

Adopted Minutes
East End Food Co-op Board Meeting
Hybrid Meeting held in EEFC Conference Room and via Cisco WebEx
March 18th, 2024

In attendance:

Board Members: Tom Pandaleon, President; Carlos Gasca Yanez, Vice President; Desmond Zheng, Secretary; Tyleda Worou, Treasurer; Mark Bowers, Lucia Covato, Nico Demkin, Nick Leise

Management: Tyler Kulp, Store Operations Manager; Jeff Guerrero, MMS Manager

Member-Owners: Josh, Fritz, Call-in User_1, Paula, Lucy Wojtaszek, Jackson, Edward Joseph James, Phil, Reed, Mark, George

Board Clerk: Jessie Ryan

Introduction

Tom called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and Desmond read the Ends Statement aloud.

The East End Food Co-op exists to enhance physical and social health in our community.

To these ends, we will create:

1. A sustainable member-owned business open to everyone
2. An ethical and resilient food infrastructure
3. A vibrant, dynamic community of happy, healthy people
4. A creative vision to transform the future

Check-In

Those in attendance checked in to express their feelings and any needs.

Amend/Approve Agenda

Decision: Tom motioned to approve the agenda as written. There were no objections.

Amend/Approve Minutes

Decision: Tom motioned to approve the February meeting minutes as written. Second by Nico. There were no objections.

Member-Owners Open Session

The Union President, Vice President, and other Union members presented the Board with a vision for reopening the Café. Some key points from the proposal that were discussed are as follows:

- Lower bars of entry in the Café; experience should be encouraged but not required
- Repurpose food so that it doesn't go to waste
- Reduce plastic waste by putting baked goods in a bakery case
- Offer a 5% discount to any Union member
- Work more closely with local farmers

Phil also shared several ideas of how the Co-op could improve, especially in the Café.

Tom shared that the Board has hired an HR Auditor to look at the Co-op's hiring practices. The audit will begin roughly in the next six to eight weeks.

George encouraged the Board to take advantage of the opportunities that have been presented at this meeting.

Paula shared via chat that she thinks bringing the Café back would be a huge win and there are likely some smaller-scale ways to get the ball rolling in the current location. It might be really good to have a team in

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place before the move so that the Café can have a strong kick-off in the new location. A place to sit and eat is a very warm way to welcome members.

Carlos joined the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

Tyleda joined the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

March Working Meeting Report

The EEFC Board met on Monday, March 4th for their monthly Working Meeting. In response to a recent request by the Board, Tyler Kulp, Amber Pertz, and Heather Johnson presented a “road map” detailing a path to reopening the Café services. The Counter will offer smoothies, juices, coffee, and tea. It will be open for six hours, three days a week, Thursday-Saturday. This plan requires staffing, staff planning, and menu planning. The Board will be working with Management to implement a plan in the next weeks and months. The Board was provided with updates on Union contract negotiations and existing lease-related matters. The Board briefly discussed Board training and the contract that was recently signed with Columinate. The Board discussed the Labor and Team Relations Committee and has decided to not continue with that committee at this time. The Board has decided that cutting back on this committee and cultivating the other committees will be where it puts its collective time, energy, and resources. The Board also had a general discussion about Management structure, IMT, and options regarding a GM search. Any relocation discussion was postponed.

GM Update

Tyler provided the following update to the Directors before the meeting:

This report is in addition to monthly monitoring reports. This update expects to give additional information to the Board of Directors that may not be included in the month’s monitoring report. This report aligns with parts of sub-policy B7: Communication to the Board.... ‘The General Manager shall not cause or allow the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.’

Membership:

Current total Member-Owners: 16,583

Fully Paid Member-Owners: 14,235

New Member-Owners: February - 42 (5 refunds)

Total Member Equity: February - \$1,663,789

Total Member-Owner sales: February - \$660,875

Register Round-Up Total:

January-March recipients: currently raised - \$1,282.58

Garfield Community Farm – <https://www.garfieldfarm.com/>

1Hood – <https://www.1hood.org/>

April-June recipients:

Community Human Services – <https://chscorp.org/>

PFLAG Pittsburgh – <https://pflagpgh.org/>

Operations Update:

- EEFC IMT successfully negotiated a new contract with UE Local 667, effective 3/13/24-3/12/27. Contract negotiations began on 2/6/24 and culminated on 3/5/24.
- YTD sales week ending 3/10/2024: \$8,971,214, which is 7.3% above PY sales.

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Questions/Comments/Clarifications:

- What do you think accounts for the 7% increase in sales?
 - The prior year that we are above was a low point in sales coming out of COVID, so we are just getting back to normal. These are all good signs; people are coming out and shopping.
- Is member shopping down or up?
 - We see larger member sales at the end of the quarters when people are using their discounts.
- Do we have an average of sales growth over budget figures?
 - Tyler didn't have an average off the top of his head. We made a conservative sales growth budget for this year.
- Is there any expected growth or estimated boost in sales with the Spring holidays coming up?
 - We typically see an increase with things such as candy, but we also bring in more products this time of year. We do not usually see a big sales increase.
- Tom suggested that the Board take this discussion of additions that could be made to the GM Update and add one or two snapshot elements to it. The Board will brainstorm what additions or subtractions could be made to the report at the next Working Meeting.
- Customer ranking of product availability went down 2%, but overall satisfaction went up by 8%. It seems a little odd.
 - That is all customer reported data. Our product availability is always around there. However, many people who filled out the survey that week might have just had a great experience.

Management Report

There were no additional updates from Managers in attendance.

Committee Updates:

Resilience

The Charter has been drafted but still needs to be approved. The Board will review the Charter at the next Working Meeting. Nick will be reaching out to Jeff to discuss marketing outreach to recruit members to join the committee.

Finance

Tyleda has spoken with Shawn and he is working to have the B1 Report completed and ready to present at next month's Board Meeting. The committee will schedule a meeting to review the B1 Report before then.

Board Perpetuation and Elections (BP&E)

This committee is in hibernation for some portion of the year. It usually centers around the Board Elections. Board education continues, as they have recently signed a contract with Columinate for Cooperative Board Leadership Development (CBLD) training opportunities. There will be a meeting with our consultant Joshua Youngblood soon. The contract provides 15 hours of consulting over the year, in addition to many training opportunities. They also provide a retreat that the Board will take advantage of later in the year. They offer live, virtual trainings as well as a library of pre-recorded topics that we will have access to. This is a collaborative training program for the Board to understand their role and for Managers to know how to interact with the board appropriately.

Member-Owner Participation (MOP)

The Committee is looking into putting together a food film festival in conjunction with the Urban Farm Tour. We are unable to support the Urban Farm Tour with the production of the brochure this year. At the next meeting, the committee will be discussing how to acquire an intern or volunteers to assist with the film

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festival and Urban Farm Tour. Marty continues to coordinate reading groups. The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 20th in the Conference Room.

Executive

There was no update provided.

Action Items

The Board will discuss which Action Items should be carried forward at the next Working Meeting.

Appreciations

Those in attendance took a moment to share their thanks.

Closing

Next Meeting: Monday, April 15th, 2024

Packet submission due: Monday, April 8th, 2024

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m. without objection.

The Board and General Manager entered Executive Session at 8:25 p.m. to discuss relocation and short-term Management structure.