

Member Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2012
Facilitator: Ben Weiss

Welcome/Introductions:

Ben Weiss, Christian Russell, Erik Hakanson, Beth Leeming, Kate Smith, Michelle Disney, Becca Titus, Ann Little, Jessica Glebke, Susan, Sarah Bortis, Israel Tockman, Terri Roberts, Kate Keller, Emily Lincoln, Barrett Campbell and Jack Rowan.

Additions to the Agenda

- None

Announcements

- Seeking members interested in weekend position vacated by Val. For more information please ask the board or see the job posting.
- Thank you Emily for building and getting the new website up and running.

Open Floor for Members

- Beth Leeming: Can we get a rough update on financials? Terri: We were in the black for January and maybe for February.
- Discussion of Additional Shopper Proposal
 - Voting has been going on for one week and ends at the end of this meeting.
 - Thank you to the 19 members who put all that information together – props to the proposal.
 - There was discussion about the proposal and some potential or perceived barriers to the program. Some are concerned about the fee and required orientation. At this point the discussion included the fact that the membership has had a week to respond to the proposal. And, there was a week to comment on the proposal development if you were one of the 19 people on the proposal committee.
 - Purpose of the trial is not only for revenue, but to show some members that we are addressing long standing requests and concerns.
 - There is also a concern about addressing the bylaws which states the Co-op will not have tiered membership.
 - Terri: This was a very hurried process and we are not in a position to delay the change scheduled for March 1. This is a trial period and can be revisited.
 - Jack: This has been a very open process; a week long review process was put out before members. Although we can review and discuss the terms by which we implement, people have voted on this process and we should recognize that. The Additional Shopper Trial Program puts a burden on the organization and we are attempting to accommodate that.
 - Any significant changes to the orientation would require a significant vote. Could we include an online orientation or do one the first time the shopper comes into the store? Note that this trial is a benefit of existing membership.

BOD Discussion Items

- Financial Updates – Jack & Terri
 - We are in the black and able to pay off some of our credit card debt. Our actions appear to be helping, even though we have had quite a bit of negative comments posted on the the Missoulian article.
 - Round of applause for our successful efforts.
- Bistro purchasing – Ben
 - Burns Street Bistro will likely have a soft opening on March 11, 2012 from 7-2. The potential investor to finance the full grill pulled out, but a new investor has come forward and is interested in not just the Bistro, but in the Co-op and its model as well. The NMDCD is

- meeting with him tomorrow and will bring details back to the board. There is potential that they could be operating as a full café by the summer.
 - Regarding the possibility of the Bistro preparing deli items for the Co-op, presale of some items and The Bistro buying from the Co-op: collaboration discussions and efforts are ongoing.
 - There was a question about how much staff time is going into processing these orders. It is explained that we get cash back on each order and having the Bistro next door will help bring people to the building and hopefully to the Co-op.
- Purchasing policy for businesses
 - Is there a financial benefit to other people/businesses ordering through the Co-op and is it worth looking into this and developing a policy? As it is, businesses are welcome to order through us if they pay the marked up price and have an active member.
 - The importance of this being directly beneficial to our membership is brought up.
 - Organizations that are not businesses, like Youth Homes and other social organizations like pre-release may benefit from this system. The Food Bank periodically buys a huge gift certificate for the Food Bank to the Co-op to buy bulk, which is one way we currently serve these organizations. Previous discussions with the Food Bank have revealed that owing to their extensive existing network they are not interested in further developing this type of relationship, although there is potential for giving like the gift certificate donation described above.
 - Should we reexamine this when we are on more stable footing and address some of the other changes we are currently working on?
 - The finance committee will look into this in more detail.

BOD Action Items

- December & January meeting minutes approval.
 - Approved.
- Executive committee nominations:
 - Jess and Ben have been co-chairs, Kate Smith has been secretary and Jack has been treasurer.
 - Do we need co-chairs or is it better to have one? The chair needs to shepherd the board and keep an eye of where we need to be going. There is discussion about the benefits and drawbacks and ultimately it is decided that the board would like one chair.
 - There is a lot of work to do in the coming year and we anticipate more teams and committees stepping up to help with the work. It would be great to have members on these committees and teams.
 - Executive committee functions:
 - The proposal is made to have less of an executive committee presence and have issues addressed by the entire board as the Co-op has a small board. The concern is that some board members are not getting a full voice on decisions being made by the Executive Committee.
 - The committee work structure needs to be reevaluated to alleviate some of the committee work from the board. There is some concern about the ease with which the entire board can be included in every decision.
 - Discussion suggests that there needs to be better communication between all committees so that everyone is aware of what other committees are doing.
 - Are we actually reviewing each month's meeting minutes and following up on items when we sign off on them?
 - MUD is having board training about how a board works. \$1,000 is being paid to Sage Solutions for the day long training, so Ann will check with the MUD board to see if their committee would be open to having our members present. The focus will be transitioning from a working board to an oversight board.

- Nominations: The slate is unanimously accepted.
 - Kate Smith- Secretary
 - Jack Rowan – Treasurer
 - Ben Weiss – Chair
- Finance committee authorization
 - It has come to the board’s attention that we need to reinstate a finance committee assisting Jack and Terri with oversight and providing proposals to the board for ways to strategic plan for financial goals.
 - The board reauthorizes an effective finance committee that is charged with establishing protocols for managing the Co-op’s finances and strategically plan for the future of the Co-op’s needs.
 - Membership will be recruited via the weekly email and on membership boards in the store. Members should have three months of active membership to serve on this committee. This committee membership will be in addition to working a 3-hour shift every 4 weeks and choosing members will be further addressed by Ben, Terri and Jack.

Reports

- Marketing:
 - Web site is up and intermittently working. Note there is a new format!
 - Thanks to Ann and Pat Little for running an ad in the Kaimin for 5 weeks!
 - We were a KGBA sponsor in their radioathon and we are still receiving advertising on the radio and online.
 - Working with Jonathan on new handbills for UM with a bike map.
 - Working on price comparisons between the Co-op and other stores in town.
 - A Spring Seed Party in May that is in development!
 - The process of responding to the suggestion box is underway!
 - There is a possibility of using space outside the café space for local children’s gardens.
- Coordinator
 - We have about 15 new members since our last meeting, but keeping members in their regular shifts is still something we need to work on.
 - There could be a role for leadership amongst our membership to work on addressing member issues. Kate K. would like to encourage members who see gaps that need leadership to talk to her about getting involved in this capacity.
 - FTOP shiftees have been filling gaps in the schedule pretty well, although we do have attendance issues with FTOP.
 - We currently have unmet training needs. We need more consistent training for cashiers and stockers and potentially some customer service training.
 - Some roles that need filled: regular attendance jobs, update calendars, check the attendance sheets, PHP programmers and a Java programmer to work on the membership database.
 - The Co-op Board is also looking at ways to create new positions within the Co-op to address cashier training consistency by offering incentives for some members to do additional hours.
- Beer & Wine Sales
 - Application was submitted last Tuesday and MT Dept of Labor has taken their fees. It will likely take about 5 weeks for approval. In the mean time we need to do some inventory research. There is a committee per state requirement and it would be nice to have some members on this. Need to decide:
 - What products to buy
 - What do we define as “local”
 - Train cashiers on how to sell; mandated by the state to have this training.
 - ID checking procedures
 - We will need a cooler too! Jack has a lead on a potential donation.

In closing, the vote:

YES: 98

NO: 11

Abstain: 1

Results from the survey asking if members would keep their shift or become an Additional Shopper: 107 people responded and 106 said they would stay in their shift.