

Plainfield Co-op Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2013

Present: Adrienne Allison, Sue Chickering, Gail Falk, Bob Fancher, Mike Peabody, Chris Jackson, Scott Harris, Joseph Gainza, Art Chickering

Elections: Gail Falk - President, VP - Scott Harris, Secretary - Sue Chickering, Treasurer - Bob Fancher, Adrienne Allison is formally elected as a Board member (grnmtmedicinals@yahoo.com).

A warm farewell and thank you to Chris Jackson for his service as President.

Customer service - the issue that Chris mentioned in parting with regard to staff issues that might affect customer service. The question being who does a staff person talk with if there is an issue with another staff member affecting customer satisfaction. The Management Collective has talked about this after the fact. Who do they talk to if there is a grievance? Seems like it makes sense for a group or committee to be formed for someone to go to. Joseph suggested that both board and MC get together to discuss. Mike will speak with the staff to elicit a couple of people who are willing to serve on this committee to determine procedures and process to deal with this issue. Joseph and Scott will serve on this committee to determine procedures and policy.

Executive session @ 6:15 to discuss personnel issue. Came out of executive session at 6:25.

Minutes from October 8th approved by those present at the meeting.

B1 Monitoring: Financial Condition and Activities: Bob noticed that the current ratio is at 1.2 which is out of compliance, while at the annual meeting the ratio from the end of Sept. was 1.3, which was in compliance. Mike uses the quarterly statement while Bob used the actual Sept. 30th date. There is a discrepancy here that is unexplainable. Mike will speak with Naomi, the accountant, to try to clear it up. Joseph wondered about #8 regarding the amount of time that vendors have to be paid. This problem tends to be directly related to a cash flow problem at the time. There is a trend towards paying the vendors in a more timely manner, leading towards compliance hopefully sometime in the near by future. There is a siding project scheduled but it is likely that this is not going to happen before the end of the quarter. We can use the \$ to pay down a line of credit from the Cooperative Fund of New England. The MC will likely pay off 10K which seems doable and will help with the cash flow problem and the vendor problem. Art wondered where the 10% figure came from and Gail explained that the policies and figures came from a suggested amount from the CDS - Cooperative Development Services and we have used these unless we have discovered that it does not make sense for a co-op our size. From the research that Mike has done, this figure is generally between 10-20%. Joseph emphasized that this is important to keep low for the benefit of our vendors.

Link Report: There has been a lot going on with the Annual meeting, the smart meter issue. Quarter four tends to be a quiet, dark time of year. It is a relatively slow period comparatively as a rule, so they are planning to have a Shop Local Saturday event on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. There are ongoing projects, the survey by Paul Hannon, finances, personnel policies and other loose ends that are being

taken care of. Progress on the coffee corner is not going as quickly as planned.

Board Monitoring: D2 Accountability of the MC's Link

Gail suggested that in order to be in compliance with the evaluation of the Link we start our meeting in December with an Executive session to evaluate the Link's performance. Mike will come to the meeting at 6:30. The link will send communications directly to the Board President who will then disburse these accordingly as she sees fit.

Board Monitoring: D3 Delegation to the MC

There was a reminder that concerns should be put in writing to be addressed. Otherwise we are in compliance with this policy.

Training of new Board Members: Bob has already been on the board for 5 months and feels comfortable with the process of individual training that he received one on one training from Gail. Gail and Joseph will meet with Art and Adrienne to go over the Policy Governance process.

Retreat: It is a time to look at our ends and determine whether we believe we are on the right track, headed in the right direction. It makes most sense to do this after Art and Adrienne are more accustomed to the process. We will plan to do this in March in addition to our regularly scheduled board meeting.

Smart Meter: Gail made the assumption that the MC was going to take out the Smart Meter based on the discussions that had happened before the annual meeting. Since we are unclear whether it does or doesn't affect her medically it seems like it might make sense to remove it. When it was discussed more thoroughly by the MC, it was discovered that the Smart Meter offered the benefits of knowing about an outage immediately whereas the emissions, from what Bob has researched are only radio frequency waves as opposed to microwave frequency waves. Gail suggested that someone shop for her if the MC decides that the Smart Meter is a business necessity. Scott reminded us to focus on the broader issue as opposed to focusing on the person involved. The Co-op does not have a generator as a back up for an outage. It seems to be unaffordable and there is virtually no space. Sue recommended that the board send her a letter to explain why we are keeping the Smart Meter. Gail will draft a letter and send it to the rest of us to peruse before she sends it.

Annual Meeting recap: Things seemed to run very well. Jamie Spector did a fabulous job facilitating and the reports were excellent. The discussion was rich with varied perspectives. Our perception is that people were pleased with the meeting overall. The consensus process went smoothly and Mike suggested that Lee Blackwell come to a meeting to discuss consensus more thoroughly. Mike is happy to invite him to our December or January meeting and have a Pot Luck when he comes. Gail will draft the language for this invitation.

Capital Planning: Bob brought up the fact that we don't really have a prioritized list of our capital improvement needs, or if we do, we are not aware of it. Joseph wondered what the story is with the siding project and why it was dropped. The building committee has been out of contact over the past

several months. Mike asked Mike Russell in March whether he could do a building inspection and Mike said that he would either do an inspection or contract for an inspection to be done. Art raised the question of whether we are talking about maintenance or actual capital improvements, because this would affect whether it is a board responsibility or the MC's responsibility. When we go over to Equity on January 1st it will be important to know what are future expenditures are going to be. Maintenance and budgeting for this is operational. If there is a need for Capital improvement, the board needs to be involved. Nancy, the building committee link, is going to reach out to the current building committee and if this does not result in any response, then the MC will begin the process of contracting out for a building inspection.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, December 10th at 6:00 PM