

## March 2020 Board Meeting Agenda

3/26/2020 **6:30pm via internet**

Members present: Annie Gaillard, Keith Bellairs, Andrew Higley, Heather Davis, Katrina Razionale, Katharine Arnold, Emily Hershberger, Steve Gorelick, Bruce Kaufman

\*\*\*This meeting was held remotely, via Zoom, because of the “Stay-at-home” order by Vermont Governor Scott and to keep all participants safe during the coronavirus outbreak.

6:32 – Erbin Crowell – Executive Director for Neighboring Food Co-op Association – update. They are sharing information and documents about how co-ops are managing this situation. Co-ops are included on Federal assistance through SBA and Co-ops that have been impacted should apply asap. Feedback about co-ops has been great and great sales during this time. Moving forward, looking at what will be the impact around personnel (burn-out, illness), out-of-stock items, challenges around logistics, and changing regulations.

6:45 – **Review and approve Feb minutes** - Annie moves to approve the minutes and the proposed changes to the policies. Katrina seconds. All agree.

6:45 – **PG Ends report**

D3 – Delegation to Management - approved

D4 – Monitoring Management performance –

The Board may evaluate the performance of management by the following criteria. Is management:

- a. *Setting pricing of goods in a way that is consistent with global ends and financially responsible?* A lot of work has been done with margins and getting better at this. We have implemented a lower margin on local products.
- b. *Maintaining industry standards for labor expenses?* Yes: Standard is 23-24%; Hunger Mountain runs at 25-27%; we are within this range.
- c. *Maintaining and encouraging an active and organized working membership?* Working on this and getting it together. With Katharine, it is improving.
- d. *Making purchasing decisions which adhere to the Global Ends?* Buyers are tuned into ethics in purchasing decisions.
- e. *Making decisions related to the management of the co-op in a timely and effective manner.* Yes, Covid 19 is really showing this!

- f. *Maintaining an active, efficient and fair Management evaluation process.*  
Still in development.
- g. *Adhering to the personnel policy?* Yes
- h. *Ensuring that the different departments of the co-op are functioning well.*  
Yes, Emily is working with the various departments to encourage efficiency and team-building.

7:02 - GM report on current crisis and response – Revenue very high in beginning, and with curbside pickup we are still quite busy. Social distancing creates natural limitations. Developing efficiencies. Higher labor costs. But perhaps small business loan/grant can help with these added expenses. Shifts in staff schedules due to family/health concerns. Shifting schedules, a few volunteers, but not a large need right now and there are very specific procedures to follow. Not many requests for delivery. Online store starting up soon. Encourage members to charge their accounts with a gift card. Members are showing a lot of appreciation. It's not perfect, but overall feedback is positive. Employees are feeling safer with curbside pickup. Biggest concern at this point is labor costs.

Should we distinguish between gift cards and personal credit? "Credit" was preferred.

Many rules around federal grants and loans. Justify how labor costs are now and the difference now with the changes. Being essential workers make a difference? Erbin from Neighboring Food Coops, can help with these things, as well. We need to track situations around employees who use family leave. SBA person in St. J will be a good resource.

Emily is doing an amazing job during this crisis!!! THANK YOU!!!

Cross training to make sure if someone is out sick there are others that can manage systems. Precautions to make sure that employees stay healthy

Cash flow and balance sheet are most important. Looking at improved compensation. Sick leave is based on a formula and how much employee works and length of employment – an hourly accrual. We will cover them.

7:40 – Board elections – Has been warned. Looking for candidates. Online and mailing – bios and ballots. This would be very time consuming and costly and cannot meet the candidates. We have an open spot with Linda's departure. Perhaps Linda will come back? She has come back early from her trip. Bruce will talk to her. Keith proposed to postpone the board elections until normalcy returns, Bruce seconds. All agree. Katharine motions that if Linda wants to come back on the Board then the board will reappoint. Steve seconds. All agree. Katharine will send this information out via email.

7:50 – Annual meeting – Postponed. Tentatively schedule annual meeting and 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. Saturday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, late afternoon/evening.

8:00 - Parameters group check in – meetings have not happened. Heather is going through surveys and continuing market research; Bruce is looking at “Milk Money” through VSECU. This virus situation is exaggerating the small size of current coop between members and employees.

8:07 – Other business/announcements – Bonus for Emily – Katharine proposes, Katrina seconds, all agree. We don’t know how this would have been managed without Emily!

Bruce has been volunteering, he says it’s going smoothly and getting things out the door efficiently. Share new products through email.

We sadly cannot reuse containers and bags right now, going against our larger goals of reducing waste ☹.

Letter from the board for members re: all of this and how to engage as members during this time. Every bag gets a note about store credit being the best option. Via check preferred?

Next meeting, April 16, 6:30

8:21 – Adjourn, Annie proposes adjourn, Katrina seconds, all agree.