



Board Meeting Minutes

6.20.2019

Attendance : Joanne McCaughn, Peter Brown, Mel Bilodeau, Desdra Dawning, Fred Medlicott, Jaime Rossman, Grace Cox (*Staff Representative*), Fern Moore (*Board Coordinator*)

Absent: Ben Witten, Jim Hutcheon

Agenda

- Agenda Review
- Announcements
- Mission Statement
- Member Comment
- Commitments Review
- Staff Report
- Committee Reports
- Break
- Board Elections 2019
- Commitments
- Meeting Evaluation
- Executive Session (Hiring)
- Executive Session

Announcements

- Ben and Jim are unable to attend tonight's meeting
- Fred will facilitate the first half and Grace the second half
- Desdra needs to leave at 8:30
- Jaime is expecting in November and will not be running for re-election

Member Comment

Heather Wood - She moved to Olympia in 2012 and for 84 weeks she has been spending all of her grocery money at the Co-op. It's meaningful to her to do so and she has found a home at the Co-op. Part of that home, was Dana. She is here to support Dana as he supports the community. She works with Honey bees and manages over 120 beehives. Her work focuses on creating genetically diverse colonies of bees. She sees the community as a colony and Dana works for the betterment of the colony. He has done so for 7 years, 3 days a week. She would like to see him reinstated. She commented that she would boycott the Co-op if he is not.

John McNamara- Member of the Food Co-op, works at the North West Co-operative Development Center and Orcas Books Co-op. He attended on behalf of Orca Books. The owner is seeking to retire in a way that will keep the store open and without debt. They are creating a Multi stake holder Co-operative. He handed out brochures. They are looking for general support from the Food Co-op and ask that we consider joining as an Organization Member and help to promote the conversion of the business. A fraction of the current Food Co-op Members joining Orca Books would meet our goal to make the purchase and working capital to move forward successfully. He encourages everyone to join tonight as an Individual Member and think about how we can leverage the Co-operative community as a whole and help promote this effort and make it successful.

Kim Dobson - Long time Co-op Member, former Working Member back in the 80s, and radio host. He is here to support Dana, who has been at the store for 10 years. He thinks he belongs there. Dana's financial condition has deteriorated from the lack of funds from selling the paper. He has lost his apartment, and this is economic hardship for him. He loves him and thinks he's a good man. He sees no reason why he shouldn't return to his former position.

Dana Walker- He is ready, willing and able to share every newsletter that he has published and assures you that you will find no racist tendencies. He holds these newsletters as proof that all these allegations against him are false. If they are going to ruin his life, he would like to confront his accusers. It is not too much to ask to prove the allegations or back off. He wants to meet with anyone who is blocking consensus on his return and requests that they bring proof.

Tom Nogler- A self claimed unhistoric relic of the Food Co-op. He was part of the group that founded the Co-op. He was previously on the Board and Staff. He is a Food Co-op loyalist. At this moment, we are at a divisive moment. Divisiveness bothers him. He sees that there is a lot more unity on the right than on the left. The left falls apart when unified. The Co-op hung a poster once that claimed all men are potential rapists, there was an expectation with this that there would be divisiveness. He was not involved in the BDS and boycott, but it also had a divisive effect on the community and caused folks to not shop at the Co-op. Even though he is Pro Palestinian, he still saw the divisive effect. There are other examples. People go thru battles with narratives and bad blood ensues. He would like to see this issue resolved and would like to see Dana get his position back. He is advocating on his behalf.

Bernie Meyer- Member of the Food Co-op since 1991. He supports Dana in selling Real Change. He appreciates his posture and his stance on this issue and values his presence in selling Real Change. He is supporting himself and providing service to the community. He does not know what is going on with Media Island. He also has a second reason for comment. Please follow what is going on in India and the Midwest of this country. India is experiencing an extreme drought. This is a projection as the climate goes down the road it is going. In the Midwest farmers are giving up planting fields because of the flooding. He urges the Co-op to build a coalition with the farm trust group and help posture Olympia for food security and survival.

Onyx - Staff Member, attends as herself and on behalf of a group of Staff Members that couldn't be here. She has been funneling complaints from Staff regarding Dana Walker and his behavior at the stores. Onyx read a list of examples of Staff experiences and her own experience with Dana. A report detailing the complaints was presented. Staff names are available if necessary. She has never been to a Board meeting and has never been to Conflict Resolution in 15 years at the Co-op.

Oso- Staff Member, who was working on this issue on Anti Oppression CAT. They have been trained in years of de-escalation and conflict resolution, that is part of the work they do here. This is the third time Oso has spoken to the Board. The Co-op has paid for them to speak about this three times. There are no black people in this room so no one in this

room can make any assumptions about this situation. There was a Restorative process for Dana to come back and for Shawna to shop at the Co-op. We sat in conflict resolution with different Staff to create these agreements. They were chosen to not to be signed or done by Dana. You can read on his blog, open slander of the Co-op and Staff Members. They would love to have Real Change, or Street Roots available at our stores. Perhaps someone misrepresented could vend the publications. Dana has been unrepentant in resolving the conflict. Yesterday, on Juneteenth, he mentioned Shawna Hawk yet again. They have a list of questions for the Board for consideration during their decision making process, that was submitted via email. What is the method we go through that we let people stand outside the store? When does feedback affect this? The Co-op shouldn't have to pay Staff to keep doing this work on this issue. They pray growth in this situation and a new option moving forward.

Ben- Staff Member also on the Anti Oppression CAT. This is his first board meeting and had to leave his shift to attend the comment period. He is frustrated that he has to be here. Dana is taking no responsibility and slanders the organization on a public forum. He reads the 'Thunderbolt' and would be fired for slander for saying the things that Dana has said. Ben feels his labor is being disrespected to fund this continuous process that goes nowhere. He sees no reason to reinstate Dana. His actions have not been in line with our Mission and he is not being willing to participate with restorative practices.

Rick Fellows- Long time Member. He read the agreements submitted to Dana. He found it condescending. People get really sure of themselves and sometimes they are not looking at the whole picture. This thing started with Media Island and essentially this is the fallout of the closing of a 17 year old organization. We radically shared that place with the community. If this type of thing that is happening at Media Island was happening at the Co-op, all the food would be sitting on the shelves. Nothing is being used there, the recording studio, the resources are all abandoned. The people who put those resources there, cant go there because of the hostility that is there. There is sadness in this community, you don't see people on the steps out front anymore. There are people that are not comfortable going to the Co-op because they see that Co-op sides with them. Media island was a model. It is more of a loss than people realize.

Estef- Staff Member. Everyone is dodging accountability. Dana does not want to take accountability. You are all perpetuating the dodging of accountability. She never felt like Media Island was a resource or welcoming until she attended the Women of Color group hosted by Shawna. There is a whole generation that does not want to f*** with your s***. Things are changing. We are going to hold you accountable now. We are tired.

Commitments Review

- ***Peter, Joanne, Mel and Desdra will meet to will create Two flow charts about what it is right now and what it should be regarding complaints and appeals. In process. Needs more work. Perhaps next agenda.***
- ***Grace is working on getting access to Board pages and will forward it on to all .***
Completed the task and development stopped a while ago. She would like to recommend that we create a task force to develop it. The task force will consist of Jamie, Fred, Peter, and Grace.
- ***Fern will forward contact info to Ben. Ben will contact them about their petition request***
Complete
- ***Fern will forward the info sent into the Board from PreservetheCommons.org***
Complete
- ***Ben will ask his colleague about credit debit processing fees***
Pending
- ***Fred will send out registration info western worker co-operative worker convening***
Pending
- ***Fern will send out the Board Retreat Notes 2018 to all***
Complete

Staff Report

Fairly obvious by the Member Comment that there is a fair amount of upset-ness with the process concerning Dana. There is no single Staff perspective, there are many perspectives. There is no consensus on a path forward.

In other news, We have new phones at all three locations. We can ‘park’ a call at one location and transfer it to another location. It also has an auto answer with a directory. We are all learning how to use them. Bradley as the Coordinator of the Eastside Remodel Team has bringing agenda items to Collective Meetings. We have new figures and rough estimates on the project scope and cost. We are continuing with two other things with the Collective. The ‘Come Hell or High Water’ book, which is a critique on how consensus processes can be exclusionary and limiting. We are also continuing work on ‘ Building a culture of Accountability’ which includes accountability about our personal culture. The idea is that over time we will look at the actual agreements that Staff have and recommit or revise the agreements, with the hope of simplifying them and how they tie to our articulated values. We also did an exercise on ‘ Whats right at the Co-op’. Grace has stepped down from BPC (Big Picture CAT), as was part of the agreements made when she took on the Board Staff Rep role. We are adding 2 people to staff BPC. One is 4 year Staff member, the other is just completing their first year on Staff. They are both very engaged and are bringing new ideas.

Joanne asked if the new phones allow for mailboxes?

*There is a number of them, mailboxes must be associated with a physical phone.
We need to talk about the board voicemail.*

- *Grace will inquire about setting up a Board voicemail box.*
- *Grace will share the ‘ whats right at the Co-op’ exercise that Staff did with all*

Committee Reports

Advocacy – did not meet. Peter commits to finishing up the draft form. Perhaps next meeting.

- Peter will finish the Draft Advocacy form

Co-Sound – Continuing their work on drafting a business plan.

Finance – did not meet.

Expansion –The Committee has been meeting on a regular basis; we have been discussing the Eastside Store Remodel, with an emphasis on improving worker safety. In regard to the safety issue, we consider the deli-kitchen remodel a top priority. Some of the other areas to be considered include flooring, changes in the placement of the salad bar and bulk items, and some plumbing to provide additional restroom capacity. We will be meeting with the architect next week to go over some revised plans; decisions on how and when to proceed with the projects will be forthcoming.

Eco Planning- Met with someone from the City about Zero waste. They learned all kinds of wonderful stuff about recycling.

Personnel – confidential email sent for discussion during Executive Session

Member Relations – There was discussion around several documents: the policy for ‘Handling Unwanted Behavior In Customer Interactions’ and the policy for ‘Working Members On Hold’. Desdra asked Alejandro if there was a document of the Staff Policy for Handling Unwanted Behavior with Working Members. He brought it to the meeting and explained that the Staff had worked on it since 2014 and for several years prior. It does not include sending Working Members to a Resolution Team, but rather putting their WM position On Hold while they can be “investigated.” Desdra questioned what policy was being followed in the cases of the Dana/Shawna event, and the ones involving two Working Members, Sadie (?) and Mary. There is some question as to whether or not this WM policy was consented to by the Board, since policy is the Board purview. Some Co-op policies are available on our website, but not all, and they are not at all easy to find.

A new Round Up at the Register will begin on July 1 for Cooperativa Tierra Y Libertad (CTL), a farm-worker’s cooperative founded in in Whatcom County. They are a group of berry farm workers who boycotted a farm in northern Washington a couple of years ago due to very poor working conditions. They have formed their own cooperative and are working to find land to farm berries themselves.

Jaime requests that the Board Members on the Committee bring a proposal to the board meeting regarding What the Board Members feel should be the next step to resolve this conflict. If there is even consensus on what to do.

The Board members on the Committee agree to meet with each other and review the concrete proposal.

- Desdra, Peter and Joanne will meet and review the proposal and make a new proposal to the Board.

Feedback:

Add to the Appeals process; When the Member Relations Committee does not reach consensus, it comes back to the Board.

Fred is not comfortable with consenting to an Appeals process until he sees those flow charts of complaints through the current system specifically including how Member complaints are handled before an appeal to the Board.

Local – The Local Committee met and discussed projects for the year. After some discussion, the Committee decided that we would act in a support role for the Faux-B-Q event, coordinating with local vendors and that we would do the same for the Harvest party. In the months of October and November, the Committee will work on an Indigenous Peoples' event which will commence on the formerly named Columbus Day and will go through Thanksgiving. The group also agreed that it was time for a charter review and members of the committee agreed to review the charter and discuss our mission at our next meeting.

Standing Hiring – Submitted a Hiring proposal to the Board for consent.

Community Sustaining Fund (CSF) Liaison - They held a debriefing on the Spring Grant Cycle. They are developing Tabling at both stores in the next few weeks to collect more members who want to Opt-In to the POS Reminder at the register. It was noted that this last grant cycle saw more funds than usual, attributing that to the POS Reminders. Interns: CSF has an intern from TESC, MaryAnn Mullins, who has been busy with classwork, but is now available to help CSF with its database organizing. It is hoped that this can lead to obtaining an intern or ILC (Independent Learning Contract) from TESC in the fall to help create an info video for CSF that can be used at various venues in the future. A Late Summer/ Early Fall Fundraiser is being discussed, beginning the planning stage. Possibly at Traditions, with a Raffle or Silent Auction, grantee testimonials, food, etc. We are working with Works in Progress to do more community outreach and become more visible in the community. Tim Nogler, a Leadership Team member, has written up a short piece for their next issue: emphasis on COMMUNITY.

Board Elections 2019

The Elections Task Force needs to commence its work for the 2019 Elections. Fred and Fern were selected to be on the Task force during committee assignments in January. Desdra offers to also join the Task Force.

We will run into some deadlines for the 'Table' if we want to publicize or recruit in the newsletter. We might want to consider asking to have one point of contact with Outreach for deadlines and election messaging.

Fred wants to table outside of the stores for recruitment. There must be food on the table.

We value highly diversity in Staff and within our hiring practices. We would like to encourage and foster this diversity in the Board (for the table meeting)

Mel thinks we should all ask three people we know to consider running for the Board.

- *Desdra will talk to table about fostering diversity in the Board article and overall election support and deadlines*
- *Fern will checkin with signage about the recruitment cards for Board Members.*
- *Fred will send out a doodle for the Elections task force.*
- *Grace will send out a doodle for the Board pages task force.*

Commitments

- *Peter, Joanne, Mel and Desdra will meet to will create Two flow charts about what it is right now and what it should be regarding complaints and appeals.
Pending*
- *Ben will ask his colleague about credit debit processing fees
Pending*
- *Fred will send out registration info western worker co-operative worker convening
Pending*

- *Grace will inquire about setting up a board voicemail box.*
- *Grace will share the ‘whats right at the co-op’ exercise that staff did with all*
- *Peter will finish the Draft Advocacy form*
- *Desdra will talk to table about fostering diversity in the Board article and over all election support and deadlines*
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- *Fred will send out a doodle for the Elections task force.*
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Meeting Eval

Great job facilitating a difficult and full Member Comment period.

Self facilitation is working very well

Executive Session Decisions

Proposal

The Board approves the Hiring candidates and alternated as proposed by the Hiring Team for hire.

Consent

Proposal

The Board adopts the Appeals Team's recommendation to initiate the ESP process for M. L***** rather than proceed with Standard Termination. Due to potential organizational conflict with the

Evaluation Team conducting the ESP, the Board directs the ESP Team be composed of one member each from Personnel, Anti-Oppression, and Humane Resources, with Jaime serving as the Personnel representative, and Mel as his alternate.

Consent

Next Month Facilitation

Jaime / Joanne

Decisions out of Meeting

1. Approval of June Meeting Minutes - Decision made via email

Consent

Attached Documents

None