

## **Board Meeting Minutes**

**3.18.10**

**Attendance:** Suzanne, Jessica, Jon, Rob, Ron, Jackie, Julia, TJ, Harry, Fern (notes)

**Absent:** Eric, Joellen (vacation)

### **Agenda:**

Agenda Review/announcements/minutes/commitments review	5 min
Unexpected Guests	5 min
Expansion Report	10 min
Strategic Plan Update	15 min
BPC Report	10 min
Board/BPC subcommittee report	15 min
Committee Reports	30 min
Next Meeting Agenda/facilitators/ Eval	5 min

### **Announcements**

- Eric will not be here, he sent an email prior to the meeting
- Fern will not be at the next meeting she will arrange for a replacement note taker.

### **Minutes 2.18.10 - Consent**

**Stand Aside – Ron, Jessica**

### **Commitments Review**

- **Joellen is willing to coordinate the NCGA board Training tasks and will check in w/BPC to see if there are any other interested.** *yes*
- **TJ will post the new strategic plan update in the staff journals next week.** *yes*
- **Julia will frame the ‘board committees what do we want’ discussion** *yes*
- **Eric w/ the eco planning committee will work on a bag fee implementation proposal** *n/a*

### **Unexpected Guests**

Jim Shulruff, a staff member, has submitted an idea to the board (see attached document) This idea originated in Jims belief in doing as much good as possible for as many people as possible. He is interested in making food accessible to more people in our community by offering non profit food. He studied a paper called the ‘sacred food project’ which found that there are common ideas and values about food. The board received his document prior to the meeting today. There is a concern that this keeps some individuals away from the store, also the board wonders if the program could make enough money to support the labor hours. Jim hopes to bring this idea to Outreach/Education and to the Gondo work group to develop the idea. Has this been done in other places? Jim has not seen a good model for it. Jim asks the board if this is something that they are interested in pursuing as an organization. The board sees this as part of the ‘branding’ and marketing. They also identify a larger question; does the co-op want to pursue a food buying club program, in the philosophical sense? There are many questions and the

board does see potential, but they need more information and would like Jim to bring a detailed proposal to another meeting.

### **Expansion Update**

No major developments this month. There was another forum, and will continue to hold them monthly April 20<sup>th</sup> and May 13<sup>th</sup>: 7-9pm downtown. Not a lot of people are coming, but very interesting discussions have been happening. There have been about 17 people who have attended and only one was against expansion. There were questions about keeping both stores open, but we restated our intentions and goals. People are ready to help and get involved. Harry and TJ met with the Small Business Ctr. again with the new proforma, she raised a lot different points and questions that the Expansion Team had not thought of nor had heard from the bank, so a very worthy meeting. There is a meeting scheduled with Bill, who did the proforma, about some of those questions. They also met with two staff members, who had questions and concerns. The margin increase project is a bit behind schedule, and we may not see the changes in first and second quarter. There is a new organization in town Oly Local Foods, who rumor has it, are opening a co-located storefront on 4<sup>th</sup> ave. this spring.

### **Strategic Plan Update**

TJ sent out the report to all yesterday. Some things were accomplished this month. And TJ feels that this month 'the rubber hit the road.' Staff are still having trouble finding time to do the work. Harry reminds that there is a system in place, SASSY, which allows staff people to make time in their schedules, and some people 'know' how to make time and others who don't. It seems to be a matter of prioritizing strategic plan work over floor work. The work is falling to a small number of people that understand the work and have the capacity to take on. But the timelines are pushed back because these people are doing a lot of the tasks on the plan. The accountability plan may be here in July, but it was supposed to be here in March. Another concern is the marketing and branding piece, the plan has been shifted to build expertise in staff, this however is a change in the work plan. There is a general lack of communication that continues. The board would like to see what the accountability task force has. The board also has grave concerns about the accountability piece being further stalled, and sees that a lot of the strategic plan hinges upon this system. TJ reminds that staff agreed to the deadlines to these tasks. Katherine has read the document that they prepared, and shared her insights .The Accountability team has been working ferociously and has recently been troubleshooting a legal personnel component. They also are revising in hopes of getting full consent. She also noticed yesterday at the Blue Group meeting in which Schedule CAT presented a preliminary document on hiring part time workers and accountability became a large part of the discussion, this led her to believe that the support she saw amongst members in that meeting for that agenda item may translate to support for accountability. Board members were expecting it at this meeting and are wishing that there was more communication from the Accountability Task Force. Katherine feels very optimistic about the strategic plan being completed, even though timelines might not be on point, the work is getting done and expectations are changing. Perhaps a follow up process needs to be crafted, for deadlines that are not being met. Kendra is also interested in working on the Strategic Plan, and was approved to fill the job description of the

Strategic Plan Coordinator, and might be useful in getting the communication flowing between staff and the board on where these tasks lie. TJ will check in with Kendra and the BPC before writing the next report. Tj will put the new update in the staff journals.

### **BPC Report**

Department meetings will begin in April, and the BPC is busy scheduling and framing these meetings. MCAT is signing people up for the Scan Genius trainings in April, and is working on a new job description for a 'Signage Coordinator', a new 'special' ing program and a proposal on delivery processing. Finance CAT is crafting trainings on key financial indicators for staff and are working on presenting these at the first department meetings. Facilities has figured out how to get the produce cooler in the store and install is on the horizon, the eye wash stations are ordered, and they are working on added security.

### **Board/BPC subcommittee**

The last meeting was cancelled due to illnesses. But a few members met and worked through some of the identified issues of CATS and coordinators. The deadlines they set for themselves are 'crazy', but they are doing their best

### **Committee Reports**

**Member Relations** – have been working on the final versions of the 'Customer Bill of Rights' and 'Customer Service Guidelines'.

**Newsletter** - is working on bios for the board for the website and everyone should be on the look out for a message from Jason.

A board report is due for May 1<sup>st</sup>, *Rob will write it.*

***The schedule for the newsletter 'Board Report'***

*July – Jackie*

*Sept- Suzanne*

*Jan- Jessica*

*March – Harry*

*Nov – Jon*

### **Education and Outreach-**

Jayne gave an awesome presentation on marketing. They are also looking to hire a graphic designer to collaborate with. They are meeting more frequently as there is a lot of work to be done.

### **Finance committee –**

We have sales growth at both stores!

The credit card companies were right, and we are getting information on the charges and they are looking less than expected.

Year to date budget shows that we were under spent on labor, and over on medical.

We lost on paper about \$45,000

Lots of the balance sheet looks great, as we have no debt.

But our cash dropped, during a year in which we budgeted to increase cash for expansion.

Harry will adjust the proforma with this new information.

Finance committee has identified ways to evaluate our cash through out the year, to monitor current trends.

### **Commitments**

- **Jim will bring more information to the board about food buying clubs.**
- **Jon will give the committee charters to Jackie to scan**
- **TJ will post the strategic plan update in the staff journals**
- **Eric w/ the eco planning committee will work on a bag fee implementation**
- **Rob will write the 'Board Report for the next newsletter**

### **Next Meeting 4.15.10**

Expansion Update

Strategic Plan Check In

BPC Report

Board Committees – What do we want?

Committee Reports

### **\*\*Attached Documents**

#### **Unexpected Guests -**

03/16/2010

To: OFC BOD

From: Jim Shulruff

Re: Special Orders and Outreach

Whether or not OFC is ready to create a third store, I believe that right now there are opportunities for OFC to blossom within the movement of local food in Olympia and her surroundings. I have heard our community calling out to OFC to operate as a cooperative, not just another retail outlet. I also see successful food-centered activism across the country drawing attention to the success of establishments like OFC, and newer non-profits like Terra, Sustainable South Sound, and GRUB.

On the flip side, I've noticed the change in sales patterns during this economic downturn, and since the opening of Trader Joe's. So, in thinking about how to expand, or even survive as a store, I feel compelled to help define our role as a local justice-based cooperative, which sets us apart from other local retail food outlets. Focusing on ourselves as a Co-op broadens our possibilities for the ways in which we expand and partner, as well as the services we can provide.

The basis of the cooperative movement is people organizing themselves democratically to meet their common needs. The one benefit of membership that represents the ideals of the cooperative is the special order system. I would like to advertise the benefits of our special order system to non-profit, community-centered organizations, where people are already organizing to meet their common needs, such as Interfaith Works (IFW) and the Eastside Neighborhood Association (ENA).

I will encourage people, through these non-profit organizations, to put together “buying clubs” that will meet their common needs, and encourage them do their shopping through the Cooperative. I will encourage them to stick to packaged goods to avoid needing special equipment to split products. I will encourage them to split cases with each other to better access the bulk order discount and the non-profit membership discount.

I believe that by invigorating the special order system we will reduce member trips, reduce the foot traffic at the stores, reduce labor costs, educate more of the community about cooperatives, and save the members money. Plus, I see this as fulfilling many aspects of our mission statement. Specifically, parts a,b,c,d,e,g,and h.

My plan is that I approach IFW and the ENA with a presentation about OFC and the benefits of the Special Order system, and to encourage them to do their grocery purchasing at OFC.

Following your review and approval as the Board, I intend to bring this to the Outreach and Education Committee to seek further input and direction.

Thank you for your attention and time!

Jim Shulruff