



CONCORD FOOD COOPERATIVE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 18, 2018, 5:30 PM, New England College, Concord, NH

Cathy Menard, President, called the meeting of the Concord Food Cooperative Board of Directors to order at 5:30 PM.

Attending: Cathy Menard, Pete Engel, Jim McConaha, David Marshall, Tracie Sponenberg, Tedd Evans and Finis Williams. Staff: Chris Gilbert (General Manager) and Melanie Waldvogel (Board Administrator), along with Keith McCormack, Kim Cote, Doris McGurrian, Maureen Barrington, Lynn Chamberlin, Josh Belanger, Ethan Archer and Pat Gale. Guests: Betsy Black and Gary Janinda.

CDS STAFF ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Sarah Dahl, CDS consultant, explained that the purposes of the survey are to obtain information regarding staff perceptions of the work environment at the Co-op and to provide a benchmark for progress. Sarah commended the staff on their 96% participation rate (51 out of 53 employees). Top-rated responses were for the questions:

- I am proud to work for the Co-op.
- My department produces high quality work.
- I have opportunities for input into decisions that affect how my work is done.

The lowest scoring responses were for the question:

- My pay increases reflect the quality of my performance.

The primary concerns voiced by staff were that pay can be non-competitive for similar work in the area and that the Co-op should make investing in long-term staff a priority with livable wages. Cathy Menard acknowledged the shared goal of livable wages, and the reality that the Co-op is recovering from the financial impact of Main Street construction over the past 2 years.

Tracie Sponenberg noted that it is rare to see staff care so much about this survey and the results that they would attend a meeting after hours, and it was heartening to see. The Board feels that there is great value in the narrative and quantitative feedback, and that we have good data to work with to achieve continued improvements. It is clear that progress has been made in several areas compared to last year, which will be more fully evident once we receive the written report from Sarah.

REVISIT DEFINITION OF LOCAL

The Co-op measures sales of *local* food so that we can report on how we're meeting our goals in the annual A-ENDS report. Last year, we defined *local* food as produced in the state of New Hampshire. Chris Gilbert proposed that we change our definition to food produced within a 100-mile radius, a measure which is commonly used by other co-ops. After viewing a map showing a 100-mile radius around Concord, which extends into areas of Massachusetts, Maine and Vermont, the board expressed support for the new measure of local goods.

Jim McConaha would like to see the board address the issue of local vs. organic and offered

to provide information on the subject. Providing local products, rather than those from great distances, supports local agriculture. Jim feels that the benefits of buying local vs. a strict adherence to organic labels should be considered by the board, recognizing that decisions regarding product mix and the balance of organic, local and non-GMO foods are clearly delegated to Chris Gilbert, General Manager.

POLICY GOVERNANCE

BOARD VOTE: Accept Policy B8: Board Logistical Support as submitted.

(Motion by Finis Williams, seconded by Tracie Sponenberg, all in favor).

BOARD VOTE: Accept Policy B9: Emergency General Manager Succession as submitted.

(Motion by Finis Williams, seconded by Tracie Sponenberg, all in favor).

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Derek Owen recently resigned from the Board. David Marshall indicated that he plans to step down prior to the September 15, 2018 election to allow Co-op members to vote for his replacement. There are 3 members whose terms expire in 2018 who are requested to inform Jim and Peter on the Nominating Committee of their plans. Thus, there will be two vacant seats plus the three expiring terms to fill at the election. Tracie Sponenberg plans to run for her seat.

DRAFT GOVERNANCE BUDGET

Cathy presented a draft Governance budget to be incorporated into the FY19 budget. Board members expressed support for a full, expanded staff survey to be conducted by CDS. A discussion then ensued about the best way to structure board training and development provided by Michael Healy of CDS, particularly in light of the expected transition in board members. The board will revisit this topic next month as part of the full budget review.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Highlights for March:

- Sales continue to increase in both stores, showing a total 4.75% improvement over last year.
- Participation in the recent customer survey increased to 450 customers, helped by board members handing out surveys, compared to 230 who responded last year.
- LED lights are being installed throughout the Concord store.
- The new Point of Sale (POS) system has been ordered and will be installed in both stores during July 2018.
- Bunny bucks were popular, with 580 redemptions in Concord and 75 in New London.

BOARD VOTE: Approve the March 21, 2018 minutes as amended.

(Motion by Finis Williams, seconded by Tracie Sponenberg; approved unanimously).

EXECUTIVE SESSION

BOARD VOTE: Enter Executive session at 7:39pm.

(Motion by Finis Williams, seconded by David Marshall; approved unanimously).

BOARD VOTE: Exit Executive session at 8:02pm.

(Motion by Finis Williams, seconded by David Marshall; approved unanimously).

ADJOURNMENT

BOARD VOTE: Motion to Adjourn at 8:02PM.

(Motion by Jim McConaha, seconded by Finis Williams; approved unanimously).

The meeting adjourned at 8:02PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 16, 2018, 5:30PM at New England College in Concord