

Plainfield Co-op Board meeting Minutes

September 10, 2013

Present: Gail Falk, Bob Fancher, Scott Harris, Sue Chickering, Mike Peabody, Joseph Gainza

July minutes approved with modifications: discussed the corrections that Mike suggested. Gail will make the corrections in the google drive with Sue's permission. Minutes approved with these corrections.

August minutes approved: unanimously

MC Monitoring B6: Staff treatment and compensation

Mike agreed to revise the personnel policy by February 1, 2014, so that we have a policy to go by. Bob said that there are samples that might be useful. He will send Mike the link. The plans for compliance are acceptable and we will revisit how compliant this report is gain at that point. We all agreed that the MC should write the Personnel Policy as well. Bob made note of the fact that we have not had to file OSHA report in over a year. Great record for safety!

Board Monitoring C8: Governance investment

We need to make sure that we develop our Board budget at the October meeting so that it will be ready before November 1st. We have accessed some outside consultants for professional support such as Tom Blachly and Paul Hannon and Michael Healy for Policy Governance trainings. We find ourselves to be invested in our governance process.

Strategic Plan Update:

Concerns were raised regarding progress or the lack of progress related to the infrastructure plans. Currently there is not much progress. Suggestions were offered from the board to talk with the Chair of the Building Committee and determine whether there is a need for more leadership. Joseph suggested that the leadership of this committee rest with a member of the MC instead of an outside volunteer who might be overwhelmed or not have time to move forward on some of these projects. The board agreed as a whole that this would be the best approach. Mike will talk with Nancy and/or the entire MC about restructuring the leadership of this committee. Nancy as the liaison may also talk with Mike about the issues raised at this meeting. It is currently an opportune time to be getting some of this construction done, so Mike hopes that things will start to move forward soon. There is still a need for a membership coordinator. Other input should be sent via email to Mike.

Information about Director's Insurance: According to Bob's sources, most Co-op's have director's insurance and Bob has written the application to get a quote for us. He should have this for us by the next meeting. Leslie Krogh-Wisner, a CPA, estimates it will cost the board about 2-3K for a financial review of how we are doing overall. The Unitarian Church has done this and it was extremely helpful. If

we were to do both of these things, our budget would far surpass past budgets, but maybe since we have done neither of these things, it would be worth our while to pursue how we might do this. It is important for us to make sure, as we move towards equity, to clarify all of this. It seems more important at this point for us to pursue the financial review as opposed to the insurance if we have to choose.

Link report:

The MC finished the design for the new sign and presented it to the select board who immediately disapproved of it. The Select board felt that it was too much and too small to be read by passers by. Once they looked at it more closely, they agreed that the letters needed to be bigger and have fewer words. "Plainfield Co-op Your Neighborhood Grocery Store" with a tree. The next meeting is tomorrow night at 8:30pm. Gail mentioned that when/if these things happen, that it would be helpful if we can hear about when these happen, so we can offer our support and possible presence. Language on the Equity FAQs was discussed and it was decided to be left as is. Two new hires: Allison and Monica from China and Williamstown respectively. Nametags were also discussed because of the board's shared frustration with not knowing who is behind the counter, not being able to get to know people's names and not wanting to ask people whom we see often but STILL don't know. Scott pointed out that it really helps to build community and build a more positive atmosphere.

Equity report: the committee has been focused on how to get the word out about Equity to the membership. There is a note with Equity committee board members attached to the Equity FAQs. It is in the newsletter and yesterday it was agreed that when we send out the annual meeting warning, we will send out the Equity FAQs with that mailing. There are also several visual aids in the co-op and Joseph plans to do a radio show. Sue suggested that it also be emailed electronically as well. A two sided document mailed with the annual meeting information on one side and the Equity information on the other. Joseph suggested that the Equity committee should continue during the first year of this transition to Equity. The board agreed. The committee also discussed what discount a working member should get and the fact that we would like to have more working members. The MC will study the pros and cons of various amounts and hours connected to discounts. The board would also lower our discount to 7% plus patronage. The committee also discussed that fact that there will likely be dissatisfied customers moving away from a discount, like there was when we moved from 2% TO 1% before. Joseph will write something for the newsletter about "Building Towards a Better Future" through this move to Equity. The committee also agreed that there would be reciprocity with any Co-op that will reciprocate. We have to make every effort possible to have a dividend payout by the end of 2014. Mike pointed out that by law ee are required to distribute a minimum 20% of patronage in some form.

Annual Meeting warning update:

The deadline for submitting items for the agenda for the annual meeting is 25 days before the meeting. This would mean that people will have until October 2nd to submit agenda items. Gail will write up this pre-meeting notice and include the need for more board members. Mike will put it on Front Porch

Forum, the webpage and in the Co-op. We will do the annual meeting warning at our next meeting on October 8th.

Candidates for the Board:

Chris was not able to make the meeting, so we are unsure who else might be interested. Sue will check in again with Michael Stuart. Scott will ask Jonathan Shapiro. A new sign is needed for recruitment. Joseph will also mention it on his radio show. Scott will talk with Jacob Klein. Sue will ask Pete Coleman if he is interested.

Survey discussion:

Gail will take a look at consolidating the many comments to get a better idea of the biggest concerns that have not been highlighted. Joseph is hopeful the moving to Equity will increase membership and prosperity.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, October 8th at 6:00 PM.