



Board Meeting Minutes

11.18.2021

Attendance: Linda Myers, Mel Bilodeau, Jace Denton, Joanne McCaughan, Cristina Rodriguez, Grace Cox (*Staff Representative*), Fern Moore (*Board Coordinator*)

Absent: Jim Hutcheon

Agenda

- Agenda Review
- Mission Statement
- Land Acknowledgment
- Member Comment
- Announcements
- Commitments Review
- Labor CAT - Hiring Proposal
- 2022 Operating Budget
- Staff Report
- Break
- Committee Reports
- Elections and Annual Meeting Review
- Provender 2021 Report Back
- Board Development Proposals
- Houseless Eastside
- Commitments
- Meeting Eval
- Next Facilitators

Land Acknowledgment

We start the meeting today by taking a moment to honor the land and the people whose ancestors have been stewards of this unceded land since time immemorial.

We acknowledge the contemporary communities of Squaxin Island, Nisqually and all the people of the Medicine Creek Treaty.

Member Comment

The Board used this time for introductions to the newly elected Board Members.

Announcements

- Jim is unable to attend tonight's meeting
- Jayana has resigned from the Board effective immediately
SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT #1
- Trudy and Tanzania our newly elected Board members are here in attendance to observe.

Commitments Review

- *Grace will follow up with Mel's request about posting the Mission Statement at both stores*
Complete
- *Fern will forward the Board requests in one email to all*
Complete
- *Co-operative Health will look into IDI tools with Parfait Basel*
Pending. In process

- Joanne will send out continuing education piece on co-ops in Washington state.

Pending. Move to next months meeting

- Everyone will submit Committee Reports via email

Some were sent in. Continue commitment

- Fern will amend the Cooperative Health Charter and forward to Staff Pages

Pending. Will send with board development charter when approved

- Grace will forward proposal language to Harry and cc Fern

Complete

- Jim will send out the Board self eval questions for the retreat

Complete

- Mel will write to Mo about sending out the Annual Meeting link to the mailing list

Complete

- Mel will let Member Relations know about the Staff Report and will reduce the time for it.

Complete

Labor CAT - Hiring Proposal

SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT #2

Staff and Labor CAT Member Mary attended to present the Hiring Proposal to the Board. This proposal was approved by the Staff Collective this month.

We proposed in July to run a hiring analysis to determine if we need more Staff. It was determined that we did need. There were a couple blocks to that proposal as Staff wanted more than 2 new hires. Right after that proposal was submitted we received more information, a few people went part time, a sabbatical was requested and another Staff member indicated that they were leaving. Questions were asked which were included in the proposal. The second round of the proposal we suggested 6-8 new hires. That proposal was marked 'as needing work' regarding questions about accountability.

Specifically if we need more Staff or if the current Collective members are following commitments and holding each other accountable. These were good questions that led to great discussions that we want to move forward with. It is true that maybe if the agreements were met, we wouldn't need to hire. Good questions, yes, but this would not be a quick fix for scheduling. The discussion helped clarify and give us direction for the collective. We proposed 6-8 again. All the hours open are short shifts that won't build a work week that makes sense for individuals. The shifts that are open are so disjointed. In the last hiring one person almost got 30 hours. Because of this and feedback on training, that its hard to train that many at once, we proposed we hire 4 now and look to hire 4 more in April, with the consideration that we are just starting the Flex Staff program. It may well be with Flex workers and new hires that we may need 4 more in April.

Feedback:

Linda- Thank you for providing all this information. It made it easy to digest and answered lots of questions she had.

Proposal

The Board approves the hire of 4 new full time Collective Staff members, as soon as possible.

Consent

2022 Operating Budget

Linda and Grace presented the 2022 Operating Budget to the Board for approval.

Mel asked, Operating Budget?

Grace responded, yes the Operating and Capital Budget. Operating is all the income and outflow that it takes for daily operations and capital planning. there is often a separate capital budget, a large project would be reflected in the capital budget.

This is a new spreadsheet view that Corey and Kitty put together to make it easier to read. It is a condensed version of the budget.

2022 Budget Goals

- maintain at least a million in cash at the end of the year
- net profit is positive
- labor as a % of sales same as for 2021
- provide ample cash for capital improvements to support necessary and useful projects
- save seed money for the capital campaign and support other projects that expand our operations
- discuss and review wage scale adjustments and changes to medical benefits

Regarding Goal 1- Cash starting in 2022 is \$1.4 million. We show an \$11,000 net cash increase at the end of the year.

Labor as a percent of sales is wages, taxes, vacation, and sick leave. For years we budgeted 24% and we are acknowledging that is not a realistic number anymore. As of last year we budgeted 25%, so far in third quarter, we spent 24% . Accrual can happen in fourth quarter. We were able to include a significant wage increase and we were able to keep it at the same percent.

This Budget allows for the capital campaign and capital improvements. We have released \$60,000 till the end of the year for improvements and we have built into our cash flow projection \$60,000 for next year.

Wage scale adjustments conversation will happen with Staff in 2022. It was determined to not have that conversation during Budget time.

We would end up \$49,000 net profit in Version 3 of the Budget

Sales Growth: West-1.13% / East- 2.43%

Margin: West 35.1% / East- 36.2%

After two years of a complete crap shoot during the pandemic, we feel things are stabilizing and these numbers will be doable for us.

Feedback:

Joanne- You mentioned saving seed money for the capital campaign. She understands we don't need things to look new, but we need to have a better grasp for Expansion and what money we have to invest.

We have \$5,000 in this budget for Expansion to engage the Membership in creating a clear direction. We have been operating on our desire to be Downtown and helping with that revival. We at a point need to verify that with the Membership and what they would like to see. The point of keeping a minimum of a million in cash, is to be building the cash to take advantage of an opportunity.

Joanne would like to explore that more with the Expansion Committee and make a work plan.

Mel- Heard you mention wages, would like to discuss that more.

In discussions about the wage increase this year with Staff, wages are based only on seniority which is annually adjusted, the same amount of dollars are adjusted at the top and bottom so they stay as close together as possible. The problem with housing costs escalating is a struggle for lower ends of the wage scale. Some Staff on the top of the wage have been discussing not applying the increase and instead applying it to the bottom of the scale. There were people that didn't support that idea. Staff want to have a thorough conversation and see if we can come up with something equity based and less equality based.

Mel had an idea about creating a campaign that folks at the top could donate to the bottom.

Joanne- The Wage scale increase would not impact Flex Workers?

Yes and no. They have a different wage set, but they are included in the one dollar per hour worked increase and they will get that as well. They don't move through the same seniority steps as Collective workers.

Mel- knows the Board shouldn't be concerned with the Operating Budget but about Marketing and Outreach, are we still giving Yelp money in this budget?

Yelp contracts have been cancelled.

Proposal

The Board approves 2022 Operating Budget

Consent

Staff Report

Hiring:

The team is in the process of interviewing applicants for the position of Flex staff. All but one of the current temp workers applied for the Flex position. The Committee is looking to hire 15 flex workers.

Internal Hiring:

We are still soliciting for a number of Management and Coordination positions that remain unfilled. Bulk East, Grocery East, and Meat West are looking to add Managers; Personnel, Anti-oppression, Training, Signs, Big Picture CAT, Cleaning, and Outreach are all looking to add or replace Coordinators.

Finance:

We have completed our work on the 2022 Operating Budget, which is being presented tonight for Board consent. Finance accepted the Board's counter proposal on the bonus and paid out the full \$50,000. The bonus was paid in our most recent paychecks. Thanks to the Board for consenting to this very welcome bonus.

Training and BPC jointly took a meeting with LaDonna Sanders Redmond considering a multi-year engagement with her around organizational DEI work. If we decide to move forward we should look for opportunities to aligning the Board's work with DEI. While Anti Oppression remains unstaffed training CAT is working to provide opportunities for the Staff to continue training.

Merchandising CAT completed a small reset of the beer and wine department at the Eastside. We flattened the racks against the north wall of the building and increased visibility. Although one week does not a trend make, sales have already improved.

Feedback:

Linda - Regarding Flex workers that will come on board, it seems that most Temp workers are moving into Flex positions?

They are being interviewed, yes.

Linda hopes this can have a positive affect on scheduling. She is also hoping Working Member numbers will creep back up as the pandemic is stabilized. She wants to reiterate that the Staffs work makes this all possible, She thanks them a bunch for that.

Grace adds that the current form of the beeper system, of having someone on dispatch is night and day from what it was before that. Our beeper system is the emergency coverage system covers those scheduled shifts.

Interim Secretary Position

We need a Secretary to serve for the remainder of the year as Jayana has resigned from the Board effective immediately.

There are emails from the Board inbox that were sent out tonight by Fern. They are pending response since the end of September. they need responding to, as well emails sent in regards to the Annual Meeting.

Joanne was secretary and didn't get emails sent to her and didn't get a response from the Coordinator.

Jace also has felt that he doesn't get the information he needs doing Board development work.

Fern acknowledged both of their feedback and responded that the email coordinator is changing and response may be more timely.

Proposal

Linda will serve as the Secretary to the end of 2021

Consent

- Fern will let the email coordinator know about the change

- Fern will let Corey know about the change in Secretary

- Grace will check in with Email Coordinator about Board Member emails and will ask reset on that password and share with all

Committee Reports

Advocacy – has not met

Board Development - has an agenda item. We will enter 2022 with 7 Board Members. It might be the right time to lead a conversation about soliciting Board Members for appointment.

Jace agrees.

- Grace will send out the vacancy process to all and the information about the last time we had appointments

Capital Campaign - Talked to Matt from the Astoria Co-op and had a great conversation about their capital campaign.

Cooperative Health - sent out the Meeting Minutes to all. Their next meeting isn't scheduled. John will present the survey results to the Board in December.

Eco Planning – has not met. Jace did reach out Tina on Facilities, who is on leave, so the request to attend a meeting was forwarded to Facilities. Mel was able to write policy regarding used containers.

Expansion – Linda needs to be included in the Expansion email list.

- Fern will ask Harry to include Linda in Expansion emails

Finance – reviewed third quarter which was positive. Margin was high and Expenses were under control.

Local - has not met.

Member Relations – prepared and hosted the Annual Meeting on Zoom and in person at the Olympia Center on November 6th. It was a successful meeting. Thanks to Mel for the recommendation on the Annual meeting guest speaker. The Committee will be looking to recruit new Staff people. They also had full Consent to accept Desdra Dawning as a Member at Large for the Committee.

Proposal

The Board proves Desdra Dawning to Member Relations Committee as a Member at Large

Personnel – Evals are looking for Staff Members. Peer evaluations are still not happening, but annual staff evaluations are continuing. Con Res continues to work on issues with Staff and all is going well. The Social Media Policy is completed. Admin leave was also approved.

Standing Hiring - has not met

Elections and Annual Meeting Review

The Board of Directors will be welcoming three new members for 2022-2024.

Tanzania K Ertel - 146

Trudy Springer - 144

Wendy Davis - 108

In total 181 total votes were cast, 122 on line and 49 on paper (cast in Stores or at the In person Annual Meeting). Of these ballots 4 were rejected due to inability to verify membership (no name or contact information provided)

Feedback:

Linda thinks we should start recruitment in June or before.

The Board Development Committee should take on that work permanently as Committee duty.

Is it included in the Charter?

Grace agrees recruitment is a year round activity. One way of doing that is raising the profile for the Board among the Members, which is an important piece as well.

Perhaps a collaboration between MRC and Board Development to develop the profile of the Board and recruitment they could bring it to the Board for feedback and approval.

- MRC and Board Development will discuss and develop Board recruitment

Annual Meeting Review

Feedback:

Linda's husband said the dancing was the best part!

Joanne felt that the in person event was appropriate and masked. There were a few times that people on the microphone lowered their masks to speak. Overall there were no confrontations and the attendees were very responsible.

Mel attended on Zoom and sound was good. She could hear the speakers good through the masks.

Grace did have to tell three people to put their masks on. They were snacking and drinking coffee. It was hard, because it was her request that Staff didn't have to police masks because we do it everyday. Its hard to recognize the the level of vigilance it requires.

Joanne apologizes and appreciates that it was difficult for you. We should have appointed a mask enforcer.

- Linda will respond to the feedback sent in regarding the Annual Meeting

Provender 2021 Report Back

Linda attended two full days of the Provender Conference and it was fantastic. The theme was 'Embracing Change and Shaping our Future' and that is what we are doing here and now. She didn't see any other OFC people there. She would like to send an email with the recordings of the sessions. Please take advantage of it there is a code that you will need to enter.

- Linda will send out the link to the Provender sessions to all

Joanne also attended and really enjoyed the community. She also would like that to be spread more throughout the Board and wishes the Board could participate. We have the opportunity to learn and share with this community.

Board Development Proposals

The Board Development Committee (BDC) has two items for discussion and approval from the Board. The *Board Leadership Development Program* proposal and *Board Development Committee Charter* proposal.

Board Leadership Development Program

We propose that we subscribe to services offered by Columinate's Board Leadership development program. We are specifically suggesting for the "Basic" package which would give Board members access to a variety of resources that could potentially be very helpful in educating new and current Board members.

Cost is \$5,175 please see the link below for details.

<https://columinate.coop/cooperative-board-leadership-development-program-cbld/#content>

Linda clarified that there are three packages offered and when she asked about the "basic" enrollment they responded that basic is for Co-ops in financial distress. We do not qualify for basic. They limit exceptions, because the services come from the annual enrollment fee. One approach, is to subscribe to the 'regular' and have a half day retreat and 15 consulting hours with unlimited enrollment in all workshops in 2022 for \$6,000.

- Linda will forward email from Columinate to all

- Grace will check with NCG about development fees that we could use

Feedback:

Jace feels like it is worth considering the regular package

Linda encourages all to look at their website. Its fantastic.

Grace pointed that we just consented to the 2022 Budget and this is where that expense would go. Do we want to have a discussion about the Board budget comprehensively or do we know this is where we want Board funds to go?

Linda responded that the Board has not had formal training like this, if we go over budget so be it. There is \$16,000 in the Board budget for expenses. This puts value on the Board.

Joanne asked how will this enhance us?

Linda responded that this gives us the opportunity to ask questions to other groups and share what is happening. She has seen lots of their articles and is familiar with Carolee Coulter who has also presented at Provender. Our in house training is unique to us and our unique structure. This is outside training that can inform and enhance all aspects of our work.

Proposal - Board Leadership Development Program

The BDC recommends that the Board subscribe to services offered by Columinate's Board Leadership Development Program. for calendar year 2022 for a total of \$ 6,000 - \$7,850

Consent

Stand Aside- Grace

Board Development Committee Charter

Proposal - Board Development Committee Charter Update

The Board approves the update to the Board Development Charter amending it to include "up to 2 members at large"

Consent

- Fern will amend the BDC charter and send on to staff pages and website

- Fern will send the updated and formatted committee charters to Jace

We also need to clean up the email address lists that live with the Email Coordinator and get those email addresses attached to the Charters. Charters should be on the Website Board tab as well.

Houseless Eastside

Linda asked for this be on the agenda to have a discussion regarding feedback she has heard in her Committee work and in our Stores.

When she was tabling at the Westside a Member was filling out the survey she had. They had a conversation and he talked about how sad he was that he couldn't shop at the Eastside anymore. He uses his bike for transportation, and in recent visits there he couldn't park in the bike shed because it wasn't safe or hygienic because of houseless neighbors sleeping/living there. When he spoke to Staff about it they said he was unsympathetic to 'their' situation. The following week when she was tabling at the Eastside she looked in the bike shed and someone was sleeping in there. What concerns her is that when a Member has a concern and are told that they are being unsympathetic to their condition. They need to be heard and not be told that they don't have compassion. The second complaint she has heard is that an outdoor electrical outlet that is called a 'charging station' at the Eastside has people on the sidewalk on the corner of the store impeding the access. She was told that there is a policy that allows it to be a charging station. There has been feces in the parking lot and needles. We owe it to our Members and Staff to make our properties safe. She doesn't think it is the Co-ops job to solve their problems but firmly believes we can assist. She would like to suggest that if Staff are very concerned about the houseless she supports assisting but not inviting them to our property as a resource. She has heard Staff in the past has assisted by preparing food at the mission or delivering food to the jungle. Its an issue and not appropriate for our business to do this.

Feedback:

Jace works for Interfaith Works homeless shelter and these issues are dear to them and feels very strongly about it. Interfaith is developing and opening a shelter in the next month a shelter that is just a few blocks away from the Eastside store. It is going to bring an influx of people to that resource. As a county and community and nationwide we are seeing more homeless people in our neighborhoods because they have lost their homes and this is their community and their home regardless. We don't know anything about anyone that shops at the Co-op and theres the concerns about safety, and those are valid concerns, and because there are people parked on the street and legally speaking we can't do anything about it because it is off our property and in the surrounding area. They agree that a proposal or plan from Staff is a great place to start and the Co-op used to bring meals to Interfaith Shelter and it would be great if they did that again. There is no great solution for a very complicated issue and hopes that Staff can work on a plan.

Linda is not talking about keeping them away from the Co-op. Its the hanging around on our property. A Staff Members bike was stolen, it was eventually recovered. Car prowlers have been out during the day. Making it known that people can hang out at the Co-op and charge phones is different. She isn't afraid and hears that we don't know all our shoppers but shoppers are coming to purchase groceries. It is making shoppers uncomfortable, and she hears and agrees that being uncomfortable is okay in circumstances.

Joanne doesn't have a solution. She was recently at the store and someone was sleeping on a sidewalk in his sleeping bag, she was startled and could have tripped on him if it was dark. She doesn't want to have a conversation with someone when she just wants to shop. We need to prioritize the shoppers and members. She appreciates the resources needed but ignoring it is not going to help. We need to have a conversation as an organization to come up with a solution. A broader conversation with the Membership. We are not trying to put them in a position or worse condition, we are trying to be compassionate.

Trudy worked in a medical center in Tacoma. They had to have clear boundaries and guided them to resources. The safety and comfort of our business and people are paramount. We can send them to resources but its not beneficial to have them hanging around. Clear boundaries are key.

Jace agrees about clear boundaries. We talk about that at work very frequently. Perhaps a solution is to have people give Staff their phone to charge instead of outside charging. Honestly, this conversation feels very not in my backyard. That its only okay if this happens else where. It feels very us versus them. We aren't taking into consideration there are unhoused Co-op Members. We are a resource in our community and especially in a time when there are not many resources for people to rely on. The co-op is not a place to be sleeping, but it is a gathering place and safe place for people. There is a balance in our community and we should challenge peoples thinking that this is a problem that we can send elsewhere. Trash and needles are going to happen no matter what its an unfortunate circumstance of our current time and setting. Jace is happy to be part of a long term conversation to come up with solutions.

Mel shared that one place to start is maintenance and boundary creating comes onto Facilities and Front end Staff. Perhaps they could monitor more and create those clear boundaries. Wherever we can include more hours and monitoring during business hours would help. She acknowledges the this is hard job to do and requires a lot of training.

Joanne likes the direction that Mel is going in and appreciates that we could have a conversation about having Staff be a primary contact either on shift or creating a role that could meet those needs. Maybe even a task force to solve it.

It would make Grace very sad to not let people charge their phones anymore.

Grace points that we are over the allotted time for this agenda item now. She hears and supports the notion of a task force and broadening the conversation. She also hears the notion of having a point person on shift for when we are open.

- Jace will take the houseless discussion forward with others and report back

Commitments

- Co-operative Health will look into IDI tools with Parfait Basel

Pending. In process

- Joanne will send out continuing education piece on co-ops in Washington state.

Pending. Move to next months meeting

- Everyone will submit Committee Reports via email

Some were sent in. Continue commitment

- Fern will amend the Cooperative Health Charter and forward to Staff Pages

Pending. Will send with board development charter when approved

- Grace will check in with Email Coordinator about Board Member emails and will ask reset on that password and share with all

- Fern will let the email coordinator know about the change

- Fern will let Corey know about the change in Secretary

- Grace will send out the vacancy process to all and the information about the last time we had appointments

- Fern will ask Harry to include Linda in Expansion emails

- MRC and Board Development will discuss and develop Board recruitment

- *Linda will respond to the feedback sent in regarding the Annual Meeting*
- *Linda will send out the link to the Provender sessions to all*
- *Linda will forward email from Columinate to all*
- *Grace will check with NCG about development fees that we could use*
- *Fern will amend the BDC charter and send on to staff pages and website*
- *Fern will send the updated and formatted committee charters to Jace*
- *Jace will take the houseless discussion forward with others and report back*

Meeting Eval

Linda felt that it went very well.

Mel- Lots consented too!

Jace impressed we ended on time.

Joanne happy we got lots done.

Next Facilitators

Linda / Joanne

Next Meeting

Co-op Index Survey

Decisions out of Meeting

1. **Approval of October Meeting Minutes** - decision made via email

Consent

Attached Documents

1. **Jayana Marshall Resignation**

11.18.2021

After what feels like months of consideration, I need to give notice of resignation from the Olympia Food Co-Op Board of Directors. I need the bandwidth to focus on my family and my job (which is going well but requires a lot of my attention and energy). I've appreciated working with you all.

Thank you for your work for the Co-Op.

Thank you,
Jayana Marshall

2. **Hiring Proposal - November 2021**

Labor Systems has taken into consideration the following items in our reassessment of the hiring needs, including the normally used "hiring formula". We are also including the answers to questions brought forth by staff members, for complete transparency on the parameters used to devise our new proposal of hiring 4 full time collective members by the end of 2021.

We think that all of this additional information supports the need for more staffing, and also gives good information for future collective conversations.

The proposal history...

In July, Labor Cat submitted a proposal to hire 2 new staff. This proposal was blocked with a request to increase the number. At that time we had reported:

"One staff member has recently resigned in addition to others moving to part time/ decreasing their hours. Additionally, LaborCAT has received information from staff who are either planning on leaving or decreasing their hours in the near future."

In August, we submitted a second proposal suggesting that we hire 6-8 new staff, taking into consideration the following changes to staffing since the first proposal.

- Another person has gone to part time, and another person has indicated intent to go to part time
- One staff is taking a year Sabbatical
- One staff has chosen not to come back after a leave
- Another staff has indicated that they will be leaving in the near future
- One staff has indicated that they will be going to school and reducing hours

A staff person marked "needs work" and contacted us with their concerns and questions. We also received general questions from 2 other staff who did not mark "needs work".

One of those staff wanted to see the hiring analysis formula. Since there were even more changes to staffing information we re-ran the formula. Here is the updated formula:

Hiring Analysis:

$110 \text{ (Average hours open/week)} + 22.5 \text{ (open management and coordination/week)} = 132.5 / 32 \text{ (Average hours worked/staff person)} = 4$

Add to that 3.5:

+ 1.5 (3 people intending to go to part time starting in January (counts as 1.5 people)) + 2 (3 people indicating their intent to leave at unknown time (counts as 2 people))

This equals 7.5.

The other staff asked the following: How many Temp/Flex Staff do we plan on hiring?

Currently there are 15 temporary staff. Labor Cat and Sassy would support that number transferring to Flex staff amounts when that becomes possible. There is no clear way to factor the Flex staff numbers into the hiring analysis because the number of hours covered by flex staff has the potential to be very fluid and unpredictable, so we do not support hiring more than 15 at this time.

Here are the questions from the staff who marked "needs work" and our responses:

1. How many total collective staff do we have who are not currently on sabbatical or long term leave? 75

2. What percentage of FT staff are currently working less than 30hrs/week (either have written a PT letter of intent or are on 20/20)? 8%

3. For floor hours: how many staff work 10-20 hours of their work in floor hours? 20-30 hours? 30-40 hours?

Less than 10 hours/week: 8

10-20 hours/week : 35

20-30 hours/week : 29

Over 30 hours/week: 6 (this is generally only the newest trainees)

4. How many staff are meeting their obligations to take extra work each week?

Dispatch and Sassy did a quick snapshot of participation and learned that an average of 70% of collective staff participate in the scheduling agreements, which is a higher percentage than we thought it would be.

5. How many staff are fulfilling the requirement for 4 hours of weekend work? Jan-March: 47 June-Aug: 54

6. Looking at previous years, what is the difference between open shift hours during the summer and open shift hours fall-spring?

Even though the Hiring Formula shows that 7.5 staff are needed, we feel it more prudent to break the hiring into 2 stages, due to the fact that many of the floor shifts currently available are not easily blended into a full day's work, and the DFRs have stressed that it is difficult to train more than 4 or 5 new hires at once. We are adjusting our proposal to reflect the current need for staffing and management, considering the future needs we can predict, due to some staffing changes we are aware of, This will give the flex staff system time to settle in, and see if it meets our needs, without an additional hire mid-2022, although we will reassess the need to hire additional people 1st quarter 2022.

Proposal:

To hire 4 new full time collective staff members, as soon as possible.