

Plainfield Co-op Board Minutes

July 24, 2017

6:15 pm at the Community Center

Attendees: Chris Jackson, Alicia White, Bob Fancher, Jean Hamilton, Sarah Phillips

Absent: Giordano Checchi, Pete Colman

Link: Chloe

Check-ins.

Action: Still need a group photo!

Board Monitoring

- C4 Board Meetings

The board read and discussed the policy – in particular, the balance in meeting discussions on focusing on the work that effects the board as a whole (and not committee work, operational matters, personal concerns). There was agreement that committee updates are important, as well as operational matters. There was discussion again on the relationship of the board to the MC.

Decision: The board agreed that it is in compliance with C4.

- B4 Consumer Treatment

The board discussed the report and agreed that the Co-op/MC is doing a lot of great work! The board discussed a desire to have stronger data in the reports that can demonstrate compliance and show change over time. The board would like to see future reports include stronger data, with narrative as support/explanation. This is true for both B reports this month. The board brainstormed some ideas for data (only possibilities for MC consideration): # of safety incidents in the Co-op, accidents, # of customer cards and/or card results/outcomes, website/facebook analytics, member/customer surveys, # of special orders fulfilled, etc.

Decision: The board accepted the report and agreed that the MC is in compliance.

- B5 Membership Rights and Responsibilities

The board discussed the report and agreed that the Co-op/MC is doing a lot of work to engage and communicate with the membership. It was agreed that, as with a lot of the policies, the work of the Co-op is one of continuous improvement. The report included a lot of information about the activities in place to inform the membership of rights and responsibilities. The board brainstormed some ideas for stronger data to demonstrate compliance (only possibilities for MC consideration): an annual member/customer survey, # of communication posts on facebook, etc.

Decision: The board accepted the report and agreed that the MC is in compliance.

Committee Updates

Treasurer - Bob

See financial statements. The board congratulates the MC on a great turnaround! The B1 report is next month, and the board will more fully discuss at this time.

Expansion Finance - Sarah

The USDA RD application was not funded. The committee continues to look to other resources to support the market study, to complete some of the feasibility work on its own, and to pursue nonprofit status for the Community Center. The board discussed whether there is support from the board, key members, and the MC for continuing to move towards a nonprofit Community Center. **Decision:** It was agreed that the committee should continue to pursue nonprofit status for the Community Center.

Outreach and Marketing – Chris

Chris spoke with Karen (MC) about the committee charter and possible focus for the committee. **Action:** Chris will speak with other past committee members, and review the strategic plan.

Building – Jean (Pete was absent)

Action: Jean will follow-up to locate the committee charter, and if needed, facilitate a meeting to develop the charter (scale and scope of committee work).

Building Expansion – Giordano

Committee is on hold, as project feasibility unfolds.

Membership – Chloe

Chloe is organizing a once a month gathering of membership to help improve the interior of the community center. The main room is painted, windows fixed. The focus currently is project-based membership opportunities. Chloe will also reach out to the building committee about improvements they could support.

Affordability & Food Justice – Alicia

Action: Chloe will follow-up with Anji

Policy Review – Jean

Still need to schedule a committee meeting. Bob wants to be included in B1 review. **Action:** Chloe will follow-up with Chris and Margie.

Action: Jean will collect committee charters this month and follow up to help develop, as needed.

Assorted Business

- Store audit: Cheese, Bulk, (look at depts not hitting budget).
Action: this item was postponed to next month
- Working member email list.
The board discussed ways to promote working member opportunities. Chloe is working on creating a distinct space on the bulletin board to advertise working member opportunities. The board discussed promoting the email list, and using FPF and

facebook as opportunities.

- Mission statement rewrite - plan
- There was a request for a member equity refund. The board reviewed the by-laws. It was agreed that a refund would not jeopardize the financial well-being of the Co-op.
Decision: The board approved the refund for Mimi Yahn.
Chloe will ensure that records on member equity refunds are adequately maintained.

Board/MC Development Calendar Updates

- Policy Governance Training - August 5 9:30 am - 12:30 pm at Gail's house
 - **Action:** Jean will confirm board and MC member attendance
- Listening Session (Fall) - establish goals
Action: Postpone this discussion for next month
- CDS Cafe (11/4/17) -
www.cdsconsulting.coop/cooperative_governance/cooperative_cafe/
 - Chloe are interested, and another MC is encouraged to attend
 - Jean will go for the board, and one other board member is encouraged to attend.

Link Report

- Anji is back (wahoo!), community center is painted (go check it out!), some new vendors (some returning – like Butterfly Bakery), there is a new cooler coming (paid with restricted funds), the MC is still looking at restructuring and possible consultants, like [Aorta](#)). The MC is planning to make these changes in time for building the new budget (October) and will present its changes to the board. **Action:** Jean will forward a consultant name for suggestion

Board Monitoring -

- **End 6 Building Connections**

Sarah suggested that the operational definition should include residents of Plainfield and Marshfield, not just businesses, municipalities and “neighbors” specifically. The board discussed some possible ways that the “data” could be strengthened – e.g., # of partnerships, dollar value of contributions, list of memberships, etc. There was discussion about the end itself, as confusing and not truly results oriented (i.e., “build connections”). The report lacked some analysis on whether the efforts (to build connections) were effective. There was discussion about the endless possible activities that the MC, staff and membership could engage in, and how this can overwhelm hard working, underpaid staff. There was discussion on how the co-op should understand its business model well in order to focus limited resources/efforts, and discussion on how the strategic plan may help to focus activities.

The board agreed that the report had a lot of detail and narrative, and shared a lot of helpful information. There was a discussion and general agreement that the report would be more helpful (to the board and MC) if presented differently.

Decision: The board accepted the report and finds the MC in compliance.

Decision: The board asks that all future reports from the MC include clear data and measurable benchmarks; narrative (information about activities) and analysis (to explain the data) are also helpful.

The board's intention is that this approach to reporting will also be easier for the MC in an

ongoing way – e.g., use a template that can be updated. Sarah offered to consult with the MC, if requested, on identifying and setting benchmarks.

Action: The board will review and discuss the strategic plan at a future meeting.

Action: Board members may choose to review other co-op reports online as examples.

Consent Agenda: June minutes

Decision: The board approved the consent agenda.

The meeting ended at 8:30pm (on time – wahoo!)