

Plainfield Co-op Minutes January 14, 2014

Present: Art Chickering, Scott Harris, Michael Peabody, Adrienne Allison, Joseph Gainza, Gail Falk, Bob Fancher, Sue Chickering, guests Bob and Betsy (St. Johnsbury Co-op) Sam Clark, Alan Banbury

Minutes from December 2013 meeting: approved unanimously

MC Evaluation: it is very important for us as a board to know about anything relative to the board that might be awry before it gets out of hand. It has been a really good year for the Co-op, the change to Equity, the new sign, the POS, the financial state of affairs overall. Bob echoes that things seem to look good from his perspective as well and the rest of us agreed. Things seem to be moving in a positive direction.

Link Evaluation: We went through the job description point by point to draft this evaluation. This position requires an enormous amount of energy, tact and responsibility. The Link has shown tremendous growth in this position responding to feedback and making improvements along the way. Reports have become more succinct, with clear data. Timely and effective in responses to board concerns and plans of actions when the MC is out of compliance. We acknowledge the challenge of being in this go-between role and trying to speak for the MC - a diverse group of people in itself. In presenting this evaluation to Mike, Gail mentioned some specific examples where there was a lapse in communication, but this really only happened three times. Mike responded to this with some clarifying statements, but heard the summary overall and Gail suggested it would be helpful if the MC members read the board meeting minutes. The board seemed in agreement that it would be great to have them posted on the board bulletin board and accessible not only on the website, but posted physically in the co-op as well. Joseph agreed to post the minutes on the Board board. Maybe we will decide to put something in the Field Notes to increase awareness about how the Co-op is doing.

Officer's Insurance: Bob \$ 1675/year - 1 million \$ with \$1000 deductible - this covers an error that the board has made that had a negative impact, this also includes employee protection against sexual harassment if a claim is filed. Attorney fees would also be covered by the million. General liability insurance that the Co-op currently has should cover accidents and other store related lawsuits. It is currently in the budget so we are in agreement that it makes sense to take advantage of this. Thank you, Bob, for your work on this.

Building committee report (courtesy of Alan B. and Sam C.: Having reviewed the thorough report that Sam drafted before hand which was very useful indeed. It is crucial for us as a board to know how much money we need to have in our Capital Improvement budget to cover the costs that we choose to incur over the long term. An inspection seems to be the first step and Sam, Alan and several other builders would try to give us an estimate or consult with someone who would have the expertise if they need an outside perspective. Then they would try to prioritize from their points of view to give us some ballpark figures and some direction as far as what would need to happen and in what order it would have to happen. The mandatory priorities will be for safety and structural integrity first and foremost, then we can branch into the "wants" beyond the "needs". An article in the newsletter asking for ideas and suggestions could go out and during these next few months a building committee composed of

staff, board members and builders can take these suggestions into account and begin a prioritization process to bring back to the board. Joseph and Bob have volunteered to be on the Building committee. Gail will draft something for the February newsletter, possibly utilizing Sam's report to give some historical perspective. The MC will designate some other volunteers. The next building committee meeting is scheduled for February 4th 7:15 PM at the Co-op.

MC Monitoring Report - B2 - Planning and budgeting, including the 2014 budget - short discussion regarding the variants effecting increases and decreases. Things look in good shape. In compliance.

MC Monitoring Report on Global Restraint - in compliance. Nice report.

Board monitoring - C - Global Governance Commitment - AOK

Board monitoring - D - Global Board-Management Connection - AOK

Link report - There is an opportunity for us to start investing with the CFNE - Cooperative Fund of New England giving us a better return for our \$. When we invest in this organization we are supporting our own co-op. The flipside to this is that this money would not be readily accessible. So, if we can diversify these investments to make sure that we keep ENOUGH \$ liquid for necessary expenses, we could be in the best place possible. Scott suggested we give the go ahead and explore these possibilities and that if \$ comes out of CAPEX it needs to go back into CAPEX when and if it comes back to us. We should be seeing a finalized copy of the MC's personnel policy (as part of meeting compliance) in the near future. Approximately 30+ people have renewed their membership in the beginning of January, and about 8 of these have paid up in full. Year in total sales cracked a million in December!

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 11th at 6:30 PM