

Plainfield Food Co-op Board Meeting March 15, 2016

Present: Gail, Bob, Giordano, Art, Joseph.
MC members: Dawn, Chloe

The **endorsement policy** as drafted was accepted. Bob will post it on the web page. Copies will be sent to the MC.

Building committee:

Not much done since Kathleen has been gone. Some storm windows in place and the new mirror in the store is very helpful.

Treasurer's report:

January and Feb. results not in; perhaps next week, Naomi will have them.
Overall budget targets have been met.

Financial review:

Dawn still gathering material. Tax time may be slowing the review. Our system not well set up to follow a particular purchase. So far we have learned a few useful things, but not much.

Newsletter:

It has been mailed; the survey is in it. The e-version is ready and people who receive it on line will be asked to complete the survey on line.

Survey's:

They are coming in; people are taking the time to fill them out. There is a box beside the register where people can leave them. Forty-four non-members have filled them out on line.
Gail will post a request on Front Porch Forum. The results will be reported at the annual meeting.

NFCA Meeting:

Dawn went and it was, as usual, very energizing. The Co-op Management conference will be in Amherst this year. MC members will be attending.
There is a Congressional Co-op Business Caucus; we should ask Rep. Peter Welch to join.
Dawn heard about "strategic conversations" amongst board members where there is time to share ideas and explore options, but not interfere with operations – Dawn said it sounds like a good system. **We agree to look into it.**
Dawn will send an e-mail with the presentations.

Strategic Planning:

The survey is the major activity – an essential part of planning. The surveys are due by March 31 so they can be compiled for a report to the annual meeting.

Link Report:

Dawn raised the question about whether a 2% profit is too much. We need to determine what costs we will be incurring: taking on debt, moving toward a livable wage, etc. This is complex and needs to be further studied – (perhaps this can be part of the strategic planning?)

Community Center income is in line with historical trends. Some collections for rent are late; One thousand dollars was deposited last week.

Megan has left for another job. Chris has been hired; we have two new hires who live in Plainfield.

Dorothy has stepped down as a member of the MC; she will continue as a buyer.

The Fire Marshall says we need an upgraded alarm system and we have until June to install it.

The St. Johnsbury co-op has closed.

Evaluation of the MC:

We will ask Judy Cyprian what dates she is available to facilitate a meeting of the board and MC.

Dividend:

After a lengthy discussion we agree on a dividend of \$2,000, equivalent to 0.31% of member sales, minus alcohol.

If some people donate their register dividend, we will divide it between Twin Valley Senior Center and the Plainfield food shelf.

Bob will include an explanation of how the dividend was calculated and the factors that caused it to be lower this year in his Treasurer's report at Annual Meeting. We will be open to questions about this from the Membership.

Annual Meeting:

Ben Koenig has agreed to sing three songs after everyone arrives and settles in. Adrienne Allison is asking Heidi Wilson and Erok to perform a skit.

Jamie Specter, who will facilitate the meeting, is working with members of the communications committee outreach sub-committee to set up the entertainment and music.

We have volunteers to help set up and clean up.

Bob will report on the dividend as part of his treasurer's report.

Joseph will present the energy coalition carbon tax endorsement proposal; he will ask Laura Mistretta, from VPIRG, a member of the coalition, to be present as a resource person.

Gail is working on the letter to the members; we will gather to help with the mailing.

We will help publicize the meeting.

Sarah Norton, a member of the communications committee, has volunteered to create some posters for placement in the store.

Joseph will talk with Carl Bissex and Ryan Gallard about being on the board - **PLEASE NOTE:** Carl has declined at this time but would like to be on the board in the future.

Art Chickering said he would ask Marge Christie. **NOTE:** She too has declined.

Building Addition Permit Issues:

Work on the flood plain issue and building permit is underway. The building permit has been submitted to the Plainfield Design Review Board (DRB). Bob and Dawn met with them; they have been very accommodating. We are not in the flood plain, but within the river corridor. The DRB recommended we proceed right away with the necessary prep work. The set-back is 10ft from an adjoining neighbor; we will be within that limit and will need DRB approval to build the addition. We must get a topographical survey and elevation. Paul Hannon will not do the elevation. The surveyor will work with the survey already done by Paul, who is willing to make his material available. We have surveys for all but the river side of the property. Little River in Stowe will be doing the work.

Alan Banbury advised that an addition that is 50% of the value of the whole building makes the entire structure subject to building codes.

The addition will have to pass an historic building review by the DRB.

Right now the building is grandfathered in for a waste-water permit, but with a new addition, we will need to get one. This would be reviewed by a state agency.

The DRB is very open and accepting; they want to cooperate.

Income Inequality Dialogue:

Joseph has not talked with Heather Pepino to get more information. We will discuss this at a later date.

MC Monitoring – B3 Asset Protection:

We now have insurance for working members – we are covered up to \$25,000 per incident. This leaves us somewhat exposed. **The MC has asked the board to solicit a legal opinion regarding insurance coverage for volunteer injury.**

We determine the MC is in compliance with B3.1 The MC will continue to discuss this. Should we place restrictions on what volunteers are allowed to do as a way of trying to prevent accidents?

The MC trains all volunteers.

Board Monitoring – C2 Board's Job:

While we agree that we are in compliance, we know we can do better.

Next board meeting after the annual meeting. We will ask that the outgoing board members attend with the new board members.