

Board Meeting Minutes

January 21 2010

Attendance:

TJ, Eric, Suzanne, Jon (facilitator), Julia, Rob, Jackie, Joellen, Ron, Harry, Fern(notes)

Absent – Jessica (vacation)

Agenda:

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| Agenda Review/announcements/minutes/commitments review | 5 |
| Big Picture CAT Report with Adam | 10 |
| St Pete's Worker Support – presentation by Danielle | 10 |
| Expansion Report: TJ and Harry | 15 |
| Strategic Plan Update: TJ | 15 |
| Bag Update/discussion | 15 |
| Committee Reports | 10 |
| Committee Assignments | 5 |
| Next Mtg Agenda Items & facilitators, and Eval | 5 |

Announcements:

- Lots of birthdays so there are cupcakes
- Harry received a letter from a staff member who was very concerned about the decision about expansion, he will bring it back for further discussion

Commitments Review:

- Expansion coordinators will craft a message to staff and make flyers for the stores.
- Harry will email the BPC report

Meeting Notes 12.17.09 - *Consent*

Unexpected Guests

Jeff Motto is taking a social movement class at SPSCC; he is doing a field research log that observes an organization. He chose OFC to research, as he and his wife are WM, he will specifically looking at the organic food movement and the social movement. He has a copy of the field research log, and is interested in watching staff meetings and our process.

St Petes Worker Support

We represent 500 members (service workers, surgery techs) are in the middle of contract negotiations since may of 2009 and have yet to reach a compromise. They are asking to maintain the status quo of their benefits the hospital is making incredible profits, and are using the economy as a reason to cut benefits. The members are low paid workers, dependant health care (80% is covered now, but they are proposing a shift of the expense to the workers an average of 2,500 dollars a year per worker) the other issues are cuts to retirement, and fair labor practices that they continue to commit, (took place at the strike

on Nov 15th by threatening folks with job abandonment, surveillance on union gatherings, limit the access to the hospital. The RNS are coming up on expiration on contracts in March, and they are pushing for a settlement before then. She asking for the boards support for ST Pete workers, asking to write a letter to the BOD of St Petes, they are very conscious of their image, and with hopes the pressure from the community will influence the negotiations. She has brought copies of the letter, which has 500 signatures; they are looking for 1000 signatures and will publishing it when and if a two day strike happens. The other big issue is they have a union shop, (everyone is required to be part of the union with different levels of membership) they want to make union membership optional. To clarify she is looking for signatures as individuals for the ad, and also a letter from the Olympia Food Co-op BOD to the ST Petes BOD. Harry commits to drafting a letter to the ST Petes BOD

Proposal – The Olympia Food Co-op Board of Directors will add our signature to the St Pete’s Workers Ad.

Consent

Stand Asides – Julia and Suzanne

Big Picture CAT Report

Katherine is here to field questions.

What is the BPC?

A group that consists of a rep from each work group that focuses on the whole picture of the collective process.

What are you working on currently?

They are working with a sub committee of the board to work on organizational process and problems, as well as what came out of the staff forums. They are trouble shooting the current decision making process moving towards a departmental decision making. This would help with financial accountability. The work groups were broken up according to theme, which doesn’t seem to be working so well, BPC is working on full collective meetings and department meetings. A real synopsis is they are trying to discover the structure of the OFC which is quite murky, they delineated the current structure and mapped the flow of decision making, and from that are proposing changes to clarify and simplify collective process. Approx 5 to 7 years ago the decision making process was evaluated the decision was to decentralize, and give smaller groups the decision making power, but they have yet to achieve this. The timeline is that a proposal will be brought to the BOD by February, which is not that far off. The sub committee has already spoken to the wisdom of a staff feedback step, staff is aware that is happening, but it is happening beside them. BPC feels confident that the process will evolve. This will also clarify accountability as well as decision making.

Expansion Project

TJ emailed out a memo,

Expansion forums w/ the members have been scheduled in feb 17th and march 17th, which will be announced in the next newsletter.

These are informational forums with the expansion team, not the board.

Strategic Plan Update

TJ sent out a memo with updates. He sees that there are staff that are motivated by the plan and are on board, and others who aren't. It is moving forward and this is the first month that there are deadlines, and some are happening, which are great. Financial reports are being printed and shared. There are a bunch of things that are off track, the timelines were not realistic, our structure makes it hard to get some of the work done, decision making can clog a proposal down before it even reaches the staff. So a lot of the tasks are. TJ will be back next month. There are still things that have yet to even be begun, An accountability process will be in place in the next couple of months, which will hold staff accountable to the tasks.

- **Fern will talk to Virginia about the No Stack Proposal deferring to the MCAT and get back to TJ asap.**

Bag Update

Jayne sent an email, with concerns that charging for bags might reinforcing the idea that the co-op is hard to shop at, and would be quite cumbersome. Eco Planning had identified all of these concerns in the original discussions.

Proposal – Marie and the Ecological Planning Committee will continue to develop a proposal by March 1st that details how they will implement a bag fee to take steps toward educating members to bring bags, offer a low cost bag alternative, and implement other methods to reduce bag usage.

Consent

Stand Aside – ron and harry

Portland Training in March

The NCGA regional conference for board and general managers, Joellen found it incredibly helpful to discuss co-op operations. They also discuss policy governance, as well as board culture. They will be offering two workshops this year, on March 27th. Harry reminds that the CDS report recommended that the board look at its own structure. Interested Participants – Rob, Julia, Jackie, Jon, Suzanne, Ron, Eric

- **Joellen will email all interested with more information**
- **Harry will check the budget for funds**

Committee Reports

Member relations – has not met will meet in FEB

Personel – not sure where it stands

Finance – did not meet in January

Committee Assignments

Finance – Ron, Suzanne, Jon,

Personel - Jackie, Rob

Outreach- Julia, Joellen,

Eco Planning – Eric, Jessica

Newsletter - Julia,

Local Farm – Joellen, Rob

Standing Hiring- Jessica ,

Member Relations – Jackie,

Board BPC Sub Committee – Suzanne, Joellen, Jon, Harry

Consent

Next Meeting

Feb 18 th 2010 facilitator - Joellen

Commitments

- **Harry commits to drafting a letter to the ST Petes BOD**
- **Fern will talk to Virginia about the No Stack Proposal deferring to the MCAT and get back to TJ asap.**
- **Joellen will email all interested in the NCGA training with more details and the deadline for enrollment.**
- **Harry will check the budget for funds for NCGA training.**
- **Eric w/ the eco planning committee on a bag implementation proposal**

Attached Documents

Bag Update -

January 18, 2010

To: Board of Directors, OFC

From: Marie, for Ecological Planning Committee

Re: Charging for bags

As the staff representative for the Ecological Planning Committee, when your decision passed to charge for bags because of the member ballot, I agreed to take responsibility to help this process move forward through the Co-op.

There are a number of factors that impact this process moving forward easily.

- 1) One of these factors was regarding the intention of the proposal itself. The focus as I saw it, of the Eco Planning Committee was to address the use and potential charging for plastic bags. Yes, we also discussed charging for paper bags as a step toward hoping to change consumer behavior and use of bags in general, but we were wanting to get a feel for how members felt about potentially being charged for plastic bags.

This factor created low “buy-in” from Ecological Planning Committee members, and questions concerning whether we would want/need to move it forward from the FEMS. They wanted me to ask you to reconsider your decision of implementing the bag fee.

- 2) Message delivery.

There was major concern from the FEMS group about calling people who use paper bags having “wasteful ways.” This also created low acceptance from staff.

- 3) Providing low/no cost bag options

The FEMS felt strongly about having some sort of low or no cost option (99 cent bag even if from China/free bag with membership? Update address/membership- free bag?). There was concern that implementing a charge without this and some other changes would create a separation of people who don't want to shop at the co-op because they didn't bring their own bags, etc. Because there has been a great deal of resistance about the low cost alternative of bags from China from some staff and some Eco PC members, this will take a while to figure out, but I imagine, is not impossible.

There are other ideas such as:

- *Implement a 3 month voluntary bag fee to get members used to the idea of bringing their bags with them.
- *Making sure that there is no blame attached with whether or not individuals choose to donate to this
- *Bring in produce baskets that have a tare weight associated with them to help folks sort produce that can later be boxed or bagged altogether (would cut down on plastic use)
- *Give an incentive for bringing bags like – name entered each time in monthly drawing for a Co-op Gift Certificate.
- *Bag making nights/once/month put on by Eco pc

All in all, there are a lot of small changes that we could make as a store to educate and create awareness to encourage bag reuse & recycling before a big change like this. It could create a hurdle for folks to shop with us at a time where we definitely don't want that.

I am bringing this to you, to establish whether or not you would like me to keep moving forward with implementing a bag fee. I am willing to continue to move this process forward step by step if I am still being asked to do so by the Board.

Proposal 1: Do not implement a bag fee.

Proposal 2: Continue to have Marie and the Ecological Planning Committee take steps toward educating members to bring bags, bringing in a low cost bag alternative, and implement some other changes mentioned in this document, communicate this with the membership via newsletter and **do not implement a bag fee.**

Proposal 3: Continue to have Marie and the Ecological Planning Committee take steps toward educating members to bring bags, bringing in a low cost bag alternative, and implement some other changes mentioned in this document, communicate this with the membership via newsletter and **do implement a bag fee.**

Thank you for your work!

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