

Belfast Co-op Board of Directors Meeting Minutes. February 26, 2014

PRESENT: Jane Awbrey, Jeanne Gail, Betsy Garrold, Doug Johnson, Jean Lenderking, Paul Nyren, Bindy Pendleton, Kip Penney, Phil Prince, Jerry Savitz, Janis Stone, Zafra Whitcomb

GMs: Joe Jordan, Chris Grigsby, Mylisa Vowles

ABSENT: Ron Braybrook, Debbi Lasky, Meg Peterson, Cindy Canavan,

MEMBERS: Gail Clark, Susie Dexter, Paul Eagle, Karin Wittman

FACILITATOR: Betsy TIMEKEEPER: Janis VIBE WATCHER: Kip

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

CSA Fairs: Bangor this Friday, Augusta Saturday, and in Belfast at Troy Howard MS Sunday
Camden Conference was "outstanding." Jean will send us a link to view and hear it online

MEMBER COMMENTS: None

CONSENT AGENDA: Accepted by consensus, with B&G pulled out for discussion

PURCHASING POLICY COMMITTEE: The committee presented a draft of their policy. A list of comments for discussion follows:

- suggest that actions of the PP Comm be posted on the website, e.g., "we have eliminated item X --because it contains y; and replaced it with item Y that does not."
- how do we determine profitability after application of the PP?
- concerning profitability, who does the research, and how much will that cost?
- terms such as "artificial sweetener" need to be defined
- do we have any idea how many of our products will have to be eliminated?
- isn't this policy political? Yes, in extreme cases
- what is the time-line of executing the processes in your draft? comments from members, a couple of months; going over store products, a year or so
- how are we going to present this draft purchasing policy to members? this is still being worked out.
- how far down the list of ingredients do you go to analyze for compliance?
- note: the Portland Co-op went out of business, in part, because of their very strict product-driven mission
- one Director believed strongly that the Purchasing Policy should be aspirational
- another observed that our current PP is, or was, aspirational
- in sum, especially if we do Policy Governance, compliance will be reported annually. if an item is not in compliance, we can improve compliance, offer the members/customers another alternative and see if they like it, or change the policy
- first, and during the process of implementation, we should be honest, with accurate labeling
- it's all about trust. and realizing the "true cost of food"

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Question: what caused the \$17,000 loss in the first quarter? Several early closures, mainly.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT: First, Keene NH conference de-briefing. The CBL-101 session that included financial and policy governance content was beneficial for new directors and Kate Harris. The leadership session elicited several comments from those attending: stunning variety of how various co-op do things; how much we can learn from other co-ops; interesting and rewarding to see our place in the hierarchy of New England co-ops, compared to the Principle 6 meeting, where we were the "top dog."

Retreat planning: still need a volunteer to house Thane, and a place to hold the social, the night before the retreat.

Board Calendar: need someone to execute the calendar, fill in calendar items

Election: question: how do we contact members who are away? Last year we emailed them, or mailed ballots to those without email addresses on our list

ANNUAL MEETING PLANNING: Seven or 8 local vendors are confirmed. These folks will set up on the right side where people enter. Chefs confirmed so far are Laan-Xang Cafe and The Gothic. Potluck desserts from members, not just Directors.

Directors and candidates: please remember to stand up and speak loud and clear, or use the microphone.

Practice time for the mic will be arranged.

Ted Quaday's talk will be entitled, "Family Farming in Maine: Eating Locally—Why does it Cost So Much?"

BUILDING AND GROUNDS: Concerning the committee report containing the idea of a new 4-story building in the existing parking lot space to replace the existing Co-op structure, a Director cautioned the committee about revealing such discussions, beyond the Board, such as to staff, or to members, in their annual report to the members. Members of the B&G committee responded that their report was simply a description of what was discussed. It is preliminary, not a fully researched plan.

MEETING REVIEW: Committees are reminded that their notes for the Consent Agenda packet are to be brief, preferably in bullet format, and should contain only significant items discussed, and plans, questions, actions, funding, etc., needed by the whole Board.

HOMEWORK:

-to be placed on next month's agenda: Purchasing Policy, Principle 6 re-cap, AM review

-all: send comments about Purchasing Policy to Doug

-Directors: sign up for March 1st, Super Sale Day, to encourage members to vote

-Board Development: work on calendar, with Debbi

-sign-up sheets are going around for set-up and clean-up at AM

-some candidates still need to send in answers to 2 questions to Phil

-place for Thane Joyal to stay Saturday night, and place for our pre-retreat social needed

PARKING LOT:

-how to allocate time on the clock, or not, for Board committee work by staff

NEXT MEETING: March 27 Facilitator: Kip, who will explain process to new Directors as we go along

End of minutes. Submitted by Jeanne Gail, scribe