

Belfast Co-op Board of Directors Meeting Minutes October 23, 2014

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Ron Braybrook, Chris Groden, Doug Johnson, Debbi Lasky, Jean Lenderking, Alessandra Martinelli, Bindy Pendleton, Kip Penney, Phil Prince, Janis Stone, Zafra Whitcomb

GM s: Chris Grigsby, Joe Jordan, Mylisa Vowles

MEMBERS: Jeanne Gail, Scribe

ABSENT: Nick Bombardier, Cindy Canavan, Betsy Garrold, Jerry Savitz

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 1) The date is set for the Co-op Holiday Party: December 14, at Point Lookout, 3 -7 p.m. (Unless we outbid by another party). Co-op will be closing @ Noon that day.
- 2) The annual Belfast Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner is November 7th. Mylisa will attend.
- 3) Meg Peterson has resigned from the Board as of September 2014.
- 4) Jean Lenderking is leaving the Board Development committee.
- 5) Zafra is back from the IT Conference in Bozman, Montana. The Co-op there does \$30 million, with a store and a Deli-Cafe, in a town of 60,000 with 10,000 university students.

CONSENT AGENDA: Accepted, without the minutes, by consensus. The minutes will be edited and offered for acceptance next month.

MEMBER COMMENTS: Kip, speaking as a member, reports that both Rising Tide and Good Tern Co-ops have signs at checkout about costly swiping fees for credit and debit cards. Chris Groden added that it is not helpful to call them "gift" cards. We need to "normalize" the use of Co-op Cards.

MONITORING REPORT B6 - Staff Treatment & Compensation

Re: (1b) Provide for fair and thorough handling of grievances in a way that does not include the board as a participant in the grievance process.

We are technically not in compliance, because according to our current, old policy, the Board is involved in hearing grievances. This could be a conflict of interest if the issue was related to a policy that the Board created, failed to create, or the policy itself was discriminatory. Historically, one dispute went to the point of being heard by the MOC, a process that the employee appreciated.

We could hire an outside, impartial counsel to oversee or arbitrate employee grievances.

It would be helpful to quote relevant sections of the Personnel Manual in these reports in the form of addendum but not in the actual Bod Packet, and to show compensation data in medians and quartiles, rather than averages, to delineate distributions more clearly. Factors that affect compensation include variation in participation in health insurance and IRA, and variable discounts depending on how much employees purchase.

Action: The B6 - Staff Treatment & Compensation monitoring report was accepted, with acknowledgement of non-compliance, with a plan to achieve compliance Board would like to see changes with regard to Board involvement in the grievance process.

There is concern for possible inconsistent application of "The GM must not: 1. Cause or allow personnel policies to be inconsistently applied", as shown by a measurable number of responses in the employee satisfaction survey conducted January, 2014. The Board will address the grievance process at the next meeting. The GMT, working with the Board, will see that the next employee survey is conducted by an outside party.

MONITORING REPORT D1

Unity of Control

Discussion Points: The Board has made great improvement on the problems in the remote past of individual Directors, and committees, giving instructions to the GM s, or to Co-op staff.

Action: The report was accepted as being in compliance.

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Proposes that by 2020, the Board shall reduce its number of members to 9, by dropping 1 member a year, by attrition or by reducing the number of open positions in elections. A director suggested an alternative, drop 2 positions a year for 3 years. "Expert" opinion is that for best decision-making, a board numbering 8 to 11 is most efficient. Our CDS Bod Consultant, Thane, recommended 9-12 as presently allowed by our Bylaws. We decided to revisit this topic next month; all please send comments to Ron before then.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE-- Status

The B&G committee is currently inactive. Several directors said they thought the group was doing projects without Board direction. It was proposed that the B&G committee be dissolved, and re-activated if the GM s requests their assistance.

MOC: Bindy will meet with the HR manager Rosemary this week to collect the GM evaluations received so far. The intention is to use Survey Monkey for Directors' self-evaluations, if this method worked for the GM evaluations.

DATES COMING UP:

Social and Ends Statement discussion will be November 9, 4-8 p.m. At Janis' home.

Board Retreat will be January 31, alternative February 7

MEETING REVIEW:

NEXT MEETING: November 20 Facilitator: Bindy

AGENDA:

Monitoring Reports B4 and D1

Grievance process

HOMEWORK:

All send comments to Ron on Board size

Doug will plan the social/Ends discussion gathering

Bindy will edit the minutes of the last meeting

Betsy will write a newsletter piece by the 15th

End of minutes.

Submitted by Jeanne Gail, Scribe