

BELFAST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES, April 25, 2013

PRESENT: Jane Awbrey, Cindy Conavan, Ron Braybrook, Jeanne Gail, Betsy Garrold, Chris Groden, Debbi Lasky, Jean Lenderking, Paul Nyren, Bindy Pendleton, Kip Penney, Meg Peterson, Phil Prince, Jerry Savitz, Janis Stone, Zafra Whitcomb

ABSENT: None

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

GUESTS: Deb Burwell

FACILITATOR: Phil; TIME-KEEPER: Bindy; VIBE-WATCHER: Debbi

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Jane Haskell is offering a "Strengthening Your Facilitation Skills" workshop beginning Tuesday, April 31, 9am-1pm

- * FEDCO Tree and surplus sales: May 3-4 for pre-order pick-up, and May 10-11 for all, both Friday and Saturday 9am-3pm;
- * local parsnips are available at the Co-op;
- * Chris testified for the GMO labeling bill in Augusta;
- * the Maine Community Health Options COOP presented at the Waldo Organic Growers meeting, at MOGFA Wednesday, April 24 at 6pm. Jeanne Gail gave a brief recap of the meeting.
- * NCGA audit of the store merchandising and layout is scheduled for the end of May.

MEMBER COMMENTS:

- * A member prefers that we price at the even dollar, rather than \$x.99;
- * A staff/member expressed concern that the Deli buys their chicken from a conventional factory farm owned by the Koch Brothers. Chris corrected the ownership as Koch Foods;
- * A member complained that they don't know who the Board of Directors are;
- * it was pointed out that we purchase Maine-ly Poultry products at the same retail price that they sell at the Farmers Market; mark it up higher;
- * A member wanted more upper-end wine at the wine-tasting;
- * complaint that there are not enough seats in the Deli Cafe, especially at busy times, due to people "parking themselves" there.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Selected out: Finance Committee, and CAD section in General Management Team report.
Consent Agenda accepted by consensus.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

1. Elections. It was moved and seconded to accept the slate of the present officers. President: Bindy Pendleton, Vice Presidents: Kip Penney and Debbi Lasky, Secretary: Phil Prince, Treasurer: Jerry Savitz. This slate was accepted by consensus.
2. The Committee assignment list still needs some revision since there are some committees with too few, and some with many members. Elections and Nominations, for example, needs more members. The Purchasing Policy Committee has not met, and may need a new convener. Contact Bindy.
3. A reminder that the NCGA is sponsoring a training called Cooperative Board Leadership-101, taught by the CDS Consulting Co-op group, in Damariscotta on Saturday, May 11. This will be part of the orientation of our new directors, but will also benefit all directors, and build relationships with area food co-ops. RSVP to Zafra by email.
4. The contact list may have some incorrect e-mails: please check your entry.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

1. Note that with the consent agenda, we don't have a process to edit out sensitive financial or personnel information for the web version of the minutes and Committee reports. It is suggested that we institute a process for easy redaction of this data.
2. A special confidential section on the website for the Board would also be helpful.
3. On finances in particular: our income, in all depts except dairy, and customer numbers have slowed for the past two months. This is a broad trend, likely related to higher payroll taxes, sequestration, colder winter, etc. The Finance Committee continues to meet on the third Tuesday at 3pm, and is open to all.
4. On reciprocal discounts: no action; we still honor all co-ops in Maine.
5. On living wage, action postponed, if interested, come to Committee meeting May 21.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT TEAM:

1. The Co-op Grill opens in City Park on May 12, Mothers Day, open until Sept 8.
2. The CAD (now called Community Appreciation Day) Planning Committee will have their first meeting Thursday, May 16 at 1pm in the basement conference room. A member of the Board Membership Committee should attend.

ELECTION AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE: Phil has written up suggestions for improvement of the election process, which has been sent by email.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: We didn't receive any questions for the member survey. Questions should be actionable and related to specific Committee work. Committees - please send Mylisa your questions by the next Committee meeting, May 7, or by the next Board meeting.

DEB BURWELL'S FEEDBACK: Board meeting process consultant's comments. What went well: evident progress in fits and starts, participation, 100% attendance. New members' comments: agenda and packet are confusing; need for a strategic business plan; Board seems overwhelmed by process rather than action and decision-making.

Suggestions:

- * process to refer member comments to Committees efficiently;
- * Committee reports should contain work done and recommendations or work done and options for Board decision/actions;
- * Board Packet needs a little work on presentation for clarity;
- * we need a meeting room with better acoustics and ventilation;
- * agenda planner needs input from Committees re: time, with goal of fewer short reports and more substance;
- * suggest we join Maine nonprofits for help on how to do surveys;
- * we need to give the GMs more direction to generate a marketing strategy.

MEETING REVIEW: See above

NEXT MEETING: May 23. Facilitator: Phil; Snacker: _____ (potluck)

HOMEWORK:

- * A director specific section on the website;
- * Finance Committee: reciprocal discount;
- * Membership is expecting questions for the member survey;
- * Board Development to work on the next agenda;
- * Committee Conveners - inform Zafra of your regular meeting times for the website.

END OF MINUTES Submitted by Jeanne Gail, Scribe