

Plainfield Co-op Meeting

Tuesday, August 13th

Present: Gail Falk, Bob Fancher, Paul Angell, Sue Chickering, Mike Peabody, Chris Jackson

Minutes of July meeting are not available. Scott took notes and they were somewhere on Chris' s computer. Chris found the minutes on his computer and will send them around for approval at the next meeting.

C-6 Revision: Officer's Roles, item 5 - Treasurer's duties – approved. Bob will email revised report and Sue will email to all to put in Board books and reflect the date of revision as August 13th, 2013.

Board Directors Insurance: Bob did some research regarding potential lawsuits and got the name of an agency in RI that specializes in Food Co-operatives. He has the application for a quote and he may need help filling it out, but he will bring the information he gets back to our next meeting once he hears back from them. This would come out of the board budget. The other thing that was recommended was doing a financial review. Gail will give Bob the name of the person who did the Unitarian Church's financial review.

B1 Financial Condition monitoring report: Mike answered a question that Sue had raised via email about the late payment of tax bills. Mike responded saying that this often happens due to a lack of cash flow, but the penalties are small and it seems fiscally sound to do it this way. Bob also was concerned about the fact that 58% of vendors were paid late. Even though we are behind in bill payments, cash flow currently is improving and hopefully this trend can change. Overall the financial condition seems to be gradually improving, though it is still pretty unpleasant at this point. The overdue bills are approximately 18K and the MC is aware that some local vendors are upset by this circumstance. The good news is the late payments are not as late as they used to be.

C7: Board Committee Principles monitoring: Mike pointed out that we don't have established charters for many of our committees and this creates confusion and a lack of direction for the committee. A charter should include goals, expectations and authority. Going forward we should try to maintain this practice of establishing a charter as the first step in any committee process.

D: Global Board Management Connection: OK as is.

Board recruitment: Sue will ask Elaine Parker. Chris will ask Graham Unangst, Eroch, Heidi, Janice Walrafen, Ben Graham, Adrian, John Shapiro. Bob will talk with Josh Pitts. Sue will approach Michael Stuart. Gail will check with Andy Robinson and Jan Waterman. Both Paul and Chris's positions need to be filled. Bob needs to get elected. Gail's term is up and she is willing to run again. Thank goodness! Greg Sanford will also be contacted by Chris.

Link Report: NFCA fall gathering is September 7th. It is located in Shelburne Falls, MA. THE MC is wondering where we are at with the Strategic Plan Update feedback from the board. Since we do not have the minutes from the last meeting, we will have to move this discussion on to September's meeting.

Equity Committee Report: The committee spent a lot of time trying to figure out the total cost of an equity share. What can the public bear and should this be based on a capital plan? \$160-\$200 range was the ballpark that they were considering and realistically people will likely pay in \$20 increments per year. If we pick \$180, we will get \$20/year for 9 years from each member unless they choose to pay off their equity upfront. There will be no benefit to pre-paying for a share. With equity people will lose their discount, but they may get some refund if the co-op is doing well. Currently the member discount is one of the largest expenses the co-op faces. Gail made the motion to set the equity share at \$180 and this was unanimously approved. If dividends are disbursed, all members in good standing will get the same amount. The Equity committee will continue to determine the anniversary or calendar year as the basis for equity/dividend payments. Mike will research this on the Co-operative Grocer's Information Network. Gail advocates for the simplest approach possible. If a person is not a fully vested member then they will not have the right to vote. At this point a person can join the day of the annual meeting and earn the right to vote.

Survey Committee report: The board agreed that the survey summary could be shared with the staff as is. With 500+ members in a town of 1200+ people we have a pretty good percentage of people from Plainfield who have chosen to be members. With reference to a livable wage, Mike researched this and discovered that the average livable wage for a single person with no children is \$16.75/hr. We are currently close to \$11/hr, 69% that of a livable wage and just above minimum wage. Mike suggested that the board have a visioning retreat using the information from the survey as a starting point. It seems to make sense to wait for the new board to do this after the annual meeting happens. This could potentially happen in November. It is important to report back to the membership regarding the data gathered from the survey.

Membership committee: The committee talked about having an information table on September 7th between the hours of 12-4 pm. Gail has offered to man the table for a couple of hours. Gail will send out an email so we can figure out coverage this way. Sue is available to cover some of this time as well. The flyer being developed will be available to have at the table as well.

Boundaries: Gail needs permission from the board to go ahead and tell Dave Strong, the Selectboard chair that we approve the information presented whereby the co-op will pay for the costs of surveying, preparing and recording deed amendments. The MC is completely on board with this and the expense will come out of the Capital funds. The board agreed to the boundary revisions presented by Gail on behalf of the outcome of the meeting with the Selectboard.

Annual Meeting Planning: The membership committee is working out the details of the annual meeting, sending out mailing, etc. The meeting is scheduled from 3-6 PM on Oct. 27th at the church. The main things to be discussed will be the bylaw changes, the equity discussion, the survey results, the elections.

Providing daycare might be helpful to get folks to the meeting. The community center could be used for this and the Co-op should pay someone to do this. The membership committee will brainstorm ways to draw people out.

We all bid Paul a fond farewell

Next meeting, September 10th 6PM agenda items:

Feedback about the strategic plan

Information about Director's insurance

Annual meeting warning

Equity

Retreat

Survey being presented at the annual meeting.