

Blue Hill Co-op Board Meeting
May 25, 2023, Blue Hill Co-op Café

Board Members Attending: Jo Barrett, Jenny Brillhart, Aaron Dority, Deborah Evans, Anne Gilchrist, Annie Silver, Jennifer Traub.

Absent Board Member(s): Jerome Lawther, Tim Tunney.

Others Attending: Julia Klein (Minute Taker), Kevin Gadsby (General Manager).

Julia Klein, minute taker

Aaron Dority, meeting facilitator, timekeeper

Jennifer Traub, tasks and decisions

Meeting called to order at 6:04 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Jo moved to approve the agenda with adjustments. Deborah seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

Approval of Minutes

Jen moved to approve the May 4, 2023 BOD Minutes with edits. Jenny seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

Tasks

Jen will put the P6 Conference next April on the Board calendar.

Annual Report items will be submitted to Kipp by June 1.

Jerome will set a Strategic Leadership Committee meeting date.

Open Owner Time

Deborah commented that Mia Strong of Strong Brewery is planning a grand opening on Memorial Day weekend. The brewery is featuring Goose egg pasta handmade with Maine grown Kamut and Deborah's eggs. Jo noted that it is delicious! The board suggested that Mia set up a booth in front of the Co-op. Discussion ensued regarding outdoor vendors' contribution to the Co-op. The board agreed that hosting vendors creates buzz and brings people into the store.

Elections Planning and Annual Meeting

Jo reported that a simple and clear ballot has been created. A PDF of the ballot is ready for printing in house and 10 ballots at a time will be kept at each register. Envelopes have been ordered. The E-ballot is nearly finished and Kipp has been streamlining the voting process. Jo and Deborah have been working on language and clarity.

Kevin broke the news that a major glitch occurred in the address database at Vistaprint, and a few hundred postcards were returned in the mail. Discussion ensued regarding the postcard design. It was noted that Co-op branding was not prominent. Jo responded that Kipp was reflecting Co-op principles posters over the dairy cooler in the store. The Annual Meeting Committee noted that the postcard should have included an invitation to the Annual Meeting as well as the Co-op logo. The board agreed a postcard should be sent for at least another year and

that it should be reviewed by the whole board prior to sending. Aaron recommended placing design review for the voting postcard on the calendar for next May.

Discussion turned to whether, considering the mailing fiasco, due diligence has been done to reach out to the owners whose emails bounced last year. Jo clarified that the postcard is not mandated by policy but is an extra alert to the new e-voting. The board determined that the postcard should be re-sent to owners with faulty emails to ensure that they are notified about the election. Staff will continue to promote the Annual Meeting and e-voting in other ways. Kevin will contact Vistaprint regarding reimbursement.

Jo suggested providing an opportunity for the board to train owners on e-voting. She reminded the board that voting opens June 6 and will continue until one week after the annual meeting allowing owners to meet the candidates. Discussion regarding logistics ensued. Jo, Deborah, and Aaron offered to stay after the meeting to train owners if needed. The opportunity for training will be announced at the meeting. Aaron suggested including a training video from Simply Voting in the ballot email.

Jenny and Anne will arrange with Liz in the Café for food and drinks at the meeting and will ask Edie Dunham to play the piano again this year. Anne recommended that food be sourced from the Co-op or the Café. Anne and Jenny offered to make food to fill in if needed. Food, drinks, and entertainment will begin at 5:30 with the Annual Meeting starting at 6:00. Directors will arrive at 5:00 to set up.

The board suggested that tastings could be incorporated into the annual meeting. Jennifer Coolidge may be asked to invite 2 or 3 vendors for tastings. Wine and beer should be included. Jenny and Anne will reach out to Kipp about promoting the Annual Meeting's food, entertainment, tastings, wine, and beer.

Board Monitoring

C4 Board Meetings – **After review, Jo moved that the board is in compliance with policy C4. Jenny seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.**

GM Monitoring

B4 Member Rights and Responsibility – The board reviewed Kevin's report. Jen inquired whether the Member-Owner Equity Refund Request created last year has been helpful. Kevin responded that it has. Jo commented that the board and Kevin have made improvements to this policy in the last year. **Anne moved to accept Kevin's GM report on B4 as in compliance. Jen seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carries.**

ENDS Report – Kevin presented his summary of how the Co-op achieved the ENDS statements throughout the year. He commented that despite challenges - covid, distribution, inventory price hikes - decent engagement with owners and the community has remained. The Strategic Leadership Committee will continue community engagement with local food focus and projects.

Kevin noted that sales jumped during the Hannaford changeover and continued afterward with many new shoppers in the store. Sales have been up 20% in May and 8-10 Maine producers have come to the Co-op from Hannaford. Hannaford reduced Maine products by 50% as well as

dropping the Field Day brand and unpasteurized products. Loyal followers of local producers have come to the Co-op. A reporter from the local paper interviewed Kevin regarding the change. Jo inquired whether WebCart would have been developed without covid. Kevin responded that it would not have and that the Blue Hill Co-op was the first to use WebCart. The program continues to have loyal shoppers. **Jo moved to accept Kevin's ENDS Report as in compliance. Jen seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.**

Finance Committee – Kevin expressed the need to communicate with owners about their investments and to formulate a response to inquirers. The committee is working through a decision tree on what to do, how to communicate, and in what order. Kevin reached out to a new lawyer on the topic but decided to re-engage Jeff Spaulding at Eaton Peabody to clarify the process. The Finance Committee will meet after Kevin hears from the lawyer.

Agenda

GM Report - B5 Customer Treatment
C5 Code of Conduct - Jenny
Conflicts of Interest - Board Reflection

Meeting Evaluation: Lively!

Meeting Adjourned: 7:26PM

Due Date for the Board Packet: Items for the Board Packet will be due on Thursday, June 15, 2023.

Next Board Meeting: Annual Meeting/Board Meeting Thursday, June 22, 2023, 5:30-7:30 PM, Blue Hill Co-op, Café. Board setup at 5:00.

Minutes submitted by Julia Klein