

Approved 7/7/2011

**Willimantic Food Co-op
Board of Directors' Meeting
June 2, 2011**

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

In Attendance Were:

* Alice Rubin	* Bryan O'Hara	Dan Britton	* Joanne Todd
* Johnnie Walker	* Kathleen Krider	* Kirk Begg	* Maiga Doocy
Maria Boekels Gogarten	* Matthew Kyer	* Stephanie Golaski	

Scribe: Susan Chasin

* = Present

Member / Guest: Bruce Oscar

Members Speak Out: No one spoke out.

Election of Officers:

The following slate was nominated:

President – Kathleen Krider

Vice-President – Matthew Kyer

Secretary – Stephanie Golaski

Treasurer – Joanne Todd

Matthew made a motion to elect the above slate of candidates to office. Joanne seconded the motion. It was unanimously passed.

Approve Minutes from May 5, 2011 Board Meeting:

Kathleen made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 5, 2011 Board meeting. Bryan seconded the motion. Maiga mentioned that there is no “e” in her last name. It will be corrected from this point forward. It was unanimously passed.

Abstentions: Joanne, Johnnie, and Matthew.

Board Retreat:

Thane put together a possible agenda for the retreat. The Board decided that while it looked very good, they weren't sure all of the items would benefit the group. It did not include Rhonda Kinkaid, who planned on doing a session about “Where the Co-op has been and where it is going.” She is a Co-op member and works in the Willimantic community. She started a one-person non-profit substance abuse program that became the Perceptions program.

A decision must be made about the purpose of the retreat. Is it for training, creating a future vision, or both? It was felt that developing a strategic vision needs to be a large part of the retreat.

If possible, the morning session could be used for Board training and the afternoon session for strategic vision planning. The Board decided to develop specific goals for what we want to get out of the retreat.

Items on the agenda might be there because it has worked for others. The only problem is that we don't know how long each item takes.

It was decided to pick the items we felt were relevant and important and add others we felt we wanted. Then someone would talk with Thane for clarification and get her thoughts on what she feels is really valuable. We want the retreat to address items the whole Board needs to function well, not just work on things relevant for the new Board members.

Items to include: Board Roles and Responsibilities; Where we've been and where we're going; Perpetuating a Strong Board; Review and Discus Board Activities and Priorities 2010 and 2011; and Revise Annual Board Calendar as Needed.

Items to get clarification on and decide whether to include: Numbers, numbers; Building a Positive board Performance Culture; and Creature Communication.

Joanne mentioned possibly using the SWOT process. This is where you start by talking about strengths and weakness along with opportunities and threats. Filtering out the most worthwhile opportunities and the biggest threats helps in creating a plan. It sounds like this would help with the visioning part of the retreat. Maybe this should be started at the July 7th meeting. By using notes from this and notes from the two meetings with Jane it could help start and continue the discussion.

Kathleen will talk to Thane about the retreat and see what she thinks about SWOT. Also she will also ask Thane her thoughts on including Rhonda in the retreat.

Location of the Retreat: Kathleen's house. She will email directions to everyone.

Food: Alice and Bruce will take care of the food.

Store Update:

The Co-op will be marching in the Boombox 4th of July parade. Patty is choreographing a shopping cart and basket brigade / march. There is a sign up sheet for interested people. We may do something at the end of the parade, like hand out watermelon.

There is no financial update. Sales have been good.

All the bulk bins will come in next week. The grocery reset will continue until mid-June, when it has to stop to prepare for inventory. It will resume after inventory and hopefully be done by the end of July.

There have been 2 meat and 1 fish orders – so far so good.

The computers have been upgraded and secured. We are looking at getting a new phone system.

UNFI deliveries have been reduced from 3 to 2 per week because they charge \$45 for each delivery. We will supplement with a once a week delivery from Tree of Life and let United know this and the reason for it. The UNFI drivers are unionized and UNFI is not responding to the new contract (union busting?). We will write a letter stating that we support the drivers.

UNFI's cost of getting their supplies has gone up and they are passing this on to us. This will probably result in a price increase for the whole store.

The POS system is giving us really good information.

B.6 Emergency Management Succession:

It was unanimously voted that we are in compliance as stated in the report prepared by Alice.

Member Survey Progress:

There was an email discussion regarding the survey and it was felt that we need to be very clear about growth and the type of growth we are envisioning.

The committee discussed and reviewed possible questions to be included. Maria set up an account for the Co-op on Survey Monkey.

We need to be very specific in what is asked and we need to ask questions that we want answers to.

From past history, we will get results from a small number of members. We are doing a survey because we have to. We want general information for members to weigh in on, especially older members.

It sounds like we want a survey along with focus groups.

Some people are afraid of the uncertainty of growth. How do you stop growth and stay healthy?

The Co-op should focus on their mission. They do it well.

Many people like it as it is now and that would be the response if general questions were asked. When more specific questions are asked, the response might be less than "the Co-op is perfect". They may actually react to size, selection, etc.

We need to create a survey to get answers to questions we don't even know yet. Should we get a professional to help us?

Is it inappropriate to make large-scale moves without asking the members? Do the by-laws state that we need to obtain member approval? Buying a building does not equate growth if it is needed for behind scenes activities (storage, office space). The results of a survey will help with decisions about how a building is ultimately used.

The survey is for visioning. We could try a survey in house and see what results we get. We could get a greater response if we have a computer up front for members to use. With a large membership, you have a smaller core of people who understand the Co-op and why a survey is important. We could have working members act as "greeters" to explain why responding to the survey is important. Is there a member who could help with creating a survey?

It was decided that the Board needs to create a vision and then put it out as a survey to get feedback from the members. We will let the retreat results create the survey. Are we looking for input on what members think or verification?

Bryan and Stephanie will continue working on questions for the survey.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Next Board meeting July 7, 2011