

**Minutes for the Potsdam Food Co-Op Board Meeting**  
**April 19, 2016**  
**6 PM**

- I. Call to Order
  - A. The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Potsdam Food Co-Op was held on Tuesday, April 19, 2016, above the Carriage House Bakery, the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present.
- II. Attendees
  - A. Voting members in attendance included Laura Cordts, Joseph Andriano, Robin McClellan, Samantha DaGrossa, Tim Messner, Pamela Maurer, Maggie McKenna, Erica LaFountain, Marie Richards.
  - B. Members not in attendance included Abby Lee.
  - C. Eric Ochraneck, and Rajiv Narula arrived late,
  - D. The General Manager, Eric Jesner, was present.
  - E. No guests in attendance.
- III. Approval of Minutes
  - A. A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3/15/2016 was made by someone and seconded by someone else, but I was distracted when it happened. The minutes were amended and the motion passed.
- IV. Member Comments
  - A. Robin: Someone told Robin they heard the Co-op wants to grow. He assured this person we are merely trying to become profitable. He had heard of some new changes and initiatives. He also suggested bulk labeling that is easier to read at the register. i.e. not handwritten.
  - B. Tim: SUNY Potsdam is undergoing a demographic change that includes far greater numbers of students of color. He brought up the fact that student sometimes feel uncomfortable off campus. They are even compiling a list of "safe places" in the community, as well as unsafe places. They are considering some sort of badge for windows of establishments declared safe. Laura asked if Eric has noticed higher diversity in the store. Eric: Yes, perhaps more students of color. Laura: are there products we should consider adding? Maggie: M/M Committee, with their Co-op speakers group idea, could use the opportunity to ask students for ideas for becoming more friendly to students of color. Eric: willing to do anything he can in the store to improve.
- V. Committee Reports
  - A. General Manager's Report was presented by Eric Jesner:
    1. Buildings & Grounds
      - a) Bathroom project planning & budgeting in process. Stefan is in charge. Looking at wainscoting and a new toilet. Looking into having a company strip and wax the floors regularly.
      - b) New Condenser on dairy walkin \$1800.
      - c) 4 door freezer LED light conversion in process good balast to cheese cooler. Working on it.
      - d) Parking lot grading in process.
    2. Personnel
      - a) No changes
    3. General
      - a) Panini press is in demand. CHB will make sandwiches, Alyssa will train staff.
      - b) UNFI show Andy, Alissa, Megan May 11
      - c) CCMA: Joe and Eric will attend June 911. One registration covered after applying (\$850). Just over \$1000 total cost.
      - d) Min Wage increase
        - (1) To \$12.50 over next 5 years, maybe up to \$15 eventually.
        - (2) \$.70 / year increase for 5 years
        - (3) Eric estimates \$21k \$25k / year based on our hours. We will need this much in **profits** to cover the increase.
        - (4) Eric: the Co-op forward committee needs to think of something fast. We don't have much time on this. Joe: Should we get political and use the media to make the point to our elected leaders that the effect of this MW increase will put the Co-op out of business? Ethically, the MW increase is the right thing to do, but it will put us out of business in 2 years. Laura: Is there an organized effort to raise this issue that we could join? Maggie: How about encouraging more working ownership at different levels? Answer: Volunteers are less effective. Also, the working owner

model may no longer be tenable. Robin: we need to be clever monkeys on this. We will need to cut back on hours. Eric: Agrees, but we need to create sales too. Getting political is tricky. At some point we will have to ask for support from membership.

- e) Sales report
  - f) 2016 Budget approval. Did not meet the sales increase that was budgeted (2%). That will be our biggest challenge. Eric budgeted for consistency and hopes to improve on it. New POS touch screens due next month. We had an operating profit, but after amendments it's -\$3000. Still net profit but we are shooting for operating profit.
  - g) Motion to approve budget brought by Robin, seconded by Marie. Motion passed.
  - h) Staff Policy Manual Review in Current Meeting File. Laura suggested posting it and encouraging the board to read it over and make any suggestions to Eric, who is open to any.
- B. Membership Committee Report was presented by Maggie McKenna:
- 1. Nothing new to report. Will share report soon.
- C. Governance Committee Report was presented by Joseph Andriano:
- 1. Lawyer looking at bylaws, labor laws, patronage dividends, and possibly BPM
  - 2. Starting to think about next election. 4 openings anticipated, 2 of which may be filled by BOD members currently in their first term. Send suggestions to Joe.
- D. Outreach Committee Report was presented by Pam Maurer:
- 1. No June potluck – farm visits planned instead, possibly a meat producer and Kent Family Growers.
- E. Finance Committee Report was presented by Robin McClellan:
- 1. Final review of budget
  - 2. Quickbooks transition is not on track. Jay, Robin, and Eric will take over.
  - 3. As of next year, anyone with a salary of less than ~\$52k will need to be paid for overtime. Eric J and Chris Affre's salaries are far below this. They currently each work 45-50 hours/week. Therefore they will need to a) work less (and have less expected of them), b) get paid for overtime, or c) have a major salary increase in the near future.
- F. Buildings & Grounds Report was presented by Eric Jessner
- 1. Punch list: Bathroom, molding, signs, regrading, parking lot lines, sump pump effecting foundation wall, among others.
  - 2. Maggie asked if we need more people on the B+G committee? Yes, they need help on projects.
- G. IT Committee Report was reported by Eric Ochranek.
- 1. **Policy change to propose: that Secretary be responsible for ensuring that folder and listserv permissions are properly assigned and unassigned, when people join or leave the board. (The Gov Committee will incorporate changes into BPM.)**
  - 2. Wiki is up. Idea is to have an easily searched library of docs.
  - 3. Minutes being added to website. Eric W-B is adding PLU search to website.
  - 4. Progress on blog. The capability is there to post, but who should post and who should vet the posts is not finalized. Robin would post financial reports. Minutes will be posted too. Eric will address the fact that many are unaware that they can opt to receive an electronic newsletter, and that Marie attempted unsuccessfully to opt out of the print version.
- H. Co-op Forward Committee
- 1. Nothing to report. We are populated. Meeting 5/11 at 5:30pm above Carriage House Bakery.
  - 2. Charge is [I'm paraphrasing because Laura speaks very eloquently and more rapidly than I can type] to discuss what's next for the Co-op, what can ensure that the Co-op achieves enough sales to stay afloat despite serious challenges on the horizon, and how the Co-op can increase its relevance and influence in the community generally.
- VI. New Business
- A. Newsletter Assignments

1. The newsletter is lacking content and we haven't been enforcing the 1 article per year per board member rule. Next deadline July 15 for Sept. 1 publication. Anyone writing can choose a topic, or bring attention to the Co-op's fall events: Open house, Oct potluck, and Colleges opening.
- B. Staff Appreciation Event
1. There hasn't been much enthusiasm for this event from staff in the past. Laura suggested pavilion at Pine St. Early summer. Waiting for responses from the rec office. Eric and Laura will continue to work on this unless someone else steps up.

## VII. Old Business

### A. 2016 Action Plan

1. All Committees have entered plans, Joe offered to make a spreadsheet to improve on the current document. Laura suggests committee chairs look at this regularly and update as needed. This is a living doc and can be shared with all committee members. Joe will post a shareable link after he has cleaned up the action plan.
2. Robin brought up our need to prioritize a Marketing Plan. Joe will attend a workshop on Federal resources that may be available to pay for this. This would basically require money to pay a marketer, as well as to implement the plan. We could borrow money from our members but it's a harder sell than previous projects. Joe suggested sending this topic to the co-op forward meeting.

## VIII. GM Salary and Bonus agreement

- A. The board voted to go into executive session (Robin motion, Joe second) to discuss Eric's bonus agreement. The executive session began at 7:34 PM and ended at 7:51PM.
- B. Laura brought a motion to approve a 4% GM salary increase retroactive to the beginning of the year. Maggie moved to approve the raise. Joe seconded. The motion passed.
- C. Laura brought a motion to approve a new bonus agreement, which would award 10% of the Co-op's net profits to the GM based on net profit reporting from the finance committee. Maggie moved to approve the motion and Marie seconded. The motion passed.

## IX. Adjournment

- A. Robin moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Rajiv and this was agreed upon at 7:55 PM.

Humbly Submitted,  
Erica LaFountain  
Secretary, Potsdam Food Co-Op