



Board Meeting Minutes

7/17/2011

Attendance

Cezanne L, Eric M (*Facilitator*), Josh S, John R, Rochelle G, Joe W Michelle W (*Staff Rep: fill in*), Fern M (*Board Observer: Notes*)

Absent: Erin G, Rob R, Jayne K

Agenda

Announcements
Mission/ Commitments
Member Comment
Hiring Committee
Conflict Resolution Store Closure
Expansion Update and feedback
MCAT Non GMO budget request
Committee Reports
NWCDC Support Letter
Strategic Plan Priorities; Staff feedback
Annual Meeting; create planning committee
Board Elections + Joe's seat

Announcements

- Jayne is on vacation and Michelle Weber is filling in for her as the staff rep.
- Harry is ill and Eric will be facilitating tonight
- Lake fair!

Commitments

- *Erin M will inquire if we have to draft a letter of support and where to send it*
- *Jayne will update the GMO page on the Website*

Member Comment

- Diana P attended as a Staff member to show support for the store closure proposal.
- St Pete's workers are in contract negotiations. This last arguing session the administration is coming with takeaways from health benefits and changes in sick leave. Union Workers are looking for support from the Co-op to put union flyers up at the stores, a letter of worker support, which will be sent to the CEO, and possible tabling at the stores. Three years ago the Co-op was instrumental in helping the union. They will email the sign to Jayne for review by the Board and consent via email.
- Joanne and Eppo attended representing 'Thurston Public Power Initiative'. They recently got enough signatures for the ballot! They also ask the Board to consider publicly showing support for Thurston Public Power Initiative. This work ties directly to the mission statement. They have three months until the vote and need support. They ask for a \$500 donation at least, or a substantial cash donation that will be used to print signs. They also would like to have an article in the newsletter and access to the mailing list. TPPI would also like to table. The endorsement and tabling request effective as soon as possible. Their main message to voters is that the initiative needs to pass so that a feasibility study can be conducted.

Hiring committee

Staff Member Emily presented as the Hiring facilitator on behalf of The Standing Hiring Committee, who are looking to revitalize the committee's work. Traditionally they have two Board representatives, the committee has been functioning for over a year with only one. Emily passed out the charter of the committee. They have been working on recruitment packets and brochures. There are two major changes on the horizon for the Hiring Committee and having another Board Rep would aid this process.

- *Eric volunteers to serve as the second rep for the Hiring Committee*

Conflict Resolution Store Closure

see attached Document #1

Staff Member Ami presented the Store Closure Proposal. Ami has served on the Conflict Resolution Committee and was asked to present this proposal by the Emergency Task Force. The Emergency Task Force has been addressing the recent theft. The proposal asks the Board for permission, per the bylaws, to close the store on Labor Day. Ami recommends closing all day labor day. Staff will coordinate the delivery, as it is a normal delivery day. We also would hire an outside facilitator to facilitate the circle. Ami adds that there have maybe been three retreats in all the years she has been here. Historically the Staff has always been committed to keeping the stores open as much as possible. Under these circumstances it is imperative to get staff together for a complete restorative process. Staff are required to attend as per the Accountability system and agreements.

John asked 'How would it be announced?'

Ami replied 'Send out a mass email, signage at the stores and registers, face book, press.' Ami will also try and get something in to the newsletter as the deadline has passed.

John would like it if there could be information available at the stores during the closure and a maybe even a coupon. Perhaps even volunteers at the stores to hand out coupons and a free apple and explain the closure.

- *Ami will work out details for the Labor Day store closure and bring any budgetary requests to the next Board meeting.*

Proposal:

The Board allows the stores to be closed on Labor Day 2012 for a Staff restorative circle.

CONSENT

The Board also requests a report about costs and an evaluation process for the Circle. Ami also requests that the Board take future, more regular store closures into consideration

Expansion Update and Feedback

The Expansion Committee presented a confidential summary document of prioritized themes and expansion options. The Committee will be bringing these themes to the next Staff Collective meetings for feedback. They also seek the Boards approval and feedback on the themes.

- Rochelle hopes that the idea for seeding co-ops does not get lost, as there was so much energy around this during the conference.
- Could it be stated in the document, that it is the goal eventually to extend services outside of retail stores?
- Incentive programs for Staff and Volunteers to not drive to the Westside store
- The 2012 committee or MRC could continue to have these discussions to then pass on to Expansion in the future.

MCAT Non GMO Budget request

Michelle authorized that the fee can come from the Trainings budget.

Committee Reports

Newsletter- new newsletter is in the proofing stage.

2012- have recently had the conference and subsequent evaluations. The last meeting was a follow up discussion of conclusions and where to go from here. Two kinds of issues emerged: how do we build more co-ops in the community and how do co-ops in the community relate to each other. There is a great need for education and awareness of co-ops. Northwest Cooperative Development Center is looking at developing a training program. Also the Co-op classes program will begin to offer more. They also identified the need to start looking to create a network of cooperatives. To start building a structure that is inclusive to all co-operatives. They are putting together a basic proposal to build the framework for this.

Local products, farms and producers- everything is continuing to be worked on.

Personnel- Needs a new board member. ***Cezanne volunteers.*** The new overtime labor policy has been in effect for two weeks. The Drug and alcohol policy has gone through all revisions and will be going to Collective meetings this month.

Member Relations- is busy developing agreements with customers and working members setting up restorative practices and negotiating contracts.

Finance- The audit came back and it went very well. There were the same complaints of the internal controls. Finance is ready to make some changes; they will add a fourth bookie and a back up, a second person looking at A/P, and are considering having more frequent audits. Our bylaws do state that we do them every three years. A yearly audit is required for state or grant funding. The Committee has also proposed the budget cycle to staff. They also will be posting all notes to Staff pages.

NWCDC Support Letter

see attached Document #2

See attached Document #2 for copy of letter of support for the Northwest Cooperative Development Center.

Proposal

The Olympia Food Co-op Board Of Directors sign the NWCDC Support Letter

CONSENT

With a minor change to attendance statistics which was 120 not 150.

Strategic Plan priorities: Staff feedback

The Strategic Plan Priorities generated at the recent Board Retreat were submitted to Staff for feedback via the journal or email. Feedback was compiled and given to the Board to review prior to the meeting.

The Board would like more feedback from Staff and more time to integrate feedback into the strategic goals. There is time allotted to gather feedback at the next round of collective meetings. The Board will have representatives attend the upcoming collective mtgs.

Eric: Tues 930-12, Rochelle: Tues 2-5, Cezanne: Weds 2-5.

The Board agrees that they would like the process to take more time to make it meaningful. The Board would also like to acknowledge that Staff are already doing a lot of this work. The Board also would like to reassure the Staff that there is no deadline for feedback and the process allows for ongoing engagement.

Extra questions:

Perhaps we need to schedule another work session outside of meeting to achieve refining the goals and incorporating staff feedback? How does the rest of this process go? Does BPC consent with the Board on the goals? How do these goals inform the budget process? Can we just earmark a strategic plan budget?

Annual Meeting: Create planning committee

- Create theme questions related to the strategic plan goals to engage membership.
- Online voting?!?

Annual Meeting Committee 2012- Cezanne, Rochelle, Fern, Eric

Annual Meeting
Saturday November 10TH 1PM- 4PM
Olympia Center

Board Elections + Joes seat

see attached Document #3

Recruitment Brainstorm

- Tabling
- Newsletter
- PSA on KAOS
- Thurston mason county volunteer board
- Oly blog

Proposal:

The Board will have 5 open spots for the upcoming 2012 election

Consent

Stand Aside - Michelle

- *Eric will set up a doodle poll for Board Recruitment tabling.*
- *Michelle will email election positions to the Newsletter ASAP*

Commitments

- *Ami will work out details for the Labor Day store closure and bring any budgetary requests to the next Board meeting.*
- *Eric will set up a doodle poll for Board Recruitment tabling.*
- *Michelle will email election positions to the Newsletter ASAP*

Attached Documents

DOCUMENT #1 – STORE CLOSURE PROPOSAL

To: The Board

7/6/2012

From: The Conflict Resolution Committee

Re: Possible Store Closure for an All Staff Restorative Circle

When our new accountability system was consented to, we officially recognized Restorative Practices as our sanctioned method for resolving organizational conflicts. We specifically addressed the possibility that occasionally this would create a need for the entire staff to meet together when an event was considered to be of a significant enough magnitude to warrant it:

“For incidents that impact large portions of the collective, or the collective as whole, we need to agree on a way to be able to meet together. The ACT feels that it is important to acknowledge that there are times when the whole staff is impacted by something and we need to prioritize the health of our collective over the (immediate) running of the business. These times will be few and far between, but unless we commit to finding a way to make this work, we won’t be fully committed to Restorative Practices, and we won’t be able to make them work for us. We all work sometimes on our days off, and we close the store early for inventory and floor night. There are two options that we see as feasible for how to do this:

- 1. Have conferences that need all or most of staff at odd hours (before open, after close.)*
- 2. Close the store for all or part of a day. We could minimize the impact of this by having a consistent day identified as a potential store close day, for instance only on Tuesday afternoons. This way we could plan for minimal impact in terms of deliveries, sales, and we could inform our membership that sometimes we have to close on that day.*

We are not proposing either of these at this time, but are including it to acknowledge that it is something that will have to be decided as we finalize our Restorative Practices systems.”

The Conflict Resolution Committee was tasked within the body of the ACT document to create a means for this to be logistically feasible, given the size of staff and the fact that we are open for such large portions of every day.

We worked with the Big Picture Cat to come up with such a method; our recommendation was sent out to all staff¹. In retrospect, it wasn't fully considered that an early store closure might need additional consent from the BOD on a case by case basis. Now the need to call such a meeting (Restorative Circle) to deal with the recent theft has been identified for the first time, and we are meeting with some resistance to the process and content of our original plan.

As you can see in the memo (footnote), we had proposed two time frames that we thought would have the least impact on operations; in addition to the closure issue, it is now coming up that the amount of time we proposed doesn't feel realistic for the participation of the full staff.

After discussing this and other theft-related items in several meetings of the Emergency Task Force, it seems that a longer time frame will be needed to have an all-staff circle. We have identified Labor Day as a day that might be appropriate. We would close, some of us could go in and handle the UNFI deliveries at both stores, and then meet starting around noon, go until dinner, then have a group-building potluck and a chance to spend time together as a full staff. Our committee would work to arrange a venue as well as an agenda, facilitation and childcare.

We do not take the closing of our stores lightly! However, trust amongst staff has been broken and morale is low. In the moment, we request your consent to close the stores so we can have this circle on Labor Day: a full, face-to-face discussion of the theft, the ability to process it as one body, and the chance to begin the work of rebuilding good feelings between us. This is timely and should you give your consent, we need to make plans and notify the membership very soon, so we are sending this ahead of your next meeting so you have a chance to fully consider our request.

¹ Memo to Staff re: Store Closure for Restorative Circles; please see attached

Additionally, we also ask that you take up this discussion in a more long term and in depth way. For many years, we have tried to establish times for group building activities and run into the same issue of the difficulties around closing the stores. We suggest that you consider helping us build in two store closures per year, of a half day each, so we can meet, discuss issues, and build and maintain group cohesiveness, in order to contribute to the health of the business and the collective. We could be open in the morning, close early, have our meeting and then a party. We feel that the membership would understand and support us in this as long as it happened predictably and they received a notice or reminder. Because we are no longer closing for inventory, this could be the perfect time to begin to integrate these closures into our organizational structure and schedule without it feeling excessive.

Ironically, we seem to be one of the few organizations that do not prioritize these kinds of retreats, and yet as a collectively managed business we have a particular need for them; especially now that we are such a large group, we can't afford to lose our cohesiveness and our personal accountability to each other. It could even be argued that an inside theft of this magnitude might not have happen if the social contract of our collective had not already weakened.

Thanks for your consideration, and please contact us if you have any questions or concerns or need further information.

In Cooperation,

The Conflict Resolution Committee: Ami, Becca, John and Kris

ATTACHED DOCUMENT #2 – NWDC SUPPORT LETTER

Olympia Food Co-op

Board of Directors

3111 Pacific Ave SE

Olympia, WA. 98501



360.357.1106 x17

July 19, 2012

Mario Villanueva

USDA Rural Development Program

1835 Black Lake Blvd. SW, Suite B

Olympia, WA 98512-5715

Dear Mr. Villanueva:

I write to provide you with the Olympia Food Co-op's wholehearted support for the NWCDC.

The Olympia Food Co-op is a natural foods store with two locations in Olympia that has provided access to excellent food for area residents, plus economic opportunities for local farmers and producers, for 35 years.

We have been pleased to partner with the NWCDC several times this year. Our most significant project together was the "Creating Cooperatives: Reclaiming or Economy and Livelihoods" conference this June. After sponsoring an employee exchange with the Venezuelan "super-cooperative" CECOSOLA in early 2012, we were joined by NWCDC participants and other community members to create and host a two-day regional conference on cooperative models. This free conference brought together over 150 community members to explore the role of cooperatives in supporting our local economy and providing for community needs. The conference included specific outreach to Latino communities in surrounding areas (Shelton, Centralia, etc.) by representatives from CECOSOLA and the Olympia-area, Latina-run Mijas co-operative, as well as Spanish translation throughout the conference itself. Other work with the NWCDC has included hiring one of NWCDC's experienced staff members to facilitate a temporary committee in need of additional assistance, and joining the steering committee of their "Cultivating Co-ops" conference this October.

With assistance from NWCDC, the Olympia Food Co-op plans to continue the community conversation about co-op start-ups begun at this year's conference. With high unemployment and economic instability, the Olympia Food Co-op sees a role for our organization in leveraging resources and community support to assist new cooperatives. As we begin to create concrete

plans to do so, we will rely upon NWCDC's expertise and knowledge to help us devise workable plans that will have a positive effect on our community's economy and food systems.

The NWCDC's big picture view and numerous connections with other cooperatives are truly invaluable to us as an organization and to our community as a whole.

Sincerely,

Joe Webster

President,

Olympia Food Co-op Board of Directors

ofcboard@olympiafood.coop

3111 Pacific Ave SE

Olympia, WA. 98501

ATTACHED DOCUMENT #3 BOARD ELECTIONS

We want YOU for the Co-op's Board of Directors!

By Jayne Kaszynski, staff

Admit it: you just imagined yourself – just for a moment – on the Co-op's Board. Indulge yourself for a moment and learn what being on the Board is actually about. We're opening up five positions this year and are searching for applicants that can help lead the Co-op through the challenges and opportunities we face in expanding, improving food security in our region, supporting local farmers and producers, running an extensive volunteer program, and all of the ins and outs of collectivism and consensus.

As a Board member, you will be joined by nine other Board members, 84 staff members, roughly 300 volunteers, and thousands of members and shoppers. You'll be overseeing the overall trajectory and vision of the entire organization, and doing more in-depth work with the committees that you join. Each Board member attends a monthly Board meeting (currently 6:30-9:30 on the third Thursday of each month) and joins two to three committees in areas of your interest.

Committees are made up of Board, staff, and volunteer members and include: Outreach and Education; Member Relations; Finance; Hiring; Local Farms, Products and Producers; Ecological Planning; Personnel; and the Newsletter. We also have temporary committees that form to deal with specific opportunities, for instance: Expansion, or the International Year of the Co-op committee. Committees are where you get your hands dirty, helping to create on-the-ground policies and plans in partnership with staff members.

Board members are most successful when they arrive with a passion for the Co-op, a willingness to learn, good interpersonal and communication skills, and the ability to dedicate 10-20 hours per month on Co-op activities. Special skills and experience are always welcome, especially in areas of financial and business expertise, farming and food, or co-operatives. However, anyone with passion, time, and willingness to learn can be a great Board member, and we welcome and encourage applications from all people, ages, and backgrounds.

Applications are due September 10th, and elections run from October 15 through November 15. For more information, please see the full information sheet at www.olympiafood.coop. You can contact Fern at boardapplication@olympiafood.coop with any additional questions, to request an accommodation, or just to turn your application in.

From all of us on the Board and at the Co-op, we look forward to working with you!

Board of Directors Application



Please answer the following questions and email them, along with a current digital photograph of yourself, to boardapplication@olympiafood.coop.

There is a strict, combined 500word limit to your responses below.

- 1. NAME:
EMAIL ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBERS:**

- 2. Why do you want to be on the Co-op Board of Directors?**

- 3. What general abilities would you bring to the Board? What specific abilities and experiences would you offer to help provide direction in dealing with the Co-op's challenges?**

- 4. What do you see as current strengths of the Co-op that you would like to see maintained? What would you like to see changed?**

- 5. What vision do you have for the Co-op for the next five years?**

- 6. Other comments**

***Applications will only be accepted by email at boardapplication@olympiafood.coop, unless a reasonable accommodation is needed and requested.**

Consent Out of Meeting

This proposal is for the endorsement of the public power initiative (including allowing supportive signs at the stores, tabling, etc.) and allowing them to use our mailing list.