

Minutes Plainfield Co-op Board

August 27, 2019

Present (Board): Giordano Checchi, Pete Boyle, Sarah Phillips, Charlotte Domino, Chris Jackson

Visitors: Les Snow, Rosemond London. Notetaker: Gail Falk

Consent Agenda: July 23 Board Meeting Minutes approved.

Manager's Update: Jean Hamilton was unable to be present. Sarah gave a report based on a lengthy telephone conversation with Jean. There is currently no spending on building expenses from the CAPEX fund. Jean does not yet have an answer on the amount of the store theft reported at a recent meeting. Dave Hill, the employee who was handling administration of payroll resigned. Kevin is filling in on an interim basis Position is posted. There is an internal candidate. Dave was invited to do an exit interview but declined.

Giordano reviewed the Financial report. Financially, July was a good month because of control of expenses. Gift card purchases are strong (\$7484 as of the end of July). Interest on the loan payment is included by the bookkeeper in the payment on principal: Giordano says the bookkeeper needs to separate interest payment from principal payment. Sarah asked Giordano to project end-of-year financial status based on current numbers. Giordano agreed to do this. He said that maintaining member shopping is essential. Bringing accounting in house remains a long-term goal, but it is not currently possible.

Sarah said priority goals for General Manager before the September 14 members meeting: (1) Staff meeting to bring staff up to date on proposals that will be shared with members; (2) invite interested staff to meet with Sarah next week to discuss employee ownership option; (3) Meet with Kari Bradley of Hunger Mountain Co-op about option of merging the two co-ops; (4) Develop interim management plan and position description for interim manager.

Sarah said merging the email addresses from COPOS into MailChimp is still up in the air and confused. Some members are still not getting email notifications through MailChimp. This is a concern because we are not sending snail mail notice of the September 14 meeting, though it was mentioned in the card sent earlier in the summer. Paula Emery volunteered to help straighten it out. **Decision: will trust that it gets straightened out and will use email to notice the meeting; will use posters and robust social media follow up to advertise; will not send a snail mail notice of the September 14 meeting.**

Building Permit: Gail reported that the Building permit to expand the footprint of the building submitted in 2016 is still pending. The Plainfield Zoning Administrator says that, if the Co-op wants to proceed, it should do so very soon because of the pending River Corridor rules, which will preclude expansion in this location. **Decision: Consider at September Board meeting in light of decision(s) made on September 14.**

Newsletter: Next issue will come out soon after the September 14 meeting.

Building Committee: Nothing new.

Marketing Committee: Considering Sandwich Board, rack of promotional cards at Goddard, regular emails with sales and specials.

Old Home Days: Charlotte will follow up to have staff get involved in the parade.

Monitoring: F4 is postponed to next meeting. F6 is part of decision about interim management plan. **Decision: For this interim period verbal updates rather than written reports by the General Manager are acceptable.**

At the July meeting, there was a discussion of changing the word “businesslike,” but no one had a suggestion and so this language will stand.

Board Recruitment. There was a discussion of the meaning of the language in the by-laws limiting board service to “a maximum of two consecutive terms.”

After substantial discussion, it was agreed that this language is not intended to be a lifetime ban on board service after a person has served for two consecutive terms, but a director who has served for two consecutive terms shall take off a minimum of two years before returning to the board.

Les Snow explained his interest in becoming a Board Member and described his experiences and accomplishments as a Board member in the past. Other potential board members were identified; Sarah will connect with them. Charlotte will post the search for board members on social media.

Sarah and Charlotte will work together to write a job description for Board Members.

9/14 Special Meeting Preparation

Meeting will be at the Plainfield Opera House, assuming it is available. Pete will contact the Opera House to reserve the space and will coordinate snacks. Sarah will get the updated roster of members. Charlotte will staff the welcome table and check people in. Gail will do a notice on the outside Sandwich Board after Old Home Days are finished. Sarah will send out a meeting notice to the members on MailChimp by September 1 with a summary of the issues to be discussed and a reminder that this is a board election meeting. Board members are asked to come early and stay late to help with set-up and clean-up.

Andy Robinson will be facilitating. Sarah will ask him to keep people on track with the decisions and not to entertain new proposals. She will also ask Andy about how to facilitate the choice of one path forward.

We will use updated versions of the Concept papers as handouts.

Giordano: Route 2 move; Jean, HMC Merger; Sarah, Employee Ownership. Sarah and Charlotte, the Status Quo Plus plan. Gail will send out the member owner written responses and the totals to the people responsible for each plan. Concept papers are to be complete by

September 10. Send to other Board members for feedback before September 10. They will be posted on the in-store bulletin board and the website, Sarah will send a meeting reminder on September 10. Also will be reminders on Front Page Forum and in-store.

Interim Management Plan. Sarah said Jean will not be serving as Interim Manager going forward. The Board needs to move forward with posting a position. This entails determining number of hours, duties, and salary. It will be a part-time position. How to pay for it will be deferred to the September meeting; one option is to borrow from CAPEX. Jean is tasked with working with staff to come up with a proposal for an interim manager.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Board decision