

**Minutes for the Potsdam Food Co-op Board Meeting**  
**August 15, 2017**  
**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, August 15, 2017, 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, Abby Lee, Maggie McKenna, Erica LaFountain, Eric Ochranek, Kayla French, Gail Anderson, and Jessica Diagostino. All board members were present!!!
  - b. The General Manager, Eric Jesner, was present.
  - c. Aviva Gold was in attendance as a guest presenter.
- III. Presentation by Aviva Gold about Ends policies, a basis for policy governance:
  - a. Aviva described “ends policies” as “A mission on steroids”. Aviva has been a co-op member for 30 years, 6 years in Potsdam. Was a member of a Champagne-Urbana co-op when it hit bad times. The Co-op brought in consultants, raised money, and Aviva joined the board. She helped draft ends policies on a committee. Surveyed membership. The ends policies became a litmus for whether an endeavor had traction at the co-op. They took the place of the default litmus of whether or not an endeavor was worth spending money on (although obviously cost should always be part of consideration).
  - b. Examples from Common Ground Co-op:
    - i. The Co-op is the center of a vibrant, inclusive community
    - ii. The Co-op movement is strengthened
    - iii. The Co-op serves as an educational resource on food issues.
    - iv. Our local food system is robust, equitable, and environmentally sound.
  - c. Ends policies can be member-owner-driven. Can guide activities taken on by store.
  - d. Eric is strongly in favor of Ends Policies, and the topic will be referred to the Governance Committee.
- IV. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Anything to remove from the consent agenda? no
  - b. A motion to approve the consent agenda (minutes from the last meeting, and committee reports since the last meeting) was made by Laura and seconded by Maggie. It was passed.
- V. General Manager’s Report was presented by Eric Jesner:
  - a. Sales Report.
    - i. Down 2.35%. Still up 4% for year. Sales per customer still went up. Lower wholesales compared to last year.
    - ii. 991 member-owners. Need to focus on member retention
    - iii. Card processing fees still below 2%
  - b. Buildings & Grounds
    - i. No news
  - c. Personnel
    - i. Interviews soon for M&M manager and cashier supervisor
    - ii. Going to hire one additional PT FE staff
  - d. General
    - i. Survival plan – 2 ways to drive sales: Beer sales, and adding some new features to the store.
      1. Beer sales
        - a. Syracuse Real Food Co-op recently added beer to their offerings and it “changed their store”.
        - b. Maggie: Why not wine? Only NY state wines can be sold in grocery stores.
        - c. What about local breweries? They don’t sell in bottles. Eric (and Andy) will make sure the selection is smart and distinctive.
        - d. License is \$1500 for 3 years.
        - e. The board response was favorable.
      2. Convection oven in bakery, and commercial range. Need hood requirements.
      3. Update bulk bins, and look into eliminating co-op pack and replacing counter with custom sandwich prep area.

4. Board would have to help with raising funds from membership for these additions.
  5. Sam: what about the safety issues brought up by staff members? Eric: we are doing the best we can with the space. If we end up deciding to stay, we may have to look at expensive structural work.
  6. **These improvements are part of a survival plan in the short term.**
    - ii. Relocate-expand toolbox: Eric recommended reading this to show board members how elaborate the process is. Just the feasibility stage involves several decision points.
    - iii. Pro-forma proposal
    - iv. Enrolling in cometrics, \$200 per quarter. We give them financials each quarter and we get access to financials of all the other participating stores, which would be useful for comparison.
    - v. Robin moves that we form an ad hoc committee to plan and enact recommendations made by market study. That motion carried. Jessica volunteered to chair said committee. Joe will work with the chair to populate the committee.
    - vi. Board and staff development
      1. CBLD. Someone involved in CBLD lives in Burlington VT and often works with City Market. Eric is concerned about the board turnover vis a vis the huge potential project we might take on. We may need more continuity to provide stability for this process, esp for Eric. Committees can provide that continuity.
      2. Cooperative Café - \$1790 for 10, \$1100 for 5 attendees. 2 Board members? Great way for board members to stay current, broaden perspective, bring ideas back from other co-ops. Keene NH. 11/3 and 4.
    - vii. Pintos – QB conversion will cost approx. \$2500. Well worth it, but not budgeted for.
- VI. New Business (voting items or items requiring board discussion)
- a. Calendar:
    - i. Robin requests that when meetings are cancelled, they be marked as “cancelled” on the calendar, not simply deleted. Also that the location be entered for each event on the calendar.
    - ii. Eric O. will send access to google calendar.
  - b. Special orders:
    - i. Maggie moves that everyone, not only members, have opportunity to make special orders (this has nothing to do with the buying club). The policy of only allowing members to special order was undocumented in the first place. Jessica seconded, the motion carried.
- VII. Member Comments
- a. Joe brought a comment that someone would like home delivery.
  - b. Tim brought a comment that someone would like for the co-op to make a statement against racism and bigotry. Perhaps a lawn sign? 1<sup>st</sup> cooperative principle can be the basis for a statement. Eric will create a sign.
- VIII. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
 Erica LaFountain  
 Secretary, Potsdam Food Co-op