

Plainfield Co-op Board Agenda
Sept 25, 2017
6:15 pm at the Community Center

Attendees: Sarah Phillips, Giordano Checchi

Absent: Jean Hamilton, Bob Fancher, Chris Jackson, Pete Coleman, Alicia White

Links: Nancy, Jeanine

Guest: Jay Hebert, notetaker

The Board did not have a quorum. The meeting was non-binding. No decisions were made by the Board and no direction is given to the MC.

Giordano and Sarah discussed the agenda and decided to proceed with discussion and notes in a non-binding meeting.

Consent Agenda (approval of August minutes) was postponed until the next board meeting.

Board Monitoring of C8 Governance Investment was postponed until the next board meeting.

MC Monitoring of B Policies and Ends

B6: Staff

There was some discussion of B6. B6.4, No internal or external equitable pay. Sarah put question to the links about equitable pay, asking clarity on why the MC agrees they are in compliance with this tenet when discussions at the board level with the Links focus on the problem of inequitable pay and benefits. There was discussion about whether the challenge is the policy, the interpretation or the conclusion that the data/analysis supports compliance. There was a discussion that the MC operates under budgetary guidelines, and thus is working to meet potentially conflicting standards (e.g. greater pay that meets B6 goal but pushes beyond budgetary limits). There was agreement that policies related to financial wellness of the Co-op and equitable wages for staff are all important.

There was some strategic, informal discussion on how wages generally within the US/world economy reflect enormous disparities. Attendees shared personal opinions about fair wages, living wages, and how to set wage scales (e.g., wages reflecting level of responsibility, wages reflecting tenure, etc).

The group discussed that the operational definition and interpretation seem to be the problem, rather than the policy itself. The group reiterated that the Board (at a full meeting) must review the definition/interpretation.

End 1: Healthy and Affordable (already tabled to October)

B1.10: Financial Condition - MC Plan/Response to Financial Management Review was postponed for review until the next board meeting.

Committee Updates

Expansion Finance - Sarah

Community Center Incorporation – No one present had any questions about the materials circulated. Postponed until the next meeting.

Use of restricted funds for market study was postponed until the next meeting.

Review “[Green Light Questions](#)” - are these the right decision points?

Is there a reasonable plan for securing all the financing needed for the project?

Is there a project management plan that allows the MC to focus on operations of the store, management of the store in construction, and transition to new store, while still being appropriately involved in high level decision-making?

Are the board and MC fully committed to the project?

Are non-board and non-MC staff and members fully committed to the project?

Is there sustainable financial plan for the “new store”?

Is there a financial and community cost-benefit analysis supports the site and design plan?

The group discussed these questions. Sarah suggested that all board and MC members should begin thinking about these questions in the context of an infrastructure expansion. The group discussed the last question, including a cost-benefit analysis about the impact on the community in addition to a financial analysis. The group agreed that this would be an important aspect of the project. The Board may still want to discuss at the next meeting.

Consideration of two building expansion scenarios: 1) build out vs 2) build up (into community center) – The group did discuss this briefly. Links and board members all spoke from their own personal perspective, not for the MC or board. There was discussion about the feasibility and what has been considered in the past. There was concern that an upstairs expansion may not create additional product space (just improve back stock and office space). There was agreement that the market study will be important in helping to determine site feasibility. Board members present agreed that the MC and building committee’s further consideration would be valuable.

Link Report - Management Restructure

The Links shared about the MC’s current decision-making challenge. A committee of the MC has been working on adapting the MC structure (pay, roles, decision-making) to propose changes that reflect the current balance of responsibilities. There continues to be a lack of consensus on the MC about what changes are needed and how to change. The MC wants to communicate to the board that they are at an impasse in making any changes. The Board will need to discuss how to proceed. Giordano and Sarah discussed some possible next steps for the Board. There was a discussion about whether the Board may want to convene a special meeting, and identify a process to hear from all members of the MC. Sarah and Giordano reviewed the by-laws for guidance on special meetings. The group agreed that a special meeting is required to discuss the Board’s role and next steps in supporting the MC. This special meeting would not be to conduct regular business of the board.

Next Steps:

Jeanine will forward a copy of the two proposals for restructure to the full Board for review.
Sarah will send out notes from this non-binding board meeting.
Giordano (as an officer of the Board) will call a special meeting.

Other Business was tabled.