

Cambridge Food Co-op
Minutes of Advisory Board Meeting
Wednesday, August 3, 2016

Meeting called to order at 6:40 by Susan Sullivan, Board Chair

Advisers Present:

David Bayne
Isaac Labish, Vice Chair
Marcia Reiss, Secretary
Hannah Stevens, Treasurer
Susan Sullivan, Chair

Absent:

Kendal Dwyer
Megan Harrington
Claire Hartten
Kathleen Ward
Peg Winship

Cory McMillan, Store Manager

Co-op Members Present:

Melissa Carll
Gery Cutler
Betsy Shiland
Rebecca Sparks
Nola White

Approval of minutes

Motion was made by Hannah Stevens to approve minutes from the May 25, 2016 meeting of the Board of Advisors. Isaac Labish seconded the motion. Vote: All in favor, motion approved. Minutes from the meeting accepted with future meeting dates updated to reflect current schedule.

Committee Reports:

Finance – Board Treasurer Hannah Stevens gave a detailed presentation on Co-op finances, including handouts with a summary report and statement of financial position, as well as a budget vs. actual comparison for the first six months of the year (reports available on the Co-op bulletin board). Hannah's presentation drew attention to budget shortfalls and points of concern for the Co-op at this time. She recommended a finance committee review with store manager Cory McMillan to decide on any adjustments or recommendations for the balance of 2016. The September meeting of the Finance Committee will focus on these possible revisions and projections for 2017.

Board Chair Susan Sullivan suggested posting important documents related to Co-op finance on the store website, in a “members only” area so that any member can access this important information. Board Clerk Michelle Nagai will follow up with web manager to make this happen.

There was a brief discussion about the Co-op finances among those present. David Bayne asked how Board members should present information about Co-op finances when asked by other members. Hannah suggested keeping an honest but upbeat approach, stating that it’s a mixed picture, and a tough time for many co-ops right now. There were suggestions to get involved more directly with the new senior residence across from the Co-op, as well as do more advertising.

David also asked about a plan to change the membership fee model (as suggested several months ago by member Charlie Reiss). It was agreed that this will require further research and planning to put in place.

Member Rebecca Sparks mentioned Lakeside General Store in Cossayuna as an appealing merchandising model. There was a lot of discussion about the value of the Co-op within the community, who the target audience is for the Co-op and how to best serve members to create more financial stability.

Hannah hopes to shift to a Fall voting schedule for the budget, rather than holding a vote in the spring when the fiscal year is already underway. To that end, she hopes to have the budget ready for the November meeting of the general membership.

By-Laws Committee – Susan, Hannah, Isaac, and Member Nola White presented the latest version of the by-laws, starting with a brief review of the basic components. Concern was expressed that the five absent Board Members had not participated in meetings or workshops with the by-laws committee and were perhaps less ready to finalize the draft for review and approval. Susan reiterated the need for all members to respond to requests for meetings (i.e. via doodle polls).

There was brief discussion of membership voting procedures. Nola gave a summary of the proposed changes as of now, and there was ongoing discussion of consensus and how it will work within the new by-laws.

At the September meeting of the Board of Advisors, the final draft of the by-laws will be presented and reviewed for approval to forward on to the general membership in November.

Update: Fundraising:

Summer Funraiser - Susan reported that the summer fundraiser (a fancy hotdog picnic at the home of member Claire Hartten) has been postponed to September 18.
UPDATE 8/23/16: The hotdog picnic has now been postponed until Summer 2017

Fall Events - A Co-op tag sale will be held on Columbus Day weekend, October 8-10. Members may make donations of items to the Co-op.

New Business:

Board Nominating Committee – Chair of the Nominating Committee Isaac Labish said that we must get new members for the Board and asked all present to talk it up and start recruiting. The Committee needs two more members to function well, and there should be at least four candidates on the slate by October 7.

Important Dates for 2016:

September 28 – Board of Advisors meets
October 8-10 – Co-op Tag Sale
October 26 - Board of Advisors meets
November 6 – General Membership meeting

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

Treasurer’s Summary Report (3 pages)
2016 Budget, Proposed vs Actual (2 pages)
Summary of Expanded Voting (1 page)
Preliminary Draft of By-Laws, 7/22/16 (13 pages)

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Isaac Labish at 8:42 pm. Hannah Stevens seconded the motion. Vote: All in favor, motion approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Nagai, Board Clerk

Date