

Draft Minutes
East End Food Co-op Board Meeting
1/21/2019

In attendance:

Present Board Members: Eddy Jones, President; Sam Applefield; Karen Bernard; Emily DeFerrari; Sarah Trafican; O.E. Zelmanovich (Zoë).

Absent Board Member: Eva Barinas, Jona Reyes, Larry Meadows, Jr.

Interim General Management Team (IGMT): eric cressley, Front End; Amber Pertz, Café; Kate Safin, Marketing & Member Services; Erin Myers, IT.

Board Clerk: Erica Peiffer, MaCall Scott.

Member Guests: Faith Schantz, Carol Cutler, Tom Pandaleon, Aaron Waesche.

Eddy called the meeting to order at 6:58 p.m. Members in attendance introduced themselves. Sarah read our Ends statement aloud. Directors recognized Erica Peiffer for her years of service as Board Clerk, in anticipation of her resignation due to maternity at the end of the month.

Amend/Approve Agenda

An executive session was added to discuss updates to lease negotiations.

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

Vote: 6.0.0

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. Zoe seconded the motion.

Vote: 5.0.1

January Working Meeting & Retreat Updates

Eddy submitted a copy of the retreat agenda to be filed with the board meeting packet, and shared a copy for member guests in attendance to review.

Election of Officers

Eddy was nominated to serve as President. Sam was nominated to serve as Vice-President. Eva was nominated to serve as Secretary. Larry was nominated to serve as Treasurer.

Decision: Zoe moved to accept officer nominations as a slate. Karen seconded.

Vote: 6.0.0

IGMT Update

Kate reported that the winter staff party hosted last week was well attended. Supplement sales were up 200% for the January 2nd supplement sale. Our new online ordering and delivery service via Mercato will launch on Wednesday, January 23rd; staff info sessions were hosted this week. The recent member email campaign conducted by Marketing and Member Services staff yielded 425 responses; Kate characterized the 13% response rate as “very high.” The 2019 member satisfaction survey was scheduled to launch on Tuesday, January 22nd. Kate provided staffing updates within the MMS department, and reported plans to attend the PASA Sustainable Agriculture conference in Lancaster with Grocery Manager Maura Holliday next month. Amber reported on improvements to our compost collection services.

Action Item Follow-up & Discussion

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

B5 – Customer Service and Value

Kate and Eric first reviewed attachments, including the most recent member survey results, a log of customer comment cards, safety protocol documents and an incident report form. Kate noted member survey results were from the prior year, as the last fiscal year was an off-year for our bi-annual schedule. Directors requested that future reports include page numbers and signatures. Karen questioned the policy interpretation that meeting customer needs necessarily leads to customer growth. Managers and directors agreed the operational definition that followed was more realistic, stating that policy compliance is defined as customer counts that “will not decrease year to year”. Eddy noted that while customer counts did fluctuate over the last three years, changes have not been significant and this data point has essentially flatlined since 2012. In review of the customer comment log, directors requested an analysis of comments aggregated by topics. Kate described the active role of MMS staff in coordinating comment card responses to address a significant drop in response rates from the year prior. Directors asked managers to consider potential new systems for collecting customer feedback, utilizing technological advances such as in-store kiosks to facilitate more real time feedback. Kate suggested that online feedback, garnered from online platforms such as Yelp and Google, could be included in future reports. Kate and Eric reported on our Co-op’s efforts to participate in NCG’s pilot program to offer online feedback surveys via a link printed on customer receipts. Regarding safety, directors requested that future reports include an analysis of incident reports aggregated by type. Eric reported on the work of our state-certified safety committee, which meets monthly. An all-staff security video training is forthcoming. Directors requested the safety committee develop a more robust plan for training staff on emergency procedures, particularly active-shooter situations.

Decision: Zoe motioned to accept the report. Sarah seconded.

Vote: 6.0.0

B10 - Environment

Kate introduced the report by explaining that data was difficult to obtain. The fact that we rent our space has been a challenge in obtaining accurate information on utility usage and making efficiency improvements. The Co-Efficient dashboard has been our primary tool for tracking and benchmarking environmental outcomes, although NCG will not have full reports available until February. Kate suggested submitting this report later next year to be able to incorporate this data. Directors agreed to move B10 policy monitoring to May. Eddy commended significant updates to policy interpretations and operational definitions. Amber expressed enthusiasm around setting goals and tracking data to support these new interpretations moving forward. In lieu of many data metrics for the prior year, the report summarized accomplishments and current initiatives around minimizing waste and maximizing reuse, including our partnership with the Pennsylvania Resources Council to develop a sustainability plan, transitioning to compostable packaging for Café to-go wares, mug and bag credits issued, and efforts to measure specific waste and recycling streams and their final destinations. Amber described efforts in collaboration with our composting service provider to transition their operation to accept compostable plastic wares. Kate identified current waste management partners, and outlined educational trainings that occurred within the last year. When comparing our food waste redistribution outcomes to those of other NCG co-ops, directors noted that while our performance was average, larger figures may not be ideal as they could signify more food waste is generated in the first place. Kate recognized 412 Food Rescue as an invaluable partner and asset to our region. Directors asked managers to set goals around bag credits as a percentage of customer transactions.

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Decision: Zoe made a motion to accept the report. Sam seconded.

Vote: 6.0.0

Board Perpetuation & Elections Committee Update

Sarah would like to recruit two other board members. Directors agreed to discuss next month.

Member-Owner Participation Committee Update

Emily reported no committee activity since last month, but outlined forthcoming work as creating a new meeting schedule and integrating new members recruited at the Annual Meeting.

Management Transition Committee Update

Zoe reported the committee had already interviewed two GM candidates and interviews with two more candidates were scheduled, although applications are still being accepted. The next round of interviews will include opportunities for staff and members to meet candidates. Zoe described the candidates as having good experience managing a business of this size and possessing experience at other co-ops, although a desire for a more diverse pool of candidates was communicated as feedback to the hiring search firm.

Closings

The next board meeting was scheduled for February 18th. Submissions to the next meeting packet are due to the Board Clerk via email on Monday, February 11th by 8 a.m. GM candidate interviews were scheduled for January 28th, and a working meeting was scheduled February 4th.

Member-owners Open Session

Faith Schantz asked for clarification regarding incident reports, and Eric assured her that incidents are being consistently documented. Faith expressed appreciation for the B10 report and the work by managers to achieve sustainability goals. Lastly, she said she was “thrilled” by the response rate to the email campaign postcard. Tom Pandaleon commended staff and board for impressive reports and results. He said the referenced sustainability outcomes should be a “source of member pride.” Managers agreed that more can and will be done to communicate results publicly. Tom encouraged staff and board to maintain a thorough level of information sharing as we re-enter a more structured hierarchy with the hiring of a General Manager. Then, Tom urged managers to consider the possibility of hosting a battery recycling collection box as a service to members and customers. Lastly, Tom described his work as an active member the North Point Breeze Planning and Development Corporation, which has been communicating directly with the developer of the nearby Lexington Park complex, and suggested there may be opportunity for the Co-op to participate in those discussions. Carol Cutler expressed gratitude for the welcoming tone of the board meeting.

Adjournment

Decision: Zoe moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Karen seconded the motion.

Vote: 6.0.0

The Board went into Executive Session at 9:12 p.m. to discuss matters pertaining to the building lease. At 9:37 p.m. Sarah moved to adjourn the session. Emily seconded. The Board voted 6-0 to end the session.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Erica Peiffer & MaCall Scott.