

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

I. Call to Order

- The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Potsdam Food Co-Op was held on Tuesday, January 19, 2016, above the Carriage House Bakery, the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present.

II. Attendees

- Voting members in attendance included Joseph Andriano, Robin McClellan, Laura Cordts, Abby Lee, Erica LaFountain, Pam Maurer, Marie Richards, Eric Ochranek, Vanessa Bittner,
- Members not in attendance included Maggie McKenna, Rajiv Narula
- Guests in attendance included Tim Messner

III. Approval of Minutes

- A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on December 15, 2015 was made by Laura Cordts and seconded by Marie Richards. It was passed.

IV. Member Comments

- Eric O. reported that he overheard someone say that we use too many plastic bags.
 - i. Eric J. reported our options are paper and plastic, and it is too expensive to get small paper bags. People are welcome to bring their own containers.
 - ii. Robin suggested that we put up a sign informing people that they are encouraged to bring in their own containers to reduce waste.

V. Committee Reports

- General Manager's Report was presented by Eric Jesner:
 - i. Building and Grounds
 - 1. Meat freezer broke last month.
 - a. Only lost the top two shelves of products.
 - b. Repair: approx. \$1500
 - i. Eric J. is speaking to the insurance company to see what we can recover.
 - 2. A member owner who is an electrician suggested that we update to LEDs.
 - a. He is offering to do this for only hour credit.
 - b. We would need to buy the bulbs, it would cost \$10 per bulb (\$400-\$500)
 - c. Erica asked how much we would save by doing this. Eric J. reported he did not know.
 - d. Robin suggested we should figure out the break-even and phase it in.
 - i. Joe responded that we should consider whether this person would be willing to do this over a phased in period.
 - e. Abby asked about whether we would need an inspection if we did this. Robin said he did not think so because inspections end at the device, and this would be changing the device.
 - ii. Personnel
 - 1. Julie has left the co-op.
 - a. Interviews are being conducted.
 - 2. Changes in the Bakery
 - a. One staff member asked to be switched from full time to part time, and a part time person changed to full time.
 - iii. General
 - 1. Seed Committee

- a. Eric J. is trying to streamline this by having them enter it directly into the computer for late 2016-2017.
 - b. The current chair of the Seed Committee informed Eric that she does not plan to continue to be on the Seed Committee. Jackie said that she would train the new person.
2. Weights and Measures
- a. The person from Weights and Measures came to the co-op.
 - b. Everything went well, except that we learned that any item that is produced with the expectation of it leaving the store needs to have the co-op's name, address, and contact information on it. It also has to have the weight, and the weight on the label can't be under.. This has an impact on the bakery labels. This means that we need to change the labels. The staff is working on complying with this. This will actually have a minor financial benefit (about \$0.01 per loaf).
3. Vegetable Starts
- a. This is in progress. Orders are made and the staff is being informed about the product.
 - b. We are trying to find out exactly what will be organic and what is just grown using organic standards, so people can be informed.
4. Apex Solar
- a. Solarize Canton visited as they are trying to partner with organization.
 - b. We could offer an opportunity to our member-owners that if 5 member owners buy together then they could get a 10% discount.
 - c. They will donate \$250 back to the co-op for each member-owner who buys a system.
 - d. If we want to do this, Eric J. will need to tell Apex Solar and a member-owner would just need to tell them when they order. They are also willing to do workshops.
 - e. Erica asked if this was an ongoing deal.
 - i. Eric J. said yes, but to remember that we needed 5 people to order at the same time to get the 10% discount.
 - f. Robin disclosed that he is a friend of people who works at Apex Solar. That said, Robin said his impression is they are a good installer. He thinks this would be a good deal for the co-op and the members. Robin suggested that we could split our \$250 credit and donate part of it and use the rest for an improvement fund.
 - g. Eric O. asked whether we could get some solar panels as a promotion.
 - i. Robin pointed out that one of the benefits of this is tax credits, and if we have no profit, then we can't help that.
 - h. Abby asked if we had any member-owners who are in this business, as we would be basically endorsing a third-party.
 - i. Laura reported that Scott Shipley is doing solar install.
 - ii. Eric J. reported that Matt Bullwinkle was.
 - i. Erica asked if he would be able to restructure the deal in some way so we could make it part of our business partner program.
 - i. Robin suggested that we could just talk with them and see if someone signed up we could just hold off to order until we get 5.
 - j. Laura asked if we had ever done something like this before.

- k. Joe pointed out that this is similar to our member benefit program and if we disclosed we would be getting a \$250 discount that it would not be different.
- l. Abby asked if anyone had any conflict except Robin.
- m. A discussion was had about how Apex finances these solar panels.
- n. A discussion was had about community solar.
- o. Abby asked what the consensus.
 - i. Robin would talk to members who can be affected by this.
- p. Discussion was had about how this may or may not fit into the business partner program based on the new policy.
- q. Discussion was had as to whether or not Apex would be considered "local."
- r. It was decided we will discuss it at the next board meeting.

iv. Sales Report

- 1. December: up 2.5%.
- 2. Year: up 0.38%.
- 3. % of sales to members: up 1.59% for year. 61.81%
- 4. 986 total members @ end of year
- 5. Sales per household: up about \$5 for the year.
- 6. Joe asked about general merchandise sales
 - a. Up 116% week 53
 - b. Up 115% in week 52
 - c. General Merch was up about \$1500 over last year, which equates to \$750 to the bottom line.
- 7. HABA was up as well.
- 8. Abby asked about the % sales to members.
 - a. Eric reported this was good because we have more members and they spent more.

v. GM Vacation

- 1. 2/21-2/27.

- o Membership Committee Report was presented by Erica LaFountain:
 - i. Working on the business partnership program.
 - ii. About to send an e-mail out to partners to renew.
 - iii. Something has been in the Chamber of Commerce welcome packet and the newsletter.
 - 1. Eric reported this has resulted in 1 new member.
 - iv. Press release about updated to business partnership program.
 - v. Badges and signs will be available to the partners.
 - vi. Working on a list of business which are not a part of the program and who are not Chamber members so we can reach out to them.
 - vii. Looking forward to helping at the Annual Meeting
- o Governance Committee Report was presented by Laura Cordts:
 - i. Annual meeting election e-mail is sent out.
 - 1. 9 responses.
 - 2. More cast in store.
 - ii. Thanks to all committee members for filling out the self-eval.
 - iii. New board annual calendar posted on gDocs.
 - iv. Abby and Joe are working on talking to attorneys about hiring them regarding reviews of our documents.
 - v. Officer questionnaire will be sent out after a board is seated.
- o Outreach Committee Report was presented by Pam Maurer:

- i. Annual Meeting is 2/9. Fat Tuesday, will be festive.
 - 1. The Bakery will be making King (Cup) Cakes.
 - 2. It was suggested that the e-mail mention that the co-op will provide cupcakes.
 - 3. A warning will be given about the beans in the cupcakes.
 - ii. We are looking for people to be Co-Op Ambassadors.
 - 1. People can get credit for that.
 - iii. Erica asked about the Remington event.
 - 1. Pam reported it will be on 2/6.
 - o Finance Committee Report was presented by Robin McClellan:
 - i. Yearly Numbers
 - 1. We had net revenue of \$6000.00
 - a. However, we have not been billed for our accounting work, so it will be closer to \$1500.
 - b. This is the first year in 3 years that we made money.
 - ii. We are changing accounting programs and have high expectations that we will be reducing the amount of work.
 - 1. Robin thanked Jay Vega who is an Assistant Professor of Management and Accounting at Clarkson, and he is having his accounting students work on our accounting system. Robin said that the work they are doing would cost thousands of dollars. They are doing this for community service credit.
 - 2. The President asked that the minutes reflect that Jay Vega is formally thanked by the board. He is receiving core worker credit for all this work.
 - iii. Robin asked that the minutes reflect this was his shortest report ever.
 - o Dues & Shares report was presented by Joe Andriano:
 - i. We are trying to find out the opinion of an attorney as to suggested language.
 - ii. A discussion was had about the FLSA issue.
 - o Buildings & Grounds Report was presented by Eric Jessner
 - i. Aside from what was reported in the GM report, the bathroom is on the agenda.
 - o IT Committee Report was presented by Eric Ochraneck:
 - i. Working on a blog for the website.
 - 1. The blog will be a new way to put content on the site.
 - 2. Some discussion was had about whether recipes would be on the blog.
 - ii. Calendar
 - 1. We are using Google Calendar for a Universal Board Calendar.
 - 2. This new calendar has been shared with everyone on the board.
 - 3. Robin showed this on his computer.
 - 4. Eric offered that if anyone needs help, please contact him.
 - iii. Technology Cheat Sheet
 - 1. In progress
 - 2. Will try to put everything of technology on this

VI. Old Business

- o None

VII. New Business

- o Annual Meeting
 - i. 2/9/16.
 - ii. Committee chairs have been asked to speak for up to 2 minutes.
 - iii. An agenda has been sent to everyone. Please respond if you have suggestions/corrections/comments.
- o G.M. Evaluation
 - i. The Executive Committee met with Eric J. regarding his annual review.

- ii. Member comments will be sought out to add to review.
 - iii. It is not due until March so it is still a working document and it will be presented to the board later on.
- Board Self Evaluation
 - i. Results posted in gDrive.
 - ii. Things that Abby wanted to highlight:
 - 1. We are self aware of what we are working on.
 - 2. A lot of accomplishments this year.
 - 3. Some contradictory things, which is interesting.
 - 4. Supportive of Eric J.'s work.
- Board Retreat
 - i. 3/5/16.
 - ii. Identified 2 potential facilitators. Robin has reached out to them.
 - iii. The committee felt that long board retreats are not the most productive. Trying to do 8:30-1 or 2.
 - iv. Recommended Agenda
 - 1. Review goals and objectives from previous year--what have we accomplished? What hasn't been accomplished that needs to be worked on? What do we abandon?
 - a. Each committee chair is asked to come to the retreat saying what they have accomplished, what they see for the future as wanting to do, what has not been done, what they want to accomplish.
 - b. Eric J. will also report.
 - 2. Apply the committee reports to the 3 pillars of financial stability, membership engagement, increased sales.
 - 3. Come to agreement on a 1 year plan.
 - 4. Do visioning on what our 3 year plan might be.
 - 5. Ideas will be sent back to committees, which will then develop an action plan.
 - v. No formal lunch.
 - vi. Details/logistics will be discussed at the February board meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

- Robin McClellan moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Erica LaFountain, and this was agreed upon at 7:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Joseph Andriano
 Secretary, Potsdam Food Co-Op