

## **Monthly Member Meeting - Minutes**

November 19, 2012 // 6pm to 8pm

Location: The Co-op, 1500 Burns Street

Facilitator: Ben Weiss

*Present:* Ben Weiss, Kate Smith, Jessica Glebke, Emily Lincoln, Terri Roberts, Kate Keller, Lacy Roberts, Nick Grener, Christian Russell, Stacy Krahn, Walter Wilde, Dave Peterson, Brent Ryckman.

### *Welcome, Introductions, Additions to the Agenda*

- Nick Grener would like to add a discussion about a UM internship during the BOD discussion.

### *Announcements*

- Voting for the Additional Shopper (AS) Program ends at 8pm tonight. As of 5:30pm there were 55 “yes” votes (continue the trial program through October of 2013) and 8 “no” votes (discontinue program).
- AS discussion - what it will mean if the trial program is extended?
  - We will need people to help out on the AS committee.
  - Administrative time handling the program will be increased.
  - Current AS members will have to pay through the next year - \$36 for the year.

*Open Floor for Members* - Members present did not wish to speak.

### *BOD Discussion Items*

- BOD Retreat - the board failed to hold a BOD retreat in 2012. The board needs to make a decision on when and where the next retreat will be held.
  - Tentative weekend - January 12th & 13th in Missoula.
  - Jess Glebke will look into location in or around Missoula.
- BOD Manual
  - Kate Smith brought it to the board’s attention that the current BOD manual is dated 2008 and needs to be updated.
  - Kate S, Terri and Ben will work on revising the manual and will bring a draft to the January or February monthly member meeting.
- Nick’s Intern Discussion
  - Nick spoke with a couple of people at UM regarding having a UM intern for the Co-op and found out that an intern would consist of approximately 10 hours/week for a total of 150 hours for credit. All interns, even those through the Business School, can be unpaid.
  - The question is - what would the internship project be? What would we have the intern work on? An internship is replacing class and therefore needs to be an educational experience with a mentor.
  - Ideas for internship:

- Database work - mentors would be the members currently working on the system.
    - A Cooperative Business Model Project (Business School student).
  - Ben - Let's prioritize what we need help with:
    - 1. help out coordinators 2. Co-op liaison 3. tech work
    - Lacy thinks that that tech should be in 2nd place in terms of priorities
  - Next steps:
    - Nick, Christian, Kate K, Lacy and Terri will work on a job description, start the process, and bring to the board at the December or January meeting

### *BOD Action Items*

- August, September and October meeting minutes approval - all 3 approved.
- Thanks to Barrett for taking great notes at the annual meeting!!

### *Reports*

#### **Coordinator Report** (Kate K & Lacy)

- Thanksgiving and holiday ordering is underway
- Cooler screens/blinds are in place. They are working great and the Co-op is noticeably cooler in the morning.
- Concern regarding the AS program: active participation moving forward
  - Payments, questions, updating forms
  - Ben - comments on ballots? The ballot document was shared with him.
    - Maybe we want to make all comments available to the AS committee to read in the coming months?
- Ordering & product requests
  - Ben: we should make the ordering process more transparent
  - Terri: provide members with an online order form with suggested products. Ask "what do you need for the holidays?".
  - Terri is currently getting the product committee going again and getting it staffed with non-board members. The goal is to have something going by January. She'll keep in mind holiday ordering transparency and suggestions for Passover.
  - Kate K.: Specialty items don't sell. She would like people who would like specialty items to pre-order them so that they don't sit on the shelves all year.
    - Terri: People buy mostly basics, but we want to accommodate Thanksgiving and other holiday meals.
- Shift Stats - Terri asked how things are going?
  - Lacy: The number of people not showing up for shifts feels the same as this summer. However, shift coverage seems to be improving. Weekends are still tough! She only had one stocker the previous Sunday.
    - Jess: Are we still calling people to remind them of their shifts? Day before calls work and we should continue to do them.
    - Lacy: We currently have one person doing them once per week. Instead of calling everyone this person is calling FTOPers, new members and members that have missed shifts in the past. These calls seem to be

working really well.

- Brent: Can we have an email go out to members the day before their shift to remind them? Lacy: Yes, we're working on this.

- Streamlining
  - Kate K: attendance, training, new member follow-up is all getting much better!
  - Jess: where is the disconnect?
  - Kate K: it would be great to have more people scheduled to compensate for no-shows.
  - Emily: Why don't we add more slots to the shift calendar to get more people scheduled on the weekend? Similar to swing shifts - add shifts slots and staff with members who can do stocking, cashiering and maybe staff the member services desk as well.
  - Terri: Drop-in option would be great too, if controlled.
  - Lacy: An "on call" list is currently used, but difficult to get members in at the last minute.
  - The coordinators will add shifts on the weekends and see if it helps with shift coverage.
- Member database
  - Kate K: Gerald from Park Slope is working on the final stages of the membership database. The database is almost to the point where we can dump data into it and see how it works.
- The coordinators are working on tracking the companies that contributed to the "no" on prop 37 campaign (General Mills and Subsidiaries, etc.), as well as trying to do in-store education about products that are non-GMO verified.
  - This is all in an effort to bring about a policy on how we deal with the monsters of the food industry, and educate our members.

## Marketing Report

- Holiday marketing
  - We will have holiday baskets available on a pre-order basis. These baskets will be in the \$30-\$60 range. Pre-orders must be made by mid-December.
  - We will try to market items we already carry that could be gifts as well.
  - We are putting most of the current marketing energy towards the holidays: gift baskets, gift certificates, etc.
- There was an advertisement in the Independent's Feast section.
- Lacy: did an interview with a KBGA reporter on a story about how to do an entirely local Thanksgiving.
- Dinner (focused on area neighborhood) will be in mid-February.
- NMCDC is having a holiday fundraiser. If there is no dessert planned should we see if we want to put together a bake sale for the event with all proceeds going to the NMCDC?

## Financials Report (Terri)

- Current sales are less than half of what we need them to be and it is very concerning.

- We've borrowed all we can through our line of credit and we have bills to pay. If we don't to substantially better before next summer, we will be in real trouble.
- What can we do?? Anything we can do as individuals would help -> talk about the Co-op and help get the word out; don't miss your shift; educate current members more.
- \*We really need to focus on member outreach for the next few weeks. We need to explain the current financial situation to our members and let them know that if every active member spent \$25 more per month we would reach our sales goal!! We need our members to shop more!!
  - Get the word out in the weekly email.
  - Jess: Do we need to make phone calls to reach people outside of the weekly emails?
  - Postcard - out to all active members asking them to be mindful about shopping at the Co-op this holiday season.
- Christian: How are sales right now compared to last year?
  - Terri: About the same, but our cost of goods sold have increased. It's time to let members know that if we don't improve sales we're not going to survive much longer.
- Dave: One project an intern could work on is inventory tracking and management. What products turnover quicker? What products bring in the most money?
  - Lacy: We have one year of data and no one to mine through the data. An intern could do this.
- Walter: Another suggestion is to reach out to the immediate neighborhood with the hope that they would shop more frequently due to their proximity to the Co-op (last minute shopping).
  - Terri: We will be reaching out to the immediate neighborhood with the dinner planned for February.
- Brent: Theoretically, as more people shop the mark-up will decrease? Yes. On the other hand, what can we increase the mark-up to in order to be financially stable? 28%?
  - Price is a huge barrier to food shopping and therefore we would have to be really careful about increasing food prices.
  - Jess: Members do pay 2% to use their credit or debit cards.
  - Terri: Most active members may not be as worried about price increases.
  - Ben: This would be a good question for the finance committee: What could we propose changing the mark-up to?
  - Terri: Price increases should be a last resort.
  - The board decided to see what happens after the first of the year regarding mark-up, but for now will focus on member outreach.

### **Facilities Report**

- Thanks to Blake and Amy for the cooler curtains.
- Snow removal - we will need 2-3 members to be on call for snow removal shifts
  - Blake, Stacy Krahn and one other member needed.
- Meeting with the NMCDC and the Bistro next week. On the agenda: bathrooms, roof access.

**Alcohol Training Report**

- Next training will be in January.
- A draft alcohol policy will be brought to the December meeting.

**NEXT MEETING: Monday, December 17th, 6pm to 8pm at the Co-op.**