

Attending: Board: Christian Russell, Ben Weiss, Terri Roberts, Emily Lincoln, Jessica Glebke, Nicholas Grener; Staff: Kate Keller and Lacy Roberts; Members: Barrett Campbell, Nate Prorok, Rachel Mockler

### **Member Meeting Minutes**

January 28, 2013 // 6pm to 8pm

Location: Co-op, 1500 Burns St

Facilitator: Ben

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

- Christian: Could a new member position be serving as the “movie person” and coordinating our movie night? The marketing committee will discuss this. Marketing will also speak with Jason about what the Co-op might sponsor at the Big Sky Film Festival in the future.

#### Announcements

- Kate K: Next Monday will be the Anne Lappe event at the University Center, 8p, “Diet for a Hot Planet.” Co-op will be tabling at the event, and Emily will make sure that we have sufficient printed materials for the table.
- Thanks to the decorating committee for rearranging the store – it looks wonderful!
- Ben: We mailed a Co-op sweatshirt to Amy’s mom and dad for xmas and after 5 years of talking about they joined the Co-op where they live! This is San Juan Island, WA.
- February 7 will be store inventory! Please let Christian know if you have break out categories that you would like counted. Christian will give a report on this at the February meeting. He will attempt to integrate similar information from other stores.
- Ben W: Carrot and Broccoli costumes are back!!
- Kate K: A Vista member at Home Resource was putting together a luncheon at the Valor House – a home for Vets – and they have invited us to be a part of this. The Co-op could be involved with recipe planning and possibly providing some food. Details TBA. Anyone interested in attending on the Co-op’s behalf should speak with Kate.

#### Open Floor for Members (15 min)

- Nothing to add...

#### BOD Discussion Items (45 min)

- December meeting minutes approval
  - Minutes unanimously approved.
- Elect Executive Committee: Slate is unanimously accepted.
  - Christian Russell & Emily Lincoln: co-chairs
  - Nick Grener: secretary
  - Ben Weiss: treasurer
- Retreat agenda planning
  - Retreat is 2/23 at Lubrecht, 9a – 6p (ish) – meet at the Co-op 8a to carpool. Possible recap at the Bistro 2/24. Further details will be worked out via email.

- Board will discuss meals and other issues via email.
    - Rough idea: Morning: board training, lunch (& ski?), afternoon: 2013 agenda planning
  - Terri: I have been reviewing relevant board-training materials and will present them at the retreat.
  - There is consensus to split the day 50/50 between training and planning. Rough estimate is 2-3 hours for training (9-11:30)
  - Planning:
    - Clearly define executive committee roles
    - Develop structure and responsibilities and how we can bring this into the committees.
    - Looking into the future/goal setting. (Jess volunteered to facilitate.)
- Product Committee – status and duties
  - Kate K and Lacy have been discussing jobs related to inventory tracking and both scouting and contacting different distributors for price comparison and GMO labeling. This should ideally be a member-led committee.
  - There are task-based projects that could facilitate member involvement.
  - Terri would like to be involved in product committee work, recognizing that staff is better equipped to deal with vendors/distributors.
  - One possible job would be to have a member scout other stores and see what other stores are carrying that we don't – and compare prices for those items that we do have in common.
  - Kate, Lacy and Terri will compile a list of tasks that could be delegated to members and start the recruiting process.

## Reports

- Coordinator (10min) // Lacy
  - The past two weeks in terms of shift attendance, sales and general vibe have been good. We have been in the 90% shift coverage range, which is really awesome!
  - We have decided to deactivate people in the POS who are associated shoppers that have not renewed their membership by paying fees.
  - We will be moving cashiers into membership desk positions as necessary. The membership database being worked on by Park Slope is coming along slowly, but it is coming along and should be manned by a member soon. This person will ramp up our communication with members on every important transaction they have at the Co-op, such as email confirmation of payment and signing up, following up with new additional shoppers – really the next step in enforcing our work requirement. This requires people to check in when they shop and will improve communication with those members when they come in to shop. The first shifts to be filled will be evening shifts as the technology gets up and running.
    - Nick wonders if we stagger these shifts since we are busiest from 3-6 or 4-7, which the staff will attempt.
    - This will make more shifts available for FTOP workers and open up some cashier shifts.
    - If there are suggestions for people who would be great for this membership desk position, let Lacy and Kate know. Ben and Jess both volunteered to fill these positions.

- In the next week there will be a test run.
  - The check in process:
    - Members/guests will stop at the membership desk first and have their card reviewed with the membership desk and facilitate that person to sign up for missed shifts. Mostly though, this will be to address people as they come in to shop and connect with new visitors and make initial contact. This person will also be there to answer questions about product requests etc.
- Lacy and Kate have been working on separating the purchasing to better facilitate relationships with distributors, with Lacy focusing on grocery and non-food and Kate focusing on bulk, chill, frozen, and produce. A scanning device would help us better fill orders. Per Terri they are not that expensive – at least not out of reach. Through UNFI, the scanning device would cost us roughly \$30. This would save us in staff time. This device may enable us to do better price comparison and ethical shopping. More research is needed. Terri and the staff will look further into this option.
- Christian volunteers to help with new member orientation. There has been a vast improvement about getting members oriented, signed up and working their shifts.
- Associated Shopper (10min) // Kate K
  - 10 additional shoppers have re-upped (out of the ~40 additional shoppers who joined last year), the rest are not shopping. Since early December there have been roughly 12 new additional shoppers.
  - There are some additional shoppers with inactive members, so we are attempting to match them up with active members.
  - One former additional shopper became a member!
- Intern/Community Dinner (10min) // Nick
  - Our first intern search was not completely successful. Rachel will be working with us, although she won't be able to commit 10 hours per week. She will be working on coordinating our community dinners, which will be discussed in committee. We will start moving on organizing the first one soon! Nick elicits feedback from the group on what they should look like:
    - Lacy: This is an event where we partner with an another organization to help pay, and while we take donations from diners, there is no set fee. It is made with things you can purchase in our store and we provide the price break down and recipe for the attendees.
      - Another organization would help us pay and also expand our outreach efforts. This could be food/neighborhood related. For example, we could partner with the Food Bank or the Growers Cooperative, or even the MFCU.
      - To get the word out we would need volunteers to canvas the neighborhood and help cook. It would be great to invite the Bistro and their expertise... this could be a great way for them to get their hours!
    - This event will take place in the Bistro space.
    - There will be education about the Co-op, and meal preparation –

and possibly some free entertainment at this event. This will help us fulfill the education principle of the Cooperative model. Education can include what being a member of the Co-op represents, including locally sourced food and an emphasis on why it is important to be a part of cooperatives and how it affects a community. This also puts a personal face on what they may read about the Co-op.

- There are many opportunities for education as the event grows – to draw people in to learn, to eat and to shop the Co-op.
- Next steps:
  - The marketing committee will talk about this further at a committee meeting next week and will present some information at the next board meeting.
- Marketing (10min) // Jess
  - No marketing updates.
  - We got a last-minute inexpensive ad in the Indy – a \$400 for \$60!!
  - Whenever there is a facebook invite everyone needs to invite their friends. You can't invite people who simply like you – you need to invite your friends!
- Financials (10min) // Terri
  - See the update of PNL and balance sheet.
  - End of the year – we were in the hole by over \$6,000 in our checking account because of year-end things that had to be wrapped up. They weren't paid, necessarily, but had to be on the books by the end of the year.
  - Assets have decreased considerably from one year to the next, mostly because of depreciation of fixed assets. We went from accumulated depreciation of \$6,000 to almost \$24,000
  - Balance sheet: we accrued a new loan for beer and wine inventory and seem to have a lot more on our line of credit – nearly twice as much – which is why there's a large increase in liabilities from one year to the next.
  - The worst part is that our assets decreased and our liabilities increased. We are not adding anything in terms of adding assets (like new equipment) and we are taking a lot of hits against our fixed assets – our value depreciates every year on this. This is a part of doing business when you aren't expanding. Usually when you buy assets your liabilities are also increasing, but we are not investing in the store- we are collecting debt to stay alive and meet operating expenses. This is not typically how you'd get a new loan from a bank. They want you to invest in new capital. We are looking at: maxed out line of credit, no back pocket to dig into if need be. Even our savings, where all member payments and additional shopper fees go, that is depleted.
  - Our sales have increased significantly. Last quarter of 2012 we had \$128,800, which was \$113,000 the same quarter in 2011.
  - We did well on expenses – even our payroll was a little less expensive. compared to the same quarter the previous year.
  - We are operating at the lowest possible operating expense at this time.
  - As gloomy as they look, there is steady growth of membership and we are retaining members better. We are building committed membership and that

- will create a more stable month-to-month sales representation.
- Questions:
    - Ben: how come the total sales is less than 25% more than cost of goods brought in? A: This could be a lot of inventory sitting that was carried over to the next quarter. We are also filling out our shelves, whereas 10 months ago there was a lot of holes. This is a benefit we should see in this quarter. In general, our shrinkage/spoilage numbers are way better than the industry average.
    - Jess: The message in the email about people spending more money is working – let's keep this fresh!!
  - Facilities (5min) // Ben
    - Bistro will be closed February 9-10 for Hood installation. Over the coming 2-3 weeks, the NMCDC will also be putting in their office above the bathrooms.
    - There is a new gravity bin section!
    - Simon, Emily and Lindsey were huge helps in moving! Thanks to Jack for his help with the new bulk bin shelf.
    - Latest building meeting is still pending. Ben will discuss with them the community dinner.
    - There is a building shared community event calendar. It does not appear to be well managed/coordinated/reviewed as there have been several double bookings.
  - Alcohol training (5min) // Christian
    - We have an official alcohol policy. Some finer points need to be figured out, Christian will finalize this.
    - An email reminder will go out to cashiers that all shoppers need to be ID'ed if buying alcohol.

Next Member Meeting: Annual Meeting February 25, 2013  
6pm @ the Co-op