



Board Meeting

5/17/2012

Attendance: Jayne K (facilitator), John R, Cezanne, Josh S, Eric Mapes, Rochelle Gause, Joe Webster, Fern (notes)

Absent: Erin Genia, Rob Richards

Agenda

Announcements	2 min
Mission Statement/ Commitments Review	3 min
Member Comment	5 min
BPC Report	5 min
Compañeros!	20 min
Expansion report	15 min
Co-op Conversation	15 min
Committee Reports	15 min
Approval of expenses reimbursement	5 min
Hershey's Letter	15 min
Retreat planning questions	20 min

Announcements

- Jayne joined 'LBA Woods', which is a group working to save land on the eastside that residents use as a recreational area.
- Rob is at a conference in Yakima and will not be attending tonight's meeting
- Harry will also not be with us tonight. He is working on payroll.

Commitments Review

- *Jayne will send out more information about the board retreat via email* COMPLETE

Member Comment

None

Minutes Review

April Board Minutes

Proposal:

The Board approves the April 2012 Minutes

Consent

Stand Aside - Cezanne

BPC Report

None

Compañeros from Cecosesola

The four delegates from the Cecosesola exchange attended and presented a slideshow. Introductions were made and Jayne explained that OFC's Board is elected by the membership, and receives no salary or income (except for the staff position.) This was of interest as there recently was a lot discussion at Cecosesola about how to best represent the community, as currently they have no board.

Jesus presented the slideshow. (Please note that all mistakes are likely due to our notetaking and translation skills, and not to the speakers! This is not word-for-word, but incorporates much that was said.)

'Thanks for your patience. It is a pleasure to talk about what we do. Building here and now the world we want. A world of integrated co-operatives called Cecosesola. We integrate workers, producers, other co-ops, and civil associations. We have more or less five economic activities. All activities are born of our necessities. We strengthen ourselves within the department of mutual aid. Through union comes strength.

There are 50 organizations integrated under Cecosesola. They started in 1977; at that time there were already co-ops in Barquisimeto.

We started our work from a social base with work students. One of the most interesting aspects that we engage in is education; it is the foundation of us as individuals and as a group. We can say that everything that happens is an educational experience that we share and reflect upon. To talk about transportation and Cecosesola is a nostalgic thing because we are no longer doing it. We can say that every activity that we have engaged in whether it begins or ends is a catalyst for new activities. 120 buses started in the 1970s and with this we began a dream of community participation. The community designed the bus routes. We were not providing a service for the community - rather we see ourselves as part of the community so we are serving ourselves. We transformed into a social movement that at one time touched the fiber of the state and because of political interests it generated a lot of social conflict. The rates for our community bus service were half the cost of the government and private companies. Because we were so controversial they said that we were fundraising for guerilla rebels. We are talking about transportation because it formed the foundation of our transformative process. This was the foundation of our activities. Within the conflict they confiscated the buses while we were still making payments

which caused Cecosesola to go bankrupt. Cecosesola gutted the buses of the benches and made partnerships with agricultural producers who were having problems with distribution. We began to deliver fresh produce to the outer limits of the city. From this we moved towards the creation of the 'ferias' (food markets). One activity died but it birthed another.

We can say that activities can change but the needs of the community stay the same. We found ourselves in the food market business. We wanted to do it in a different way. We were conscious of the fact that it would not be a profit-based activity. We were working in solidarity with the community. The ferias are a process of social integration. We integrate local producers thus benefiting the entire community. Our profits are not seen as just for the workers but rather as a community resource. Some of our more recent activities are household goods and appliances. This is a way of selling things that incorporate other co-ops farther away. This activity started as a buyers club. At that time we had been around 40 years and developed a credit union so this was an easier activity to integrate.

It's important to reiterate that all the activities are developed by community needs, we don't engage in activity to just make money.

Another activity is the mutual aid program, a community fund. Different producers and members give a monthly contribution to meet the needs of producers. The community matches that fund, by monthly contributions and a small percentage of sales from the ferias. If something happens to one of the producers, the fund can help compensate their loss. This is another way of integrating as a movement.

In developing health services we used the same criteria of community participation. We say our most recent activity, but it has been around for 12 years now. Other co-ops within Cecosesola have their own co-operative clinics. We saw the need to expand this and created the hospital ICCHS (Integral Central Co-op Health Services).

Cecosesola is 20,000 associates, 1,200 associated workers, and is comprised of 50 public and community associations. We have been active for 45 years with sales of 100 million dollars a year.

It's important that our activities are auto-financed (in other words, financed by us.)

Every job we do is rotated. It's important to have a collective learning process. We don't have a hierarchical structure, or a board. We ourselves are responsible for the business. We are in a permanent process of developing other co-ops. We have problems every day that are transformed into learning. It is a human process and develops our sense as individuals within our collective. There are a lot of things that we would like to share but we have limited time. For us it always a pleasure to share, we want to have a mutual learning process. This experience gives us the tools to reflect on the day to day. We end with an invitation a quote from Myron Rogers '**insert quote here**'. (John, can you get us this quote?)

It's not a job it's a lifestyle.

The world is asking for change, a more just economy. This community process signals that there is a way out and that we are creating a path out. There is a social movement in Olympia and the question is, is it able to germinate into integration? I can make a strong relation to the co-op movement in Olympia and Barquisimeto.

Some laws emerge and try to block and stop us, but we have had those moments of reflection with the law. With the new constitution we were able to develop a co-operative law and able to integrate this law into the legislation. That opened many more paths to allow us to do more on a national, regional and local level.”

Expansion

The Expansion Committee is continuing with the visioning process, in which they attended the last collective meetings. They are also compiling all old and new feedback as well as all past expansion studies and projects.

Draft of Expansion Vision:

It's a warm, sunny afternoon and the Co-op is buzzing with activity. Inside the store, members amble down the spacious aisles, selecting healthy and delicious food for themselves and their families. Friends meet and exchange greetings, while staff answer questions and help find items. Natural light pours through abundant windows making the heaped produce displays even more beautiful and appetizing, while the smell of a fresh menagerie of local baked goods and brewed coffee permeates and enchants. Two members have paused to read one of the plaques throughout the store that explain different green design elements or credit local craftspeople for their work, while educating about our mission “to make human effects on the earth positive and renewing”. The unique, accessible, ergonomic design makes staff and members comfortable as they interact, and the cleanliness of the store reflects our pride in the Co-op's space.

The office and classrooms are just as busy as the store. In one of the conveniently located meeting rooms, the Evolution Team is planning the next phase of Co-op expansion while next door the Outreach team is reviewing the final steps in the Olympia Food Co-op Institute's first “Consensus, Cooperative and Community-Building” seminar. Down the hall, Co-op class members are just getting out of a class about myco-remediation. The teacher and several students walk toward the demo garden below to look at on-site examples. The garden hums with color, art and life; a staff member has foregone the break room inside to take a restful lunch break in a covered, living-roof structure, while at another bench two mothers visit as their toddlers explore. Suddenly, a group of people spills from the office doors, laughing and joking: a volunteer work party has just finished a deep clean of the Co-op Community Processing Kitchen.

At the Westside store, the sunny weather has inspired much of the neighborhood to stop by for a snack or to pick up fresh produce for an impromptu lunch with friends. The new interior paint and flooring picks up the light from the windows and brightens the entire store, creating a feeling of expansiveness. Members pause and pass each other smoothly in the widened-aisles as they peruse the creatively designed displays. With the extended

retail space (when the offices moved to the Little House) sales are higher than they have been in years.

Across the parking lot, the doors to the Little House property are wide open, welcoming members into the garden to eat the snacks they just picked up and talk with the friends they ran into. The outdoor garden space at the Little House is particularly busy today as staff set up for a neighborhood bar-b-que and acoustic concert later in the evening, but members still find their way through the open doors of the garden center's retail nook, where they pick up seeds, soil, and chicken feed. A knowledgeable staff person at the counter listens as a member describes the problem she is having with her tomato plants, while another member browses through the local, organic, and heirloom seeds.

Meanwhile, in the upstairs room managers complete the day's orders and in the front break-room several staff take a restful break from the store's invigorating atmosphere or work on quiet projects

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Co-op Conversation

The Staff Engagement process took place this week. That information is being compiled along with the report from the community sessions. Upon completion this report will be posted in the stores and made available online. A larger presentation about the process and results will be presented at next month's Board meeting.

Committee Reports

Finance:

First quarter statement shows sales growth above projected budget and that is with the Westside store closure four days in January. Sales were 2.69% over budget resulting in a strong first quarter. Discounts were above budget, which makes sense 'cause people bought more stuff. Purchases are also above because they bought more stuff. Margin is higher. 4.4 % gross revenue above projected. We spent less than budgeted. We made \$55,000 above budget overall and cash has rebounded.

Proposal:

Add 275 hours to labor budget. Finance committee has reviewed. And the board approves for amendment for 2012 budget.

Consent

Stand Aside- Jayne

2012:

There is a flyer for the upcoming Co-op conference, which they have been publicizing. They are working with the city council to declare 2012 the Year of Co-operatives. Steven Buxbaum is writing a proclamation, which will be read this Tuesday at the city council meeting. We also have three minutes on the agenda to talk and introduce our compañeros from Cecosesola. We also may have an article in the business section in the Olympian highlighting the conference. Cecosesola folks have been on the radio with KAOS, and are giving a talk at an ESL class in Centralia. They also will visit Shelton. The committee is hoping to get the invite out to the Spanish speaking

population. The 2012 committee has also built a website, ran an ad in the Cooper Point Journal, submitted an article to Olympia Power and Light and a front page on Works in Progress. They are also trying to publicize on KBOO radio in Portland as well as emailing to the membership. They are concentrating on the 'totally free participation' message.

Outreach:

We have a new logo! The next newsletter will be partially redesigned. Next steps: t-shirts stickers, etc.

Approval of Expenses Reimbursement

The Board was asked to approve an expense reimbursement for Staff Members Alejandra and Emily as part of the 5-week exchange in Venezuela Jan 21- Feb 23 2012. The Finance Committee has reviewed this request and would like the Board to approve it, as there are not receipts for some of the expenses and the exchange rate has proven confusing. The exchange was under budget, the expenses are very minimal, and John R recommends that we approve the expenses.

Proposal:

The Board approves the Cecosesola Reimbursement Invoice 001.

Consent

Hershey's Letter

Email sent to the Board:

I am a campaigner at Global Exchange, international human rights and social justice organization and a member organization of the Raise the Bar Campaign. For two years we have been calling on Hershey to go Fair Trade in order to eliminate forced child labor from its cocoa products (www.RaiseTheBarHershey.org).

I am reaching out to your coop today to take part in a campaign we are organizing to make the Hershey Company a better corporate citizen. Specifically we are targeting them to stop using cocoa produced with child labor. [I am hoping you will sign on to a letter we are sending to Hershey.](#)

Recently Hershey announced it would work with Rainforest Alliance to certify its Bliss and Dagoba lines. While this is a good first step, Rainforest Alliance does not go nearly as far as Fair Trade to identify and remediate child labor. Additionally, we believe these product lines represent less than 1% of Hershey's sales and that Hershey may have made this change to take advantage of the "conscientious consumer", when the majority of the products it sells are produced with abusive child labor.

As a retailer of natural products, we hope your Coop will be interested in signing on to a letter to the Hershey Company letting them know it's not enough to remove child labor from their higher-end products alone. A number of NCGA members have already enthusiastically agreed to sign on to this letter.

*The text of the letter is attached. Please let me know if your Coop would be interested in signing on. We hope to get this letter to Hershey by the end of April and would need your sign-on by **Friday April 27th**. I realize this time frame is tight; let us know if you plan to write a separate letter and/or are interested in participating further in this campaign.*

Thank you so much for all you do in the world to promote green and healthy food.

Very best,
Jenny White
Global Exchange

ATTACHED LETTER BELOW

April XX, 2012

Dear Hershey Company Board of Directors,

As natural grocers and food coops, we share a passion with our customers for high quality products that help foster a socially just and environmentally sustainable society.

Our committed pursuit of sustainable and socially responsible products means we care deeply about links between the chocolate brands we offer and the horrific stories of forced child labor and human trafficking in the West African cocoa industry. As you know, in Cote d'Ivoire alone, the US State Department estimates that more than 109,000 children work in the cocoa industry under the "worst forms of child labor," and that some 10,000 or more are victims of human trafficking and enslavement.

We acknowledge Hershey's recent pledge to ethically source a small amount of the company's overall chocolate by working with Rainforest Alliance to certify your Dagoba and Bliss lines, however, this does not erase the fact that the vast majority of Hershey's profits are earned at the expense of children. Hershey's apparent unwillingness to commit to purchasing significant amounts of ethically sourced cocoa is puzzling considering that several of your major competitors have made already significant commitments to buy independently-certified, ethical cocoa.

Therefore, we have strong concerns about carrying any Hershey products, including your Dagoba and Scharffenberger lines, until the Hershey Company demonstrates its commitment to being a leader in the movement for independently-certified chocolate, which meets or goes beyond the standards of Fair Trade, instead of just barely keeping pace with its competitors.

We appeal to you and the Hershey Company's legacy of caring for disadvantaged children. Please consider our concerns so that we can continue to work together in the future to meet the growing demand for socially and environmentally responsible chocolate.

Sincerely,

List all signers (by Company/Organization name) alphabetically

Proposal:

The Olympia Food Co-op Board of Directors will sign the Hershey letter.

Consent

Stand Aside – Jayne

- *Jayne will reply to the Global Exchange in regards to OFC's support of the Hershey Letter*

Retreat planning questions

Jayne asked the Board whether and whom from staff would they like to attend for any part of the retreat?

The Board requested that BPC and the Member Engagement Committee attend the retreat for part, but not all, of it.

- *Jayne will send out a draft of the retreat agenda*

Commitments

- *Jayne will send out a draft of the retreat agenda*
- *Jayne will reply to the Global Exchange in regards to OFC's support of the Hershey Letter*

Next meeting

Co-op Conversation
Expansion