

Cambridge Food Co-op
Minutes of Advisory Board Meeting
Wednesday, May 25, 2016

Meeting called to order at 6:36 by Susan Sullivan, Board Chair

Advisers Present:

David Bayne
Kendal Dwyer
Megan Harrington
Claire Hartten
Hannah Stevens, Treasurer
Susan Sullivan, Chair
Kathleen Ward

Cory McMillan, Store Manager

Absent:

Peg Winship
Isaac Labish, Vice Chair
Marcia Reiss, Secretary

Co-op Members Present:

Tom Jones
Charlene Pray
Nola White

Approval of minutes

Motion was made by Claire Hartten to approve minutes from the March 23, 2016 meeting of the Board of Advisors. Hannah Stevens seconded the motion. Vote: All in favor, motion approved. Minutes from the meeting accepted with no modification.

Committee Reports:

Outreach & Fundraising - Susan presented three focus areas that the committee is working on: 1) growing membership by spreading promotional materials more widely, including farmers market tables and other locations; “upselling” items in the store, offering free samples of coop-sourced foods, tasting nights, etc; and creating more fundraising events.

Claire Hartten described her idea for a fundraising “fancy hot dog night”, which she has offered to host at her home in the village. Will be open to all, festive, low price-point, accessible. Locally sourced foods to draw in area producers (i.e. Round House Bakery, Long Days Farm). She suggested late July or early August, will follow up via email with specific date suggestions. Hannah Stevens acknowledged Claire for willingness to take lead on the “hot dog” fundraiser.

Offering goods for sale at the July Block Party in Cambridge was also discussed. Cory McMillan brought up the possibility of some logistical hurdles with food regulations, but several members have expressed interest to participate (i.e. local chefs, Michelle Nagai and Mike West, and others) and possibly donate services or use of commercial kitchen spaces.

Kendall Dwyer suggested contacting new librarian in Cambridge, Cindy McGuire. Cory has already been in touch, Co-op may participate in talk/presentation series, and also children's programs.

Bicycle delivery service was briefly discussed. Not much response yet per Facebook posting. David Bayne suggested looking into how other delivery services are operating (re insurance, logistics, costs, etc). Hannah expressed concern over the local topography of Cambridge (i.e. the hills) and possibility of a cycling delivery service.

Kathleen Ward proposed setting up a "go fund me" crowd funding campaign for the Co-op. Susan expressed concern about conflict with another fundraising campaign currently going on in the village. Michelle Nagai suggested that strategy and timing are crucial to a successful campaign.

A brief tangential discussion took place regarding finding a painter for the back of the building. Kathleen had a recommendation, can request a bid. David questioned what needs to be done to prep building for mural painting. Kathleen suggested possibility of composite cement board siding as an option to consider.

By-Laws Committee – Nola White presented a brief recap of what was presented at the General Membership meeting in April. In summary, the by-laws now clearly reflect the importance of member-owners, and that they have power at the Co-op; The by-laws reaffirm consensus as the best model; and they expand the decision-making to include more members via a consensus, to 2/3 majority vote, to full membership vote process. The proposed timeline is for a draft to circulate at the next Board meeting in June. At the July meeting, the Board will review and, if appropriate, approve. In August, the approved draft will circulate to all members. Throughout August and September, drop-in information sessions will be held. In October, the full membership will vote. A brief discussion ensued regarding consensus, and how this is tracked and recorded in meetings.

Review of 4/17/16 Annual Membership Meeting – Hannah began the discussion by expressing that she was not happy with how the budget was presented at the meeting. Susan expressed concern that time was an issue, and wondered how to make the meeting more "audience friendly". More discussion ensued about how to best present a complicated budget proposal to the general membership. It was generally felt that not enough time was allowed to fully deal with member questions prior to voting, perhaps some questions were not asked or not fully handled. Several members were in favor of holding budget review meetings prior to the final vote, similar to the proposed plan for by-laws drop-in meetings. Nola mentioned that the Board is doing a great job of getting information out to all members.

New Business:

Shift Time Change - Cory opened a discussion of the possibility of changing member shift options to better match current needs at the Co-op. In the new system, shifts would be 2 hours long instead of 4, and would be mapped to specific jobs, for example stocking produce, packing bulk items, or working the register. Cory's hope would be to create more ownership of roles in the store, which in turn would produce better results as workers develop pride and attachment to their particular shift roles.

Other Board members expressed interest in the idea, but also raised some concerns. Workers would still need supervision and "best practices" in place by staff; record keeping system for shifts would need adjustment; members might have to make more trips to the store to meet the four-hour work requirement per month (if, for example, unable to find two 2-hour shifts in a single block). Someone suggested conducting a member survey to gauge interest.

Hannah asked if there was general consensus among the Board to explore this idea further. All in agreement that it should be investigated further.

Remaining Meeting Dates for 2016 (Updated 8/3/2016):

~~June 22~~ (cancelled)

~~July 27~~ (cancelled)

~~August 24~~ (cancelled)

August 3

Attachments (on bulletin board in store, or by request)

Outreach Planning Update 2016, 3 pages

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Kathleen Ward at 8:34 pm. Kendall Dwyer seconded the motion. Vote: All in favor, motion approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Nagai, Board Clerk

Date