

**Cambridge Food Co-op
Minutes of Advisory Board Meeting
Wednesday, September 23, 2015**

Meeting called to order at 6:42 by Susan Sullivan, Board Chair

Advisers Present:

Cheryl Baldwin
Melissa Carll
Kendal Dwyer
Isaac Labish, Vice Chair
Cory McMillan
Marcia Reiss
Susan Sullivan, Chair
Kathleen Ward, Secretary
Peg Winship

Absent:

Hannah Stevens, Treasurer

Members:

Charis Kotfila

Approval of minutes:

Motion was made by Isaac Labish to approve minutes from the 26 August, 2015 meeting of the Board of Advisers. Cheryl Baldwin seconded the motion. Vote: All in favor, motion approved. Minutes from the meeting on 26 August, 2015 accepted with no modifications.

Business & Discussion Items

General: Board Chair Susan Sullivan welcomed everyone and announced that member Cheryl Baldwin is resigning as of November 8, 2015. After an overview of the meeting agenda, Susan reminded all present about the semi-annual general membership meeting, to be held on November 1, 2015. She requested a board workshop to prepare for the meeting, to be held on October 21, 2015 at 6:30 pm. All members were in agreement about the date and time.

Nominating Committee: Cheryl reported on the progress of the Nominating Committee to find new members to run for positions on the Board. Working together with Isaac Labish, the team personally contacted over 40 Co-op members and identified two suitable candidates: Claire Hartten and Megan Harrington. Both candidates have submitted bios to the Board (see attached). Baldwin reported that in addition to these candidates, they were able to create a list of 13 individuals willing to pitch in for future tasks and projects around the Co-op. Baldwin and Labish felt this was the result of personal contact and simply asking. Discussion ensued about the value of doing an email "blast" to solicit member participation in

the Board or other Co-op activities. Baldwin noted that while the email may not have created much direct response, it seeded the idea for members, who were, in turn, more approachable when contacted directly. It was agreed that this kind of direct member contact is helping to build future member participation in the Co-op, even if it doesn't result in new candidates right now, or immediate participation. A question was posed about adding new Board members outside of the semi-annual membership meetings. Susan agreed to review the rules at the next meeting of the Bylaws Committee and report back to the Board. Susan invited Isaac to take over as chair of the Nominating Committee (current head of the committee will resign in November). Isaac agreed. Additionally, Kathleen Ward and Kendall Dwyer volunteered to serve on the committee.

Reports

Finance: Susan presented an overview of a finance report prepared by Hannah Stevens. It was noted that for August 2015 sales were down 4.5% over the same month for 2014. Over the past few years, although sales for healthy local foods are growing, across the CO-OP Sector, sales are flattening out. Several members noted that other outlets are starting to carry products that the Co-op sells. It was agreed that this is an issue to discuss more carefully at the board workshop in October. It was also noted that overall, the presentation and accounting of Co-op finances is much more solid than it has been in the past, and that this continues to make a significant positive impact on Co-op operations and decision-making. See attached Treasurer's Report for more details.

Manager's Report: Manager Cory McMillan presented a written report on the Co-op operations. He gave a brief review of the program from National Grid that subsidizes upgrades to commercial spaces and discussed the LED lights that will get installed in store as part of program. He also mentioned several exciting new store additions, including several locally made products. Cory issued a thank you to all the people who have been promoting the Co-op recently and getting new members to sign up. The response to the elimination of the 10:30 am shift has been generally OK, with only a few exceptions. Per the Board Chair's request, Cory will now include a copy of the membership report with his monthly Manager's report. Susan and Cory reported on their visit to Honest Weight to view the SMS point of sale system in action. It was noted that there are fewer mistakes at the Co-op cash register lately, thanks to small changes in procedure and extensive notes posted at the register. Board members thanked Cory and staff for their speedy and calm handling of the produce cooler breakdown. See attached Manager's Report for more details.

Building Committee: Marcia Reiss reported on the ongoing effort to get the Co-op office spaces rented. Discussion of hosting an open house at the Co-op ensued. Members agreed this would be a good way to both promote the spaces for rent and celebrate purchase of the building. All agreed Columbus Day is too soon. Susan and Melissa volunteered to head a task force to develop the idea further, and create press releases, etc. Cheryl put forth the idea to secure advertising in local free papers. Several members added suggestions. Kathleen will donate the "home of the week" ad space in the Free Press, for posting the office rental listing. She will also

list the rental on MLS with a cooperative fee, which may get the property more exposure. The board agreed that the expense of the fee is manageable if it means getting the spaces rented.

By-laws Committee: Isaac reported that the By-laws committee is making consistent progress, with nothing new to discuss at this time. Susan brought up a concern about her term length and agreed to look into the issue in more detail with By-laws committee.

Membership Committee: Charis Kotfila reported on behalf of the Membership Committee. She will be scaling back soon on her involvement and a replacement will need to be found. Susan and Cory raised the issue of membership policy regarding missed shifts and other punitive policies affecting members. Discussion ensued regarding pros and cons of these policies, with all members agreeing this is an area for further review and possible policy revision.

New Agenda Items & Comments/Questions

Isaac informed the Board that George Kerber, of KMS Small Engine Repair, is offering a special donation to the Co-op when members use his services. He will donate 10% of a customer's total bill to the Co-op when they have engine repairs done in his shop. Pick up a business card in the Co-op for more information, and let him know you are a member.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Kathleen Ward at 8:17 pm. Melissa Carll seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Ward, Secretary

Date

Michelle Nagai, Board Clerk

Date