

**Minutes for the Potsdam Food Co-op Board Meeting
August 18, 2020**

- I. Call to Order
 - a. The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Potsdam Food Co-op was held on Tuesday, 8/18/20, at 6:10 pm via "Zoom", with the president in the chair and the Secretary being present.
- II. Attendees
 - a. Voting members in attendance included Erica LaFountain, Aviva Gold, Becky Allen, Kellie Hitchman, Hillary Vaillancourt, Karen Bage, Philip Paige, Katie McLaughlin, Megan Lane, & Jessie LaRose (13 = full board)
 - b. Excused Members not in attendance were; Deb Massell, Jim Fryer & Marshall Issen
 - c. A quorum was present.
 - d. The General Manager, Andy Peet, was present.
 - e. No guests were in attendance.
- III. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Minutes from the July Board meeting were approved as corrected. Motion by Erica. 2nd by Megan
- IV. **GM and Committee reports**
 - a. General Manager's Report was presented by Andy Peet:
 - i. Buildings & Grounds: There have been numerous cooler break-downs/issues in the store. Andy has a good repair person who is also a new core worker. Repairs are getting done. Some floor tiles are needing replacement.
 - ii. Personnel: 2 new part-time workers were hired for the bakery. Kristen was promoted to Lead Cashier. A search is on-going for a new manager for the Carriage House (CH) bakery. Andy is looking for someone with experience in leadership to act in a supervisory role. Baking experience is not the most critical experience factor. He wants someone who has ideas for expanding the prepared foods line coming out of the CH. Ads have been placed in North Country This Week, on Facebook, North Country Now & the website. Erica wonders if advertising further afield would be beneficial. Andy has a couple good applicants currently and wants to interview them first. More extensive advertising will happen if necessary. He will start interviews next week.
 - iii. General discussion regarding Sales:
 1. Jessie suggested the Co-op investigate working with GardenShare to provide benefits/coins/coupons for Co-op produce sales.
 2. Co-op could set up a booth at Canton/Potsdam Farmers Mkt to do outreach & education.
 3. Aviva suggested that the Co-op needs a Marketing Manager to focus on increasing SNAP customers...a new target audience(?)
 4. Co-op should make connections to local food organizations (Cooperative Ext., Neighborhood Ctr, etc about what we have to offer.
 - iv. Sales Report: Overall sales for July are down over 5% compared to one year ago. The number of daily customers is down as well. On the positive side, the sales so far this month are better than last month, so we are seeing some recovery from the pandemic shut-down of the spring. There are fewer lunch customers. Credit card swipes are down (so, the associated fees are down) but the overall amount of each credit card sale is up. Sales to wholesale customers are picking up; customers include; Jernabi, Nature's Storehouse, North Star Food Hub and St. Lawrence Dining Service. EBT/SNAP sales have increased. More people may be getting SNAP benefits since unemployment levels rose. Families with children who are eligible for free/reduced school lunches can receive "pandemic" EBT.
 - b. Outreach Committee Report (chaired by Christi Sommerfeldt): Erica said the committee did not meet this month.
 - c. Governance Committee Report was presented by Katie: The committee discussed the BPM and elections for next year. Erica suggested the Gov Comm reach out to current board members to determine the interest in holding the position of President, beginning next year.

- d. Finance Committee Report was presented by Andy Peet: (Karen recommends that all Board Members attend at least 1 Finance Comm meeting.)
 - 1. Andy and Marshall now have Quarter 1 P&L Statements and Balance Sheets. Coop is close to breaking even on Net Income.2019
 - 2. Project Loan repayment: \$75,000 was borrowed from members. The 1 year interest (\$2,168) has to be paid back now. \$400/week will have to be allocated to pay off the loan by 2024.
 - 3. All bills are paid up - 10 days out.
 - 4. ShopHero: Andy, Jessie & Laurie are having a meeting next week with ShopHero about setting up an online store.

- e. Fund-raising Committee Report presented by Karen Bage: [See notes from meeting in google folder]
 - 1. Next month, Hillary will have some progress regarding the direction and steps required in setting up a "Friends of the Co-op" fundraising arm.
 - 2. Karen said the Co-op's increased SNAP sales will bolster our standing for the HFFI grant. HFFI invited the Co-op to submit a full application, which is due 9/25/20. \$3 million is available to "win". Co-op is seeking \$200,00 toward purchase of the new location. Aviva and Karen are the leads on this application.
 - 3. 63 Market St. building is still on the market. Erica wrote a letter and Karen has spoken with the Realtor to let him know of our continued interest. Realtor stated no one else has contacted him about the building.
 - 4. Erica, Karen, and Aviva provide regular updates to the DRI; including how the Co-op has dealt/is dealing with COVID-19 and about our business plan.
 - 5. Phil Paige offered; COVID has caused commercial property values to go down and residential property values to go up. There is an increase in out-of-state people moving to the North Country.
 - 6. Outreach and Fund-raising committees are sharing info and working together.
- V. Unfinished Business**
 - a. Erica reminded all board members to change the ownership of any Co-op-related google docs made in personal accounts TO the PotsdamCoop.
- VI. New Business**
 - a. (Andy & Jessie) September Local Food Event to be held the week of Sept. 20-26, 2020. Local food producers and their products will be highlighted; raffles for various local products; no open food samples will be allowed; Customers can get a 10% off voucher from North Country Now to redeem at the Co-op; the focus will be on signing up new members.
 - b. Andy would like to have a separate event to focus on the reduced membership fee and elimination of 2% discounts. Jessie wants to have alternative benefits to offer new members. The membership dues are set by the Board. The discounts are set by the GM. An agreement was made between Board and GM to eliminate both the fees and discounts at the same time. That deadline is set for Dec 31, 2020. Andy would like to extend the deadline till Feb or March. There was some disagreement from the board on this matter and it was decided to 'table' the discussion for now and pick it up via a group email discussion. Erica suggested that Andy and Jessie share a doc with the Board that outlines what they are asking for and the reasons.
- VII. Member Comments** (Only items of interest to the whole board, otherwise contact GM directly)
 - a. Katie mentioned that she heard of a complaint from a member about the large amount of plastic being used at the Coop. This is due to the on-going pandemic.
 - b. Andy reported that the donation "button" available on the online ordering form is being used by shoppers.
- VIII. Announcements**
 - a. (Karen) The DRI has resumed having meetings after covid-related shutdowns.
 - b. Next DRI meeting is August 19, 2020 at 6pm online. Board members are encouraged to listen in.
 - c. Our next monthly board meeting will be held __9/15/20 @ 6:00pm__
- IX. Open forum/Discussion topic:**
 - a.
- X. Adjournment**
 - a. There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at _7:35_ PM.

Megan Lane
 Secretary, Potsdam Food Co-op