



CONCORD FOOD COOPERATIVE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 19, 2023 5PM

Hotel Concord, Concord NH

Jaran Blessing, President, called the meeting of the Concord Food Cooperative Board of Directors to order at 5:08 PM. **Attending in person:** Pete Engel, James Stever, Krista Helmboldt, Shawn Menard, Joe York, Sam Pike, Chuck Gilboy, Garland McQueen (Interim General Manager), Adam Orcutt (Store Manager) and Melanie Waldvogel (Board Administrator). Erin Strafford attended as the auditor from Rowley and Associates, PC. Jaran Blessing and Ryan Poirier attended via Zoom. Board quorum is met (9 out of 9 present).

2023 FISCAL YEAR AUDIT

Erin Strafford presented the audit to the Board. The audit report is dated Sept 5, 2023, and the last financials reviewed by Rowley and Assoc. were in October. This audit report is closed as of June 30, 2023. The co-op has a clean opinion as of the audit close with a growing concern over continued loss. Highlights from the audit included: \$973K in assets and \$653K in liabilities, ERC funds remain as well as a \$100K line of credit, net sales were down \$100K while cost of goods remain the same, profit margins are good with 1% negative change, and there was a \$73K increase in operating costs. The co-op had a net loss of \$330K, with \$100K of that in depreciation. Operating costs increased by \$74K partly due to inflation. Erin noted the books looked accurate and all items were delivered in a timely manner.

BOARD VOTE: Approve Audit Report Fiscal Year 2023 as submitted.

(Motion by Pete Engel, seconded by James Stever; approved unanimously).

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Garland was pleased to announce Nov/Dec sales are on an upward trend, with a profit of nearly \$42K in November. The holiday season is showing a strong sales trend. Upcoming store improvements include:

- Ramped up deli offerings
- A hot bar that is open on both sides
- Re-opened olive bar
- Front door merchandising optimized
- Breakfast offerings, such as sandwiches, biscuits and burritos

Money saving ideas for the store include:

- Equipment (such as the hot bar) to be repaired so it is fully operational
- Unused equipment to be sold
- Storage units to be condensed
- Expenses (including unnecessary automatic payments) to be reviewed and cut
- Pay scale discrepancies to be addressed.
- Online ordering (ROSIE) may be discontinued

More staff is needed to create these changes, and five new kitchen employees are already in training. The positive merchandising was noted by the Board and commended. New London sales have been strong, and Garland will focus on UNFI deliveries and new products there. Staff appreciated the Board members volunteering to help over the busy Thanksgiving season. More positive change is on the horizon for January.

POLICY GOVERNANCE

Garland has been a great influence on the staff. He has given managers and employees the authority to make changes they want to implement. Morale has been high, and policy and

procedure are key to maintaining a good environment. The staff survey from June was discussed, and Garland plans to give employees their reviews soon.

BOARD VOTE: Approve Policy Governance B6: Staff Treatment and Compensation as submitted.

(Motion by Chuck Gilboy, seconded by Pete Engel; approved unanimously).

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Pete reported that the cost saving initiatives that were discussed over the summer, such as dissolving the farm partnership with Canterbury Shaker Village, eliminating some staff positions and the senior discount, did not add up to the savings anticipated, which was a wake-up call for the Committee. The sales and net income recently trending upwards have been encouraging to see, and sales in the new year will need to be solid. While the budget shows a loss, Garland believes the budget can be beat.

GENERAL MANAGER SEARCH COMMITTEE

Krista explained that 28 candidates applied for the General Manager position to date, with two of the candidates as frontrunners. Screening and interviews are scheduled for mid-January. The job description will be reposted in the new year, when more candidates will be searching for a position. The Board discussed generating even more interest, and the best platforms, such as Indeed, Columinate, newspapers and ads, as well as social media. Krista, Chuck, James and Sam were thanked by the Board for their work and dedication to the process.

NEW PLANS AND INITIATIVES

Garland sees food service as key to bringing more people and foot traffic into the co-op. He explained inventory turns to the Board, and what he would like to see happen in each department. The Board reviewed upcoming store items such as seafood, deli offerings, the sushi department, and baked versus rotisserie chickens.

EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

The Board will be voting in a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer at the January meeting. Please send interest in these positions to Jaran by early January for the slate.

MINUTES

BOARD VOTE: Approve the July and August Board minutes as submitted.

(Motion by Krista Helmboldt, seconded by James Stever; approved unanimously).

Shawn observed that three additions were made to the October minutes following Board votes via e-mail: appointment of Ryan Poirier, Round It Up for 2024, and approval of the General Manager Search Committee charter and budget.

BOARD VOTE: Approve the October 17, 2023 Board minutes as submitted.

(Motion by Krista Helmboldt, seconded by Joe York; approved unanimously).

The Board adjourned from regular session at 6:38PM.

The next Board meeting will be Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 5:00 PM, The Hotel Concord.