

BELFAST CO-OP BOARD MEETING - Sept. 22, 2011 – FINAL, for web.

PRESENT: Russ Barber, Jeanne Gail, Wayne Kraeger, Debbi Lasky, Paul Nyren, Bindy Pendleton, Kip Penney, Jerry Savitz, Paul Sheridan, Zafra Whitcomb ABSENT: Phil Prince. STAFF: Chris Grigsby, Joe Jordan, Mylisa Vowles. MEMBER: Susan Guthrie.

FACILITATOR: Bindy Scribe: Paul S. Timekeeper: Paul N. Vibewatcher: Russ

ANNOUNCEMENTS: There will again be trains going to Common Ground fair, from both Thorndike and Unity, starting at 8:30 AM each day, approx. every 15-20 minutes. Also at Common Ground, four of the five co-op food stores in Maine will be working and represented at the Cooperative Maine table. If you are at the fair, please stop by and say hello. The board received a vote of thanks from the group of staff coordinating Customer Appreciation Day; we had probably 100% involvement of the board in one or another parts of the event. Zafra will be out of town Oct. 4-7 at a Co-op IT managers' conference in Minnesota—safe travels!

MINUTES: from August 25, 2011 were accepted, for print and web versions, 9 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain, with this change: under GMT Report, replace “In October we will discourage credit card purchases under \$10” with: “...will encourage use of cash and gift cards for smaller purchases.”

MEMBER COMMENTS: Member Susan Guthrie spoke of a fundraising endeavor for a program of family-to family assistance, that is being coordinated by the Institute for Life-Long Learning, as the fiscal agent. The first family to be helped is a co-op member with a child that needs multiple surgeries. Question was, could this family be a recipient for a “1% donation day?” This type of request is handled by the staff's Charitable Giving committee, with board advisement. Suggestions: as the recipients of 1% donations have been set through January, could one of those be asked to switch months with this cause? Could a pledge of about 50% of the usual proceeds from a 1% day be made now, with balance to follow after the actual date? Individuals could also donate now.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT TEAM: written report received. Questions, comments:

-clarification: public WiFi is not yet installed in the café area. Reminder that a comment from the Annual Meeting that our café is too small during some times in the year—why would we want to cram more people into there? It is not clear that WiFi would add to the numbers of people occupying the café, and it is not clear that it would add or subtract to café sales. If we did it this, would be as a service to members and customers. A group of members has come to the board to request this, and we assured them we would try to get this done. Work needed should be relatively easy; the system would need to be secure and a method established for limiting access time (i.e., not during 11 AM to 2 PM, lunch hours). About 10 hours labor have been invested for research; we have a quote of about \$200 for electrical work. Grand total estimated to be \$400-900. Still to do would be any policy development.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: written and chart reports received. No news on changing of fiscal year. If it requires a bylaw change, time is running short. No consensus on the committee as to end of discussion; will review. Staff costs for work done on board committees are now included in the new budget, draft was received. Last year's budget was prepared with an across-the-board increase, and was not as accurate as could be. This budget has been revised line by line. Hope is for a profit, and thus a patronage dividend. Far less equipment and project costs are anticipated in the coming year. We will work on not repeating that. Committee and GMT are now keeping track of labor costs every two weeks. A big chunk of our labor overcosts last year occurred before our busy season, due to projects. Also, by paying attention to labor costs as affected by the seasonality of the co-op's business. The board stipends are now under member discounts. Question: is 5% additional in budget line sufficient for all board operations, including education and travel to conferences? Debbi will do research on a suggestion to add \$2500 to the board line, specifically to cover cost of CCMA

conference, without NCGA membership. Proposed, that we move into the new fiscal year based upon this draft budget, the final one to be approved in October, accepted 10 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: The draft Political Action Policy was amended. Added were: "on behalf of the co-op" to the first line, and add "political" in front of parties on the last line. Also needed was a check for the correct latest version of the Mission Statement; accepted 10 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain. The November 5th retreat location has been found; will need to assign a notetaker. Homework: those who want, meet at Debbi's for a pre-pre-retreat wood-stacking party, TBA.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: noted additional to the written report, CAD is not intended to be a money-maker, but a community event. Attempt is to keep down labor costs by using member volunteers. The GM report has accurate figures as break-even, which is better than years past. The cost of the event was about \$3000 for labor, from a total of about \$8000. We had eight new members sign up, also much better than in years past.

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE: action item was to create a working group for Annual Meeting planning: Mylisa and Jeanne (Membership), Paul S. (Elections), Jerry (volunteers), Bindy (convener). This group will try to meet before next board meeting; should get a place on the agenda. Please return the form in tonight's packet: "Review of Retreat Goals from Jan. 2011" to Zafra by Oct. 18, for use in planning Nov. 5th. Each committee is asked to discuss and bring a draft committee charter, towards helping us avoid "mission creep." Committee meetings monthly times are now posted on co-op website.

REVIEW AND HOMEWORK: please e-mail Bindy with updated committee contact numbers.

Appreciated was the written as well as chart reports from Finance. Homework:

- Debbi will do research on suggestion: to add \$2500 to budget line "Board Travel/meals/education" as to approximate cost for one person to attend CCMA w/o NCGA membership
- meet at Debbi's for a pre-pre-retreat planning and wood stacking.
- add to agenda: Working Group for the Annual Meeting
- deadline of Oct. 18 to return "Review of Jan 2011 Retreat Goals"
- each committee to discuss and bring to meeting a draft "charter" aimed at helping to avoid "mission creep"
- assign 20 minutes to next agenda for Finance Committee for adoption of budget
- report back from GMT on member request re charitable giving, as per Susan Guthrie

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, October 27, 2011, at Waterfall Arts. Kip to facilitate and bring board box, Bindy and Russ to coordinate snacks.