

**Draft Minutes**  
East End Food Co-op Board Meeting  
February 18, 2019

**In attendance:**

Present Board Members: Eddy Jones, President; Sam Applefield, Vice President; Eva Barinas, Secretary; Larry Meadows, Jr., Treasurer; Karen Bernard; Emily DeFerrari; Jona Reyes; Sarah Trafican; O.E. Zelmanovich (Zoë).

Interim General Management Team (IGMT): Amber Pertz, Café; Maura Holliday, Grocery.

Board Clerk: MaCall Scott.

Member Guests: Tyler Kulp, Ed Wrenn, Joni Rabinowitz, Faith Schantz, Tom Pandaleon.

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Eddy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members, directors, and staff in attendance introduced themselves. Karen read aloud the Ends statement.

**Amend/Approve Agenda**

An Executive Session was added to discuss the GM search and lease negotiations.

Decision: Sam moved to accept the agenda as amended. Eva seconded the motion.

Vote: 7.0.0

**Amend/Approve previous meeting minutes**

Directors reviewed draft minutes of the previous meeting and made corrections for grammar and clarity as reflected in the published minutes.

Decision: Emily moved to accept the minutes as amended. Sarah seconded the motion.

Vote: 7.0.0

**Working Meeting Update**

Eddy reported that the Board met on Monday, February 4<sup>th</sup> to do planning around the GM search, discuss lease and expansion updates, and begin committee planning work, including identifying members and creating charters. Jen Girty, HR Manager, was in attendance and reviewed the organization chart with new directors.

**IGMT Update**

Amber reported that Tyler Kulp transitioned to the position of Produce Manager on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Department managers, Kate Safin, Maura Holliday, and Amber Pertz, will attend the True Zero Waste Symposium on February 21<sup>st</sup>, in hopes of learning ways to enhance the co-op's waste and recycling goals; composting improvements may be expected in late March to early April. The most recent member survey closed on February 4<sup>th</sup>; results will be available in March. Eddy informed the Board that Kate reached out when the response threshold had been reached; Eddy elected to keep the survey open, feeling that additional member feedback justified any additional incurred fees. Mercato was taken offline due to a technical issue, but is up and running as of February 14<sup>th</sup>; the first order delivers February 19<sup>th</sup>. A profit share was distributed to staff on February 7<sup>th</sup>, at the rate of 38.9 cents per hour worked, with a total dispersal of approximately \$11,530. The average profit share thus far, for a full-time employee, is \$177 per quarter. Amber reported that the co-op's landlord has begun renovations and is looking to lease space to new tenants. Future use of the Annex, Training Room, and Gemini is uncertain; therefore, these spaces are being cleared of co-op property. Maura reported that, in regards to action item 57, Kate continues to look into the feasibility of participating in The Food Trust's Food Bucks program, which makes produce more affordable for SNAP users. Directors and managers discussed altering the monthly GM Monitoring reports schedule, in an attempt

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to achieve a more even distribution throughout the year. It was suggested that the B9 be revised to include the full management team, rather than a three-person DGMT. Maura and MMS Manager, Kate Safin, attended the PASA Sustainable Agriculture Conference in Lancaster last week. Maura reported an overall positive experience, with great break-out sessions, though attendance seemed lower than in previous years. Sam inquired about the status of the Food Bucks program, to which Maura responded that the management team was instructed to put projects like this on hold in the absence of a General Manager; furthermore, the MMS department is not currently adequately staffed to dedicate the time needed. Zoë noted that the Board is excited to move forward with this project when time permits, despite the absence of a GM. Prompted by a question from Sam, directors discussed updates to be made to the board calendar, including removal of outdated committee member names, CDS calls, and possibly D reports. To ensure consistency, it was agreed that directors and the Board Clerk will utilize the same version of the board calendar. MaCall Scott, Board Clerk, will confirm permissions on the Google Drive are set appropriately so that all directors may edit.

**Bylaws Committee Charter Review**

Zoë outlined the mission of the committee; to put forth recommended changes to the bylaws and present them to the membership for a vote. This committee will exist until members have voted on the proposed changes – the goal being November of 2019, with the possibility of November 2020. Zoë shared that in order to pass, a majority vote is needed, not a quorum as originally thought. Emily will coordinate with Kate to develop an email to member-owners which will describe the new committees and encourage involvement. Karen recommended the committee reach out to member-owners that ran for the board last year, but did not win. Emily suggested that adding language from the bylaws, which speaks to making changes to the bylaws would be helpful. Changes to be proposed should be agreed upon by May 2019. A committee meeting will be called in the next several weeks. Eddy requested that the committee research what legal actions are required to make changes to the bylaws.

**Management Transition Committee Charter Review**

The mission of this committee is to liaise with the IGMT and coordinate the GM hiring process. Zoë confirmed that Jen Girty, HR Manager is on the committee. Directors and managers discussed how the committee may best support managers during the transition period. Sam reported that he attended a portion of the management team meeting on February 12<sup>th</sup>, and wondered if it would be helpful for the IGMT to have more contact with the Board in that fashion. Amber reported that she appreciated the timing of the visit, as it coincided with lease discussions. Zoë encouraged the management team to request board member presence as needed. Second interviews for the GM position will begin soon; staff and member-owners will have an opportunity to engage with second-round candidates.

**Board Perpetuation & Elections Committee Charter Review**

Committee members, Sarah and Karen, reported that the charter is mostly the same, with additional points added regarding board evaluation. Eddy explained that the purpose of D monitoring is for the Board to evaluate itself. During his tenure as president, D monitoring has not been done; however, a shortened self-review is practiced every six months, and has been beneficial. Zoë encouraged the committee to reassess the board candidate packet for length and accuracy, to which Karen added that the online candidate form and paper version of the form do not match. Zoë requested the committee not lose sight of this project. Regarding board training and development, Eddy encouraged the committee to implement, rather than recommend development opportunities. Eddy suggested that financial 101

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training would be beneficial for the full board, and charged Sarah with looking into CBLD training for new board members. Lastly, Eddy requested that in regards to board elections, the BP&E Committee keep in sync with the Bylaws Committee.

### **Annual Meeting Committee Charter Review**

Emily and Karen reported that last year's charter is being used with some minor revisions. The committee will meet in April 2019 to acquaint members with the Annual Meeting timeline and goals. Eddy stated that work needs to be done around setting the board calendar; it was determined that setting the 2019-2020 calendar would be added to the agenda of the April working meeting. Shawn and Kate's presence is requested at the April working meeting to assist in building the calendar; Karen committed to communicating this request.

### **Member-Owner Participation Committee Charter Review**

Emily provided an overview of the committee's purpose; to assist the Board in creating and sustaining a participatory community of member-owners. She reported that a draft version of the charter is available in the Member Linkage folder of the Google Drive. Eddy suggested the charter be submitted for the March board packet.

### **Finance Committee Charter Review**

Larry reported that the charter is not yet complete, but will be submitted for the March board packet. Eddy requested that the owner of the 2019 Finance Committee Charter sheet be changed to the Board Administrator, and took the opportunity to remind the Board as a whole to be cognizant of document ownership on the EEFC Board Google Drive.

### **Expansion Committee Charter Review**

Sam reported that a revised charter is in progress and will be submitted for the March board packet. Member-owner, Tom Pandaleon, wondered if lay members will have access to all committee charters. He recommended that the Board consider providing member-owners with a description of each committee, and requested the descriptions not be too generalized. Emily asked that committee chairs write a 250 word description of their committee; she will pass the descriptions on to Kate, who will post them on the EEFC website.

### **Member-Owner Participation Committee Update**

Emily reported that the committee developed their charter, and acknowledged the group for its collective efforts.

### **Management Transition Committee Update**

Zoë reported that the Board has interviewed five candidates for the GM position. The process is ongoing and the search firm, The Carlisle Group, continues to seek out qualified candidates. A plan is being developed for conducting second interviews, which will be discussed further in closed session.

### **Action Item Follow-up & Discussion**

Directors and managers reviewed progress or lack thereof on action items from previous meetings.

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**Closings**

The next board meeting was scheduled for March 18<sup>th</sup>. Submissions to the next meeting packet are due to the Board Clerk via email on Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup> by 9 a.m.

**Member-Owners Open Session**

Ed Wrenn expressed interest in reducing the use of plastic in his shopping. He requested that the co-op make plastic reduction a higher priority by making it easier to shop responsibly with things like: boxes for glass bottle/jar transport, bio-degradable bags, and containers for sale near the entrance. Zoë assured Ed that plastic reduction is very important to the Board and co-op staff members. It was suggested that there be a standing piece in the Co-operator dedicated to plastic use. Ideas included, “Plastics: Look What We’ve Accomplished” and “Plastics: Here Are the Hurdles.” Tom Pandaleon added that members may not realize how often this topic comes up. Also mentioned was the possibility of giving a discount for using one’s own produce bags, jars, etc. Ed stated that there are zero waste grocery stores in the world, and that it is not outside the realm of possibility to make a radical change. Tom asked if there were any lease updates, to which Eddy responded that there was nothing to share publicly; it will be discussed further in closed session. Joni Rabinowitz shared that she was excited about a movie called “Bag It” – about a person who is learning about plastic use – and was glad to learn from Kate that the co-op will be showing it sometime around Earth Day. Tom said that he walked by the old Animal Rescue League building and wondered if the space would be appropriate for the co-op; concern was expressed over the size of the parking lot. Lastly, Ed expressed interest in the large plastic buckets that bulk nut butters are stored in, and wondered if they could be given to customers. Managers present answered that they can be given away; however, there is issue with both storage space and cleaning the buckets. Amber informed Ed that some of the buckets are re-used for compost.

**Adjournment**

Decision: Sarah moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m. Larry seconded the motion.

Vote: 8.0.0

At 9:10 p.m., during Executive Session, member-owners, Mrea Csorba and Maren Cooke, arrived to present a letter regarding plastic use, however, the Board was unable to accommodate the request for a presentation at that time. An electronic copy of the letter was distributed to board members, and is attached to the meeting minutes.

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The Board went into Executive Session at 9:01 p.m. to discuss matters pertaining to the GM search and building lease. At 10:00 p.m. Jona moved to adjourn the session. Larry seconded. The Board voted 9.0.0 to end the session.

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Minutes respectfully submitted by MaCall Scott, Board Clerk.

120 Maple Ave.  
Edgewood, PA 15218  
Feb. 18, 2019

Board of Directors  
East End Food Co-op  
7516 Meade St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Dear East End Co-op Board Members,

In October 2018, a few of us attended a Co-op board meeting to begin the conversation about reducing single-use plastics including drinking straws, the #1 plastic "clamshells" and other take-out containers made of non-recyclable material, and the #4 food wrap film plastic at the store.

The conversation continued with staffer Kate Sañin, who has graciously updated me regarding steps the Co-op was taking to address our concerns. We are heartened by the measures taken so far. But given the increasingly dire warnings about the dangers widespread use of non-recyclable plastics pose to environmental and human health, we urge the Co-op to step up its game to be Green.

Listed below are our committee's suggestions for Sustainable Practices in fostering healthier ways for us members to shop at the Co-op.

1. The Co-op has already discontinued plastic bags at the checkout counter, but they continue to rely almost exclusively on plastic bags at food stations in the rest of the store. Please make compostable bags an option to the non-recyclable #4 plastic film bags at the vegetable stalls and bulk sales. Make the paper/biodegradable options VISIBLE so customers can start switching over. Include signage promoting the option at prominent locations in the store.

2. We applaud the internal educational programs initiated for the staff. And enlisting Justin Stockdale of PRC as a consultant to advise on green practices is a great move! But in our view, plans to educate the shopping public on Best Practices in Recycling, while good, only goes so far. Indeed, given the free-fall of the recycling industry since last year, the proposed initiative strikes some of us as a ruse to greenwash the Co-op's continued use of plastic: in effect, externalizing the problem onto the hapless consumer who now owns the clamshell and other plastics no-one in the industry recycles.

Instead, the Co-op should start a recycling collection center of its own for the plastic film and packaging it dispenses and contract with a speciality facility to down-cycle those plastics, as Giant Eagle does for plastic bags.

3. Please stop using those green-and-brown paper take-out containers which, with their natural colorations mislead customers regarding safe and wholesome use. You must know that the inside chemical coating is a P-phos, which leaches into foods and is damaging to human health and reproductive capabilities!

Instead, apply outward and upward pressure on commercial companies to expand alternative lines of products such as paper wraps, or some version of a beeswax product like Abeego. Please note, saying that the limited national supply of alternative products are going to cities such as San Francisco and Seattle that have banned SUPs and P-phos is not an acceptable reason for us to continue being endangered. We urge you to be faithful to the model of "Green, not Cheap"!

4. Develop and promote a Co-op policy to serve and sell food in alternative containers brought in by customers. Publicize the rules consistent with Public Health and Green initiatives. Advocate for changes in regulations where appropriate (like specifying guidelines for the safe use of customers' containers, rather than forbidding it). Publicize, rate, and recommend alternative dishware and packaging as part of the the Co-op's Public Education mission. Relocate reusable products that you stock in the back corner of the store to feature them more prominently at the entrance area, so customers can readily see and buy them.

5. Establish a loan option for customers to borrow more-sustainable foodware with prepared take-out items. Given the already operational deposit system for milk bottles at the Co-op (and for many different items at the Carnegie Libraries), it shouldn't be hard to have members purchase prepared foods in non-toxic containers loaned to them with a small charge which can be returned for credit. The items could then be properly sanitized on-site along with the eat-in tableware. This would help reduce the Co-op's reliance on those unacceptable, non-recyclable containers or even the stretchy (nonrecyclable) plastic wraps around pasture-raised meats and organic desserts.

6. Consider adding a staff member dedicated to rooting out and eliminating single-use plastics at the Co-op: working with suppliers, finding alternatives, and changing store practices to avoid SUPs. We think that if you were to canvass members, most would say that the tiny amount added to each grocery bill would be worth it — both to reduce their own plastic footprint, and to set an example for other retailers to follow.

Thank you for listening and responding; let's keep the conversation going!

Sincerely,

Mrea Csorba, PhD *Mrea Csorba*  
Livable Pittsburgh, RePlastics, What's SUP  
Co-op member since ~1976  
mrc25@pitt.edu

*[Signature]*  
Maren Cooke, PhD  
Putting Down Roots, GASP, 350 Pittsburgh, What's SUP, Climate Reality Project  
Co-op member since 2000  
(previously GreenStar, Upper Valley, Cambridge, and Arlington Co-ops)  
maren.cooke@gmail.com

SUDHA KRISHNASAMY *[Signature]* WHATSUP

*[Signature]*  
Sen Murdan

to EEFC Board

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NAME

SIGNATURE

COOP MEMBER  
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NAME	SIGNATURE	COOP MEMBER
Anne Robb	Anne Robb	
CHRISTINA SCHMIDLAPP	Christina Schmidlapp	✓
Rette Aghbar	Rette Aghbar	
Reg Commarata	Reg Commarata	
Nancy Daulton	Nancy Daulton	
Nora Cemes	Nora Cemes	
Natalie Ahwesh	Natalie Ahwesh	✓
HUMANE ACTION Pittsburgh		
Pam Howe	Pam Howe	
Brian Bonsteel	Brian Bonsteel	"no plastic please"
Barbara Litt	Barbara Litt	✓
Ed Wrenn	Ed Wrenn	✓
Nora Johnson	Nora Johnson	
Elise Yoder	Elise A Yoder Forest Hills	
Pat Daddemeyer	Pat Daddemeyer	YES
Joe GUTHRIE	Joe Guthrie	yes
Danella Ardell	Danella Ardell	yes
James Morgan	James Morgan	yes
Ang Kennedy	Ang Kennedy	
Laura Edwards	Laura Edwards	yes