



Board Meeting Minutes

6.21.2018

Attendance: Joanne McCaughn, Jim Hutcheon, Ben Witten, Jaime Rossman, Peter Brown, Sam Green, Laura Love (*Staff Representative*), Grace Cox (*Board Facilitator*), Fern Moore (*Board Coordinator*)

Absent: Brian Frisia

Agenda

- Agenda Review
- Announcements
- Mission Statement
- Commitments Review
- Member Comment
- Naturipe Berries boycott endorsement
- Initiative 1635
- Committee Reports
- Capital Facilities Plan
- Staff Report
- Break
- Organizational Health
- Board Retreat Follow up
- Executive Session
- Commitments
- Meeting Evaluation

Announcements

- Brian is unable to attend tonight's meeting
- Grace will not be in town for the July meeting.

Member Comment

- *Renee Chardel and Zac Smith*; Seeking permission for petitioning outside of the Stores. They have 5 different petitions. 1585 - \$30 Car tabs, 1600 - Universal Healthcare, 1634 - No new tax on groceries, 1639 - Safer gun law, 1631- Clean energy petition. They brought copies of four of the petitions. The Board discussed the initiatives and there was support for two initiatives that seem to be mission statement aligned (firmer gun control, cleaner energy carbon tax)
- *Desdra Dawning*; Last year she was not feeling well and resigned from the Board. She is feeling much better. She has been approached by many people to contact the Board to offer to serve on the Board perhaps to fill one of the vacant seats.
Sam asked what work she is interested in. She responded that she still serves on the Member Relations Committee as a Member at large. She is interested in Advocacy, Eco planning and also Expansion work. She also considering a run for the 2018 election.

Commitments Review

- *Laura will setup store tours for the Board members* In process
- *Grace will send the Grievance policy to Joanne* Complete
- *Sam will add the Board support team to the Asana account* Complete
- *Laura will check in with Sophia about Eco planning committee Membership* Complete. Staff is being assigned.
- *Laura will contact Outreach and Signage to solicit a Committee member at large* Complete.

Naturipe Berries Boycott Endorsement

SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT #1

The Produce Department would like to officially honor the Naturipe berry boycott called for by the Northwest chapters of the AFL-CIO and Familias Unidas por la Justicia last October. *See Attached Document #1.* Merchandising CAT and the Board were asked to review the boycott materials and endorse them. Merchandising reviewed and approved the endorsement via email.

While there is support for the boycott, the Board reads the policy, as this being a Staff decision. The Staff have not presented this as an organizational conflict that needs Board resolution. The Board endorses the boycott and would like the Produce Department to follow the policy and leave this decision to Staff unless it comes back as an agenda item that would fall under Bylaw Section 3 #13 Board Duties #16 resolve organizational conflicts after all other avenues of resolution have been exhausted.

Initiative Endorsements

It is petition season ! Petitioners are requesting to gather signatures at both stores. There was a petitioner at the Eastside gathering for Initiative 1635 stating that he had the right to gather signatures any where. He was turned away from gathering signatures on the property. The only initiative that the Board has endorsed is 1600, at the May Board meeting.

Petitioners also requested endorsements at tonights Member Comment agenda item. They presented 5 different petitions including; 1585 - \$30 Car Tabs, 1600 - Universal Health-care, 1634 - No new tax on groceries, 1639 - Safer gun laws, and 1631- Clean energy Initiative.

Proposal

The Board has not and will not endorse Initiative 1635.

Consent

Proposal

The Board will not endorse Initiative 1585.

Consent

Proposal

The Board will not endorse 1634.

Consent

The Board would like to read the other Initiatives including 1631 and consent via email by Sunday the 24th .

- All Board members commit to responding to initiative endorsements via email.

Committee Reports

Advocacy- There are Board and Staff ready to convene the Committee once the Board approves the updated charter.

Co-Sound - They held a debrief on the Co-opatopia event. They also reviewed a timeline for incorporation. They wondered if someone on the Staff Collective would like to attend Co Sound meetings.

- Laura will contact Staff about attending Co-Sound meetings

Finance - Reports: Sales are down slightly, but margin is up nicely. Wellness, in particular, is down 10% from budgeted sales. Cash is about the same as last year. We are still on NCGA watch list, but possibly will be off after June. Audit: Included a review of internal controls as well as finances. No material or significant deficiencies were found. Expansion: Corey will start on updating a very rough pro-forma. The Committee has an agenda item later in the meeting to propose the development of a capital improvement plan that looks forward at least several years.

Expansion - Met and discussed the due diligence steps and service vendors to contact. Jim and Harry are co coordinating the feasibility. We gave ourselves a deadline of July 4th.

Eco Planning - formulating a plan to reduce the number of disposable containers and method to track that. Ben would like to bounce some ideas off a Staff person and get data on overall container usage.

- Fern will forward Ben, Kitty's contact info

Personnel - Continued work and revisions on the Personnel Coordinator job description. They also worked on a draft proposed Anti Bullying policy.

Member Relations - planning the Annual Meeting. Preparing for a potluck theme this year. They talked about a Member that was banned from the stores for a year and his membership has been revoked. Robyn is still moving forward with coordinating with the Senior Center. There will be a Working Member party at our downtown office on July 15th during Lake Fair.

Local - debriefed on the recent Local Eats event. They are making plans to support Outreach at the Harvest Party and supporting the Annual Meeting. They set up an interest meeting for Staff members.

Standing Hiring - We did a hiring! Jamie would like to not approve the hire via email. The Board would like to change the process and review hiring recommendations in meeting. There was also discussion about revising the decisions via email process.

Community Sustaining Fund (CSF) Liaison - no report

Delta Force Subcommittee - no report

Elections Task Force - They created another test ballot. They will test verification of ballots at the end of the month. There may be a test version in Board members email, please participate in the test.

Bylaws Task Force - Attended Collective meetings to get feedback on proposed Bylaw changes. A few groups requested to wordsmith some of the language. The Anti Oppression CAT sent their thoughts and recommended updates. Final Proposed Bylaws will be presented to the Board next month for approval for the ballot.

Organizational Health - has an agenda item later in this meeting. They edited the developing proposal and are seeking more Board feedback.

Developing Board Roles - trying to schedule a meeting.

Reconciliation Task Force - trying to schedule a meeting.

Capital Facilities Plan

Finance Committee Board members, Sam and Jaime want 2018 to be the year that we have a capital improvement plan in place that looks forward at least several years; this will also support more realistic expansion planning. Sam and Jaime seek a directive from the Board, with a goal to have a preliminary plan in place by September in order to be able to include the plan in the 2019 budget process. If approved, Finance Committee will be available to add a meeting or two dedicated to working on developing it. The Board briefly talked about this at the retreat. We don't have a capital plan and do not have a multi year budget. We know we want to expand but don't have the money to expand.

Proposal

The Board would like the Fiancé CAT to create a process for capital planning; looking forward no less than ten years. Finance CAT will draft a first plan so that both are ready for the 2019 budgeting process that begins in September.

Consent

Staff Report

Facilities sent a report to the Board via email. We recently hired new Staff. The Training Staff is working on setting up the training schedule. The Working Member CAT is planning the party at the Downtown office on July 15th during Lake Fair.

At recent Collective meetings, Staff talked discussed what a proposal to put our evaluation system on hold would look like. There were many concerns aired about our evaluation system and there were calls to put the system on hold. The Big Picture CAT brought this request to Staff to discuss. Staff also reviewed the draft of the Proposed By-laws changes. They also continued discussions on the scheduling and emergency coverage and developed more options for these systems.

Organizational Health

The Accountability task force and Organizational Health Task force are not the same thing. Laura needs support of a group to work on these proposals. She would clearly like to request that a Board member help with this proposal development. She does not feel like personally she can continue to work with this.

Joanne, Jim and Peter would like to assist in developing these proposals. This group will bring back a revised proposal to possibly be reviewed at the July meeting.

- *Laura will send the Org Health documents to Jim, Peter and Joanne*

Board Retreat Follow up

The Board retreat follow-up heavily ties in to the Organizational Health work. At the Board retreat, we reviewed the major Board and Staff responsibilities in our Bylaws and narrowed down where the Board should do work and where the Board should not do work. We are still clarifying this process, and do not see it as a quick fix, but rather figuring out a way forward as an organization.

Realm of possibility for Board Roles - Next Steps

- *Board proposes recommendations new accountability system to send to staff*
- *Acknowledge work done and work beginning*
- *More listening- schedule listening sessions*
- *Build connections between Board and Staff via direct group reports at Board meetings*
- *Acknowledge first sharing from staff*
- *Extend invitation to contact individual board members*
- *Seek outside legal council*
- *Get training for Board on related issues*
- *Amnesty for past eval/performance issues*
- *What happens with people in current roles*
- *Include Board on staff discussion*
- *Encourage evals to be on hold*
- *Acknowledge Staff work and ask for a timeline on their proposal*
- *Get clarity and updates on conversations*
- *Communicating with the Membership*
- *Recruiting a diverse Board Membership*

Next Steps

*Acknowledging Jim and Joanne will rough draft for the June Meeting **Pending***

*Listening (multiple avenues, surveys) suggested plan for what this would include by June meeting Joanne and Jim **Pending***

Clarity update on Staff plans; review grievance procedure, notes and current policies Laura b June Meeting

Anti-Oppression training for the Board now and also with new Board people, ongoing training. Jim and Laura will check in with Anti O CAT. Jim has also contacted a trainer.

Feedback

Jaime- Feels strongly we should define what it should be and how it should be working. Perhaps we should start reviewing what didn't work about the vision of the existing system. The Board should have a base understanding. There was discussion about investigating the system breakdown further.

- ***Laura will contact former staff member with inquiry and contact Fern with their response***

Meeting Eval

- Thanks for that reminder that we don't have to make a decision during Member comment
- Facilitation should be clarified for the Member Comment item. There is confusion whether the Board would like to facilitate that item themselves or if the facilitator should.

Commitments

- ***Laura will setup store tours for the Board members*** In process
- ***Laura will contact staff about co sound meetings***
- ***Fern will forward Ben Kitty's contact info***
- ***Laura will send the Org health documents to Jim, Peter and Joanne***
- ***Laura will contact former staff member with inquiry, and contact fern with their response***
- ***Fern will email the website about July meeting time change***
- ***Jamie and Joanne will contact standing hiring about changing the process***
- ***Joanne and Jim will draft Acknowledging and Listening items from the Board retreat next steps***

Decisions out of Meeting

1. Approval of April Meeting Minutes - Consent

2. Approval of Hiring Candidates - June 6 2018

Decision made via email

Consent

Stand Aside- Sam Green

3. Approval of Contract and Counter Offers

5.30.2018 Contract Approval

Consent

Stand Aside- Jaime Rossman, Joanne McCaughn

6.5.2018 Counter Offer #1

Consent

Stand Aside- Jaime Rossman

6.12.2018 Counter Offer #2

Consent

Stand Aside- Jaime Rossman

Next Meeting

- Advocacy Charter
- Expansion
- Organizational Health
- Decisions via email and consent via email policy

Attached Documents

1. Naturipe Berries Boycott Endorsement

The Produce Team yesterday in our meeting agreed to ask MerchCAT and the Board to officially honor the Naturipe berry boycott called for by the Northwest chapters of the AFL-CIO and Familias Unidas por la Justicia last October. I agreed to research the info needed and recommend the boycott to MerchCAT. Here's what I found!

The produce buyers have actually already been honoring this boycott unofficially by purchasing other berries from our distributors, but we decided as a team we'd like to ask MerchCAT and the board to officially endorse it so we can put out the information to co-op members.

The products in question are Naturipe brand berries (all types). Fortunately, both our far-flung produce distributors (Charlie's Produce and Organically Grown Company) offer other berry labels as often as they can, in the same price range as Naturipe or Driscoll's berries. There may be short gaps in berry availability throughout the year, but these gaps are something that the produce team is not concerned about.

(Just for MerchCAT information: The east and west produce buyers are still honoring an unofficial Driscoll's boycott (the Driscoll's boycott officially ended with an agreement between Sakuma Bros. farms and Familias Unidas por la Justicia, but there are widespread allegations of other worker's rights abuses at other Driscoll's farms, so we saw no reason to start carrying them again after the boycott ended.)

Attached is the Resolution of the Northwest Washington Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, Endorsing the Boycott of Naturipe Berries.

What I can tell so far from online news is that there is a growing campaign to counteract the growing use of H2A visas sparked by the death of the worker on Sarbanand Farm last August, information about which you'll find in the websites I attached.

Here are some websites with information I think you'll need to make the decision based on the Boycott Policy:

Northwest Washington Central Labor Council announcement:
<https://www.nwwclc.org/naturipe-berries-boycott-resolution/>

First three links on this site:

<http://familiasunidasjusticia.org/en/newsandupdates/>

Community to Community H2A campaign:

<http://www.foodjustice.org/blog/2018/6/1/block-the-expansion-of-h2a-say-no-to-h2c>

Here's the SLOG article that described the incident that sparked this boycott and the resulting campaigns:

<https://www.thestranger.com/slog/2017/08/15/25352012/temp-workers-describe-grueling-pace-at-what-com-county-blueberry-farm-where-laborer-became-fatally-ill>

Here's another article from that day last August:

<http://kuow.org/post/death-ignites-labor-tensions-berry-farm-near-canada>

And here's an op-ed style article by someone who clearly has the opposite viewpoint:

<http://www.capitalpress.com/Washington/20180313/boycott-organizers-restate-unsupported-claim-against-berry-grower>

My disclaimer before you check into all of this is that I really can't tell whether this has become a nationally recognized boycott (one of our requirements for officially endorsing it) or not. Grace, are you able to find out information through Union channels about this? I can tell that Community to Community (an organization associated with Familias Unidas por la Justicia) is starting a national campaign to resist the growing use of H2A visas in Washington state and beyond that was sparked by the original call for boycott.

Please make us whatever recommendations you think are appropriate.

- Jenn

Here's the text of the NWCLC boycott:

Resolution by the Northwest Washington Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Endorsing the Boycott of Naturipe Berries

WHEREAS, the Northwest Washington Central Labor Council is the central body of labor organizations in Whatcom, Skagit and San Juan Counties, WA and is a voice for the interests and needs of working people in Whatcom, Skagit and San Juan Counties; and

WHEREAS, Sarbanand Farms, owned by Munger Farms in Delano, California and itself a member of a grower cooperative Naturipe, has endangered the lives of farm workers at its Sumas, WA farm because of degraded living and working conditions, including inadequate and potentially contaminated food, inadequate water, no access to health care, inadequate work breaks and working in dangerous environmental conditions that included high temperatures and extreme air pollution resulting from forest fires; and

WHEREAS, farmworker Honesto Silva Ibarra died due to these dangerous conditions and many other farmworkers fell ill due to the same conditions; and

WHEREAS, more than 70 workers hired as H-2A guest worker walked out of Sarbanand Farms to protest the degraded working and living conditions and the death of their fellow farmworker; and

WHEREAS, Sarbanand Farms employs 519 farmworkers in Sumas, WA hired through H-2A visas and recruited from Mexico and the legal requirements of the H-2A visas prohibits striking, forming a union, or seeking other employment if the workers want to leave Sarbanand Farms, and the employer holds the visas of the workers, thereby prohibiting them from legally leaving their worksite, creating a condition of virtual slavery; and

WHEREAS, the H-2A visa program is an unsustainable practice that hurts local economies by benefiting large farms that have the resources to contract H-2A workers at the expense of small family farms and permits farms with a history of systemic wage theft, labor rights violations and retaliation against workers to continue these practices because workers can be easily replaced and there is little oversight to ensure worker safety and protection of labor rights; and

WHEREAS, there are built-in incentives to hire guest workers rather than local or domestic farmworkers because employers who hire guest workers are exempt from paying social security and unemployment taxes; and

WHEREAS, the H-2A visa program harms all workers in a community by lowering working standards and putting all power in the hands of the employer; and

WHEREAS, Familias Unidas por la Justicia, a local farmworker union of the Pacific Northwest that has given material and non-material support to the former Sarbanand workers has called for a boycott of Sarbanand Farm berries marketed under the Naturipe brand until Sarbanand Farms negotiates a contract with Familias Unidas por la Justicia that includes the establishment of a worker committee and union oversight over food, housing, working conditions, rest periods, all necessary medical care, a fair disciplinary process and a starting wage of \$15 per hour.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Northwest Washington Central Labor Council supports the efforts of Familias Unidas por la Justicia in their campaigns to improve the lives and working conditions of farmworkers in Northwest Washington; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Northwest Washington Central Labor Council endorses the boycott of Naturipe Berries until Sarbanand Farm meets the conditions set forth above in negotiating a contract with Familias Unidas por la Justicia and calls on its member affiliates to honor this boycott.