

BELFAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES, March 28, 2013

PRESENT: Jeanne Gail, Betsy Garrold, Chris Groden, Jean Lenderking, Paul Nyren, Bindy Pendleton, Kip Penney, Meg Peterson, Phil Prince, Janis Stone, Zafra Whitcomb

GENERAL MANAGEMENT TEAM (GMT) MEMBERS: Chris Grigsby, Joe Jordan, Mylisa Vowles

MEMBERS: Gail Clark, Jane Awbrey

ABSENT: Debbi Lasky, Jerry Savitz, Ron Braybrook, Betsy Garrold, Cindy Canavan

FACILITATOR: Kip; TIME-KEEPER: Zafra; VIBE-WATCHER: Bindy

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. The native plant sale with Rebel Hill Farm is on until pick-up day, May 11;
2. Troy Howard Middle School's art show, "Tomatoes", is in the Deli for March.

CONSENT AGENDA: Accepted, as amended, by consensus.

MEMBER COMMENTS: Bindy received two letters: Thanks from Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition for the 3rd Thursday Donation Day contribution; and positive remarks about the Co-op from Helen Hughes, with the advice that we use caution in our expansion plans. There were queries about the wi-fi. Zafra remarked that it is a work in progress in limbo currently due to technical difficulties

We received positive input from a couple who moved to Belfast because of the Co-op community. Chris Groden announced the new website for the to be refurbished Opera House: <OurOwnOperaHouseBelfast.com> bearing the acronym OOH Belfast.

ELECTION AND NOMINATION COMMITTEE: Thanks to all who helped encourage members to vote, the election has concluded. The Election Committee proposes that we accept the results of the election as tallied, moved, seconded, and accepted by consensus. Note that the staff election for their representative to the Board will be held next week. Jane Awbrey is the only candidate.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: As reported in their written report, the Co-op's proposal to the City to manage Belfast's City Park food concession awaits City Council's decision on April 16.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: The committee submitted information verbally about the Co-op's wage structure, in the context of living wage. According to studies by MIT in 2012, and the State of Maine in 2010, the basic living wage for Waldo County is \$9.19 and \$10.50 per hour, respectively, rising with family size. Our wage starts at \$9, going up to \$9.50 after 90 days. Full time is >32 hours a week. Benefits include Health Insurance, IRA, employee discount, and reward, for eligible employees who participate. Our benefits amount to 4% of total payroll. Those at other Northeast co-ops range from 1 to 3%. We have 70 employees, 40 of them full time, 54 full time equivalent, and 30 part-time. Our ratio of pay from the lowest to the highest paid is 2:1, or if non-wage compensation is included, about 3:1. Our goal is to come up with a target wage proposal that would raise the lower wage more and the higher wage less.

On reciprocal discounts with other local Co-ops, this will be addressed later after more communication with Good Tern in Rockland and the Blue Hill Co-op.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: See material reported in consent agenda. On the topic of staff and GMS attending and convening Board committees; staff attending meetings will clock in using the special job code if they are working during the time of the meeting; if they are not working, they will not clock in.

On group note-taking: we urge committees to try it at their own meetings for a couple of months.

PURCHASING POLICY COMMITTEE: No meeting or report. Chris Grigsby reports that we have signed the letter supporting the Maine Legislature GM labeling bill (LD 718), and we are still in the process of deciding about contributing financially.

Chris Groden asks if we should consider boycotting all of the companies on the list of those carrying GMO food in some of their products, as mentioned in the California Prop 37. In discussion it was observed that this is not practical since it would amount to about 30% of our grocery products. The natural foods industry is trending toward GMO labeling, since both Whole Foods and Trader Joe's have announced that they will demand GMO labeling

by 2015. NCGA is also hinting about a similar move for their suppliers. GMO vs. non-GMO is already accessible for some items by their PLU numbers.

ANNUAL MEETING COMMITTEE: For the critique of the AM, Peri Tobin is working on tallying the question and response cards from attending members.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: The committee is still awaiting questions from Committees for the member survey.

The quarterly member-Board gatherings need to be scheduled. The Finance Committee has expressed interest in the next one.

MEETING REVIEW: We are doing well on consent agenda, have advised Committees to practice group note-taking/summarizing, and have minimally begun consensus decision making.

HOMEWORK:

Finance: more on living wage, reciprocal co-op discounts, and quarterly gathering;
Board Development: plan to elect officers next meeting; committee assignments; Deb Burwell to attend next BOD meeting; new Director orientation;
Membership: feedback from Annual Meeting;
All Committees: send questions for member survey to Mylisa;
Newsletter content: Annual Meeting wrap-up and election results;
Election: all Directors send suggestions for improvement to Phil.

Next Meeting: April 25th. Facilitator and Boxer: Phil; Snacker: Chris Groden.

End of minutes. Submitted by Jeanne Gail, Scribe