterfront.

While it will be difficult to leave the Market I will carry forward the fundamental democracy of this place to all of my future work. Over the next few months I will work closely with staff, the PDA Council and the community to support a smooth transition.”

Over the next few months, the PDA Council will conduct a national search to find an exceptional executive director to take on the challenging responsibility of managing Seattle’s historic public market and a vibrant neighborhood.

Pike Place Market is Seattle’s original farmers market, founded in 1907, and is one of the oldest continuously operating public markets in the U.S. The market operates within a 9-acre historic district and is a bustling neighborhood of hundreds of vendors, residents and businesses, including farmers, craftspeople, independent shops, buskers, and residents, many of whom are low-income seniors, and five social service agencies. www.pikeplacemarket.org

The Pike Place Market Preservation & Development Authority (PDA) is a not-for-profit, public corporation chartered by the City of Seattle in 1973 to manage the properties in the 9-acre Market Historic District. The PDA’s charter is to preserve, rehabilitate and protect the Market’s buildings, increase opportunities for farm and food retailing in the Market, incubate and support small and marginal businesses, and provide services and affordable housing for low-income people.

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