



CONCORD FOOD COOPERATIVE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 20, 2019, 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, Jim McConaha, Tracie Sponenberg, Peter Engel, Finis Williams, Chuck Gilboy, Traci Komorek, and Krista Helmboldt. **Staff:** Chris Gilbert (General Manager), and Melanie Waldvogel (Board Administrator). **Guest:** Willow Gilboy.

REVIEW OF CALENDAR

The Board reviewed the upcoming month, and rescheduled items as necessary.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT – February 2019

Chris Gilbert reported that sales are up by 5% in Concord and 8% in New London. Customer count in Concord increased 11% over last year. A demo specialist has been hired. Participation in the annual Customer Satisfaction survey has been high, with 285 responses in the first day. New memberships in Concord were especially high for the month. Chris is following both the Minimum Wage bill and the Plastic Bag bill in the NH legislature and will continue to provide updates.

Chris Gilbert leaves the meeting for a Board discussion.

SETTING GENERAL MANAGER COMPENSATION

The Board Initiated Step Two of the General Manager Compensation Process, as outlined in the article in Cooperative Grocer by Mark Goehring and Carolee Coulter. The Board reviewed the method as proposed, noting that it will be a two-year cycle for a four-year process. The second step requires written responses from board members to strategic questions. Board members are expected to complete these questions in two weeks.

BOARD VOTE: Proceed with the proposed method of setting General Manager Compensation.

(Motion by Jim McConaha, seconded by Finis Williams, all in favor).

ORGANIC AND LOCAL PRODUCE DISCUSSION

Handout: The NH Harvest Season

Jim McConaha presented to the board about the benefits of providing local produce, with information about Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Two important messages about IPM are how much it reduced the use of pesticides and how much money it saved farmers, all leading to a healthier product at lower cost.

- Uniquely New England characteristics of farms: smaller farms, products sold directly to the consumer, and thin margins (costs need to be kept down).
- Supports the local farm community and the rural character of NH
- Improved freshness and nutritional value of local produce

Peter Engel mentioned that produce represents approximately 10% of the Co-op's total sales; thus, even incremental increases present a growth opportunity.

Traci Komorek noted the importance of eating 5-9 serving a day of fruits and vegetables, and the most convenient and easiest way to get those fruits and vegetables is to find them at the Co-op.

One of the key challenges of providing local produce is finding an adequate supply to meet the demand at the Co-op. Difficulties and unpredictability of the growing season add to this challenge.

LEARNING FROM OTHER SUCCESSFUL CO-OPS

Cathy Menard reported on both Monadnock and Middlebury Co-ops. The Board will keep a running list of ideas gleaned from other successful co-ops:

- A group photo of the board would enhance our communications with members. This could be taken before the April 17th meeting.
- The board commented on an essay on plastic bags written by a Middlebury board member which laid out possible alternatives to using plastic bags. Board members expressed a desire to reduce plastic waste from the meal at our board meetings, and from the hot bar in the Concord store. (A reminder that members can bring their own water bottle to the meeting).
- "Cooperator of the Year" recognition. This could be awarded in several categories at the annual meeting such as: Staff, Farmer or Supplier, and Community Partner.
- Middlebury Co-op has 5,000 members and had 800 voters at their last election. We are already working to make our elections more robust by increasing the number of board candidates. We would love to increase the number of voters as well.

BOARD VOTE: Approve the February 20, 2019 minutes as amended.

(Motion by Finis Williams, seconded by Traci Komorek; approved unanimously).

BOARD VOTE: Motion to Adjourn at 7:09PM.

(Motion by Finis Williams, seconded by Traci Komorek; approved unanimously).

The meeting adjourned at 7:09PM. The next meeting is scheduled for April 17, 2019, 5:30PM at New England College in Concord.