

Belfast Co-op Board meeting — June 26, 2008, minutes; submitted by Kip Penney
Approved at the July 24, 2008, board meeting. *Decisions are in bold.*

PRESENT: Allen Ginsberg, Debbi Lasky, Susan Lachlan, Mike Marino, Bindy Pendleton, Kip Penney, Jerry Savitz, Zafra Whitcomb, Scott Giroux, Peri Tobin. Staff: Goldy Goldstein, Erica Buswell, Pepper Bush. Other members: Liz Townsend. Absent: Richard Brown, Kate Harris, Wayne Kraeger, Paul Sheridan, Karen Aveni.

FACILITATOR: Goldy; scribe: Kip; timekeeper: Debbi; vibewatcher: Jerry.
The agenda was rearranged a bit to accommodate various attendees time constraints and to add an item.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Erica announced that there is a Board of Directors listserv on the Co-op Grocers Information Network (CGIN) website that we could acquire use of for \$100 each year in addition to our current dues, if BOD would like to budget that expense. Board would need to decide before next year's budget is passed. Susan passed around board member list and committee members list to ask for changes in addresses/info and committee make-up.

MINUTES: *May 22 minutes were adopted (6 YES, 0 NO, 2 ABSTAIN)* without any corrections or additions (or changes for the website posting).

ELECTIONS RESULTS: After last month's BOD meeting, staff and board members spent time reminding members at co-op cash registers to vote for the board of directors. Paul's written report said that the co-op has 2476 members as of June 18, 2008. Of 251 valid ballots, from 260 submitted, each of the candidates were re-elected to the board, each receiving more than 10% of the valid votes cast, Allen Ginsberg received 207 votes, Bindy Pendleton 223, and Jerry Savitz 183. Also, Paul will make recommendations in the fall when the Elections Committee next meets to improve the election process and help the co-op election go more smoothly and to rid ourselves of the lack-of-quorum too-long-stretched-out election period. See more details in the report from Paul Sheridan and Karen Gleeson.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: *Nominations were made and accepted for President: Bindy Pendleton, Vice President: Debbi Lasky, Secretary: Susan Lachlan, Treasurer: Allen Ginsberg. The slate was approved by a vote of 10 YES, 0 NO, 0 ABSTENTIONS.* The board appointed position of SCRIBE was not filled because no one came forward to be a co-scribe with Paul S., who had asked that someone serve as such with him. People are to consider the position and we will revisit the scribe job next month.

GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT: Comments, questions and suggestions were addressed regarding the written report dated 6/26/08.

1) Erica said the peanut allergy reaction at the cash registers raised by a member and supporters has been resolved to everyone's satisfaction, by having 3 of 4 registers be peanut-free.

2) To the comment that the deli has been overwhelmed during Sunday brunch, many suggestions were made to help alleviate the congestion and worker stress. The GMT and appropriate staff will work on solutions.

3) Re: the Customer Appreciation Day, Pepper reported that although sales were \$1000 greater on that day compared to a similar summer Saturday, because we increase our labor (to staff the store inside and out) as well as day-related expenses (entertainment and promotion). we actually see a \$4000 "reduced bottom line" for the day and barely "break even". To the suggestion that perhaps we should drop (or sharply curtail) the event due to the additional expenses and to ease summer stall workload, numerous people and especially Goldy spoke in favor of the event as an excellent co-op

promotion and as a boon to community relations. In addition, vendors, entertainers, members and other customers often thank the co-op workers for putting on the day. It was reiterated that board members are needed to help make the day a success this August 16, so sign up now for a shift.

MEMBER COMMENTS:

1) Liz Townsend spoke that we please allow members to have their own recycled containers refilled in the deli to reduce the use of plastic in the co-op. Although for awhile members and customers were not allowed to do so, for “legal health” reasons, we have “helped” the state clarify the policy so people may once again bring in their own containers to have them filled by deli workers (and to fill your own bulk items). It’s tricky for staff because, health-legalistically, they may not touch the dispensing utensil to the individual’s container while filling it due to possible contamination by packages not guaranteed to be sterile. GMT will re-announce to staff that it is once again ok to let members use their own containers in the deli.

2) Letters to the board by members re: the peanut allergy producing items being displayed at the cash registers were brought up by Kip. They were referred to the Community Interaction Committee for response to the individuals, hoping that their concerns had been met and noting that the board is looking at the Issue. See above #1 In the GMT report.

DELI COMMITTEE: Jerry reported that, after the deli’s successful reset of coolers and counters, the DC will not meet again until September, but that it will then look at how the Deli and Meat and Cheese departments might become more integrated.

MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE: MOC met once during the month with the GMT which expressed that it wants more direction from the board regarding long term planning. For example, the board needs to look at the Mission Statement and set up with the GMT goals to help enact that founding Statement. Zafra mentioned that CGIN has a discussion on its website re: how the GMT and BOD can follow through on such topics. MOC will next meet with the GMT on Tuesday, July 22.

RECYCLING PLASTICS: HOW CAN WE BE MORE INVOLVED? Discussion included a number of ideas: 1) Talk to Roger Lee of the City Council’s Climate Change Committee which has met at least once; 2) Can Belfast, either the co-op or the city, sign up to be a site affiliated with Eco-Maine, an organization in Portland. Eco-Maine takes a lot more varieties of plastics from homeowners. (So If you’re going to Portland, save ‘em and take ‘em.) The board set up a committee. Volunteers: Bindy, Susan, Peri, Zafra and member Liz Townsend to pursue our options. 3) Zafra: In our everyday choices of packaging. we all need to reduce our use on the “upstream side” of the situation: don’t just think of it as recycling, it’s also important to reduce the use. Numerous municipal efforts have been successful, especially In the Pacific NW. 4) The co-op could push itself to reduce the use of plastics in house, couldn’t it/we?

FINANCE COMMITTEE: 1) Pepper reported that the third quarter inventory, a “paper and electronic” one will take place Monday, June 30. Also, that when beginning the budget process for next year. he noted that projecting 5% growth will make it tough to meet the GMT’s plan to change to a Pay for Performance wage package for all staff. 10% growth would handle the requirements of such a system much better, but that that seems to be a rather more out-on-a-limb projection than he would like to count on. 2) Re: patronage dividends, Allen said there are two types we need to address, a) old ones from years ago that are “un-cashed” or never claimed, about which we need to talk to our accountant: and b) our current Patronage Dividend system: Should we change it to become a “full” system with all the particulars that it entails. FC will look into that with others in the co-op community and report back. 3) We did not discuss the Pay for Performance proposal and need to hear more about it during the budget approval process.

CHARITABLE GIVING REPORT: Goldy reported that the latest information was not in yet and we

postponed the topic until July meeting.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: RETREAT/TRAINING IDEAS: 1) Scott handed out a questionnaire to be-filled out and handed back in "soon" (by June 30 please). See it to fill out. 2) Role of staff reps as members of the board. we need to finalize a policy to clarify the confusion (or potential confusion) among staff and board. See Pen's May 7 summary of her information gathering of staff. Who do staff reps represent? Are they simply advocates for the "staff position" in board proceedings? Are they full members of the board representing the interests of the full member ship? Are there any discussions or decisions that they may not take part in? It was noted that we settled the Issue re: staff Input at General managers' review. but that we need to finish the discussion to put this one behind us In policy form. A proposal will be made at the Sept meeting by Debbi and Zafra and, If they need help, the Bylaws Committee.

BOARD RECORDKEEPING: The board needs to post minutes in a timely fashion and needs to file another copy somewhere. Debbi will post minutes and is recreating the bylaws-invoked member Information place once renovations are finished at the front of the store.

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: 1) Scott reported that Richard Gray Is installing some new adjustable grocery shelving prototypes and that he (Scott) and Wayne will continue their volunteer work finishing the General Merchandise section late in Oct. or in Nov. 2) Goldy reported the parking lot was striped June 25 and that filling holes with estimated 2 yards of tar has been hampered By continued too-wet. weather and will be completed when there is a stretch of drying days. 3) Survey on co-op's south side border with Mr. Morrison is coming and the architect, lawyer and surveyor are to meet with Morrison to secure that we have a firm border. Allen questioned that such a thing had not been budgeted at all. Rip said the MOC had set it as one of the goals for Goldy to accomplish as part of his next (current) year work. The MOC had not planned that there would be financial issues and needs to work out the details with Goldy, the Ft and the budget for next year, if not for this year and will report back.

2009 BUSINESS PLAN & LONG RANGE PLANNING: Erica and the GMT asked for feedback re: the initial draft for 2009. Susan spoke of desire to see the co-op compost garbage to give it away or sell. Rip wondered if the co-op could look into developing a "carbon neutral plan". Susan also asked that we look into how we could reduce our reliance on public utilities and energy by reducing our need and/or generating our own. Erica noted that we need to look at the goals of the business plan and that those who have spoken to her re: details (before tonight) have reiterated what the staff had already come up with. It was noted that she should take that as that she and the GMT were on the right track and to proceed Also, the budget process will affect the business plan for 2009. We did not really get into the discussion of how to create or meet long range goals or plans.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: Held a "new member orientation" in June but that the turnout of zero new members was disappointing, especially after the committee had created materials and an introduction for "newbies."

HOMEWORK: Board Development survey back to Paul by June 30. Get your address/contact info changes and committee "assignments" AND agenda topics to Susan by July 18. Plan to choose yourself or someone else to be co-scribe with Paul by the next meeting. Facilitator for July 24 will be Susan. Study up on Pay-for-Performance and bring questions and feedback. First budget reading will be at the August 28 meeting so submit budget line item requests to Pepper by Aug.16, Customer Appreciation Day. Sign up for a shift for that Cust. App. Day.

NEXT MEETING; Thursday July 24, 6:30pm at Waterfall Arts, Susan facilitating.

