

PLAINFIELD CO-OP BOARD MINUTES

Special Meeting

May 14, 2019

Board members present: Giordano, Sarah, Charlotte, Pete

Board member Absent: Chris

Guest: Gail Falk (notetaker)

Sarah Phillips called the meeting to order at 6 pm. Meeting has two agenda items: To plan the Community Meetings and to consider a personnel issue in executive session.

June 8 Community meeting at the Community Center. Sarah said this will not be formal membership meeting as there is not enough time to provide the notice required by the by-laws (25 days). Thus, there will not be board elections at this meeting.

Goal of the June 8 meeting is engage members in the issue of Co-op finances.

1. There will be an updated financial report (can update the report provided at Annual Meeting). One goal is for member/owners to understand the true costs of operating the store (Jean and Giordano will present that)
2. Have staff present measures they have taken or will take to break even (Jean to take lead)
3. Engage the members, encourage participation in addressing financial needs

Do not want this to be a meeting where member/owners are lectured to. Advertise that we want people to bring ideas. Goal of these meetings to change people from shoppers to members/owners.

#1 and #2 will be presentations with questions, but the heart of the meeting is engagement -- #3.

Will not have a facilitator for this meeting. Want the Board to engage directly with the member/owners, not have someone in between. Assign Timekeeper and Facilitator duties to Board members.

Pete and Charlotte will come early to set up.

Write up an e-blurb to send out via e-mail and also publicize the meeting on Front Page Forum, Facebook, Instagram, Facebook. Sarah will tag Kevin to do the postings. Gail will write it up.

Post on website and also have posters in the store. Charlotte will send it to Bob for the website. Will print mini-invitations to hand out to shoppers.

Meeting Two. Goal of this meeting is for Board members and member/owners to engage in deep dialogue about the future of the Co-op and to begin changing the culture of the Co-op. What is the value of the co-op? What is its purpose? Want people to put forth ideas that they believe in enough to work on or invest money in. Don't generate ideas for someone else to do.

Charlotte will ask Erok to write a poem for the meeting

Pete proposed that if people paid more for membership they would be more concerned and pay more attention when the Co-op was in trouble. Charlotte noted her disagreement.

Agreed that, for this meeting, Board members can throw out ideas of their own and do not have to be speaking for the Board.

Plan: to convene an ad hoc committee of 3-4 member/owners to facilitate the meeting – a “street team” designated to plan, publicize and host a large community meeting in late June or early July and perhaps subsequent focus/small group meetings. Board will participate and offer support but not be in charge. Team is charged to bring back ideas to the Board.

Sarah will go through volunteer cards from the Annual Meeting to identify team members and will convene the team. She will reach out this week and report back at the regular May Board meeting.

Decided to wait identify a date – leave it up to the team members to do this.

At 7:00 pm, the Board went into Executive Session. Gail exited.

The Board left executive session at 7:43pm.

The Board wants the ad hoc personnel committee to clarify what "restorative measures" means in the context of this proposal.

The Board agreed that a pre-requisite for engaging in the committee's proposal for mediation would be a legal agreement that participants will not take legal action against the Co-op, individual staff or board members.

Next steps:

- * Sarah will respond in writing to the ad hoc committee chair about the proposal, and that Charlotte, as a committee member, will liaison in person.
- * Pete and Sarah will seek informal legal counsel.
- * Sarah will send board members a copy of the Board's file for review.
- * Discussion to continue at the next Board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.