

**Frederick County Consumer Cooperative
Board of Directors Meeting
January 27th, 2022**

Board members present: Megan Schneebaum, Mary McKelvie, Gislene Tasayco, John Clarke, Alecks Moss, John Beutler

Board members absent: Lynn Brantley, Bob Wolpert

Staff members present: Román Diaz, Sarah Lebherz, Susan Schulman, Blair Barnes, Eric Moser, Nick Fitzpatrick, Joe Asim – Staff Liaison

Owners present: Judy, Mary Hardin, Annie Marshall

Guest Speaker & Interpretation: Aaron Stephens, Special Project Director, The ARC Frederick County

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm by Megan Schneebaum via Zoom.

Food for Thought: A Speaker Series

The meeting started with a 20-minute TED talk style presentation about The ARC and their Culinary Training Academy in Frederick. It was another moving presentation about the importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Approval of Agenda

Agenda is approved.

Consent Agenda

Board Meeting Minutes from December 2021 were approved.

Owner refund requests were approved.

Owner Comment Period

None

Quarterly Financials

Sarah highlighted highest weekly financial totals to date – Week 37: Christmas, and Week 39: Blizzard. Note that these sales were achieved with only 10.9% labor. Things are slowly moving in the right direction. Cash on hand saw a slight dip due to expected equipment repairs at the Rt. 85 store. Further discussion of the Coop's financial status was included in the GM Monitoring as B3 – Financial Condition mentioned below.

Staff-Board Liaison Update

Joe presented Staff feedback and request notes received in the Board suggestion box:

1. Suggestion to make sure that Curbside Staff workloads are reviewed based on the number of curbside orders and the importance of having a curbside option for Owners.
2. A request for more buttons with pronouns & messaging: "happy to help from 6 ft. away" – Susan said Marketing can make these this week.
3. Staff would like to have ASL classes – HR would like to start building the training and orientation program and will take this request into consideration.
4. A concern that with departmental cross training, team members will be inefficient – management will keep an eye on this.
5. The Café team has been offered tips and would like to accept, but not allowed to. Discussion followed about the equity of only one department receiving tips. There was further discussion about how tips affect payroll and taxes.

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6. A request for gender neutral restrooms. Staff has access to gender neutral restrooms in the warehouse/back of house area. Signage will be updated to remove gendered images. Discussion about gender neutral restrooms for customers is ongoing with Board and Leadership team.

Staff Department Focus – Café

Eric Moser, Director of Prepared Foods was welcomed. He oversees the Café at both store locations. He updated the Board about staffing and the difficulty that the industry is seeing nationwide in foodservice. Having Sue Leveille on board working as a recruiter has been a tremendous help; she has prescreened great candidates. Based on the number of recent new hires, the Café at Rt. 85 is scheduled to reopen the beverage service line on February 2nd with the sandwich line to re-open in March. Eric met with Mark Pependice of National Co-op Grocers (NCG) who is pleased with the direction our cafes are going and the quality of staff, systems in place and training programs.

Alecks asked about cross training and Eric replied that it is happening, particularly for people from other departments to help run the register while baristas prepare food and drink – it can get difficult from a quality perspective to have people from other departments making food and drinks.

Megan thanked Eric for all of his hard work and dedication, she said that Eric can approach the Board at any time if there are areas where the Board can help.

GM Monitoring

- B3 – Financial Condition
 - Román presented Financial Indicators; categories showing include: Current ratio, Debt to Equity, Labor Expense. Categories showing non-compliance included Net Income, Sales Growth and Gross Profit Margin. Margin less wages, EBITDAP and Inventory Turns categories were rated as “TBD”.
 - Items of note – sales growth at 7th street is strong. There is opportunity to improve sales at Rt. 85. Looking at receiving policies to help with margins. The Café at Rt. 85 will be opening and should help overall sales.
 - Megan thinks it would be helpful for when there a isn’t a benchmark reached, to understand where the GM, Román, would like it to be. In the future, Román will provide information about the steps he is taking to reach compliance. John B motioned to approve Roman’s report on B3, Mary seconded. All voted in favor.
- B4 – Asset Protection
 - Román discussed the protection of assets, including repair, insurance and payroll systems. The only area of non-compliance was the budget for maintenance and repairs. Routine maintenance on older equipment had not been followed and as a result, there has been more spent on repairs than budgeted.
 - John C asked what will happen if Rt. 85 store equipment needs more repair since 98% of the budget has already been used? Román mentioned that we are expecting to spend \$30,000 for the remainder of the fiscal year so will most likely go over budget and will have to pull from another GL account.

Board Monitoring

- D2 – Board Job Descriptions

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- John C presented the policy with the Board. John C and Megan will review and revise for vote at next meeting.

Board Nomination Process

The Board recently had two Directors voluntarily resign and it is the Board's responsibility to fill these seats in a timely manner according to the Bylaws. Alecks motioned to approve an open call for candidates. John C. seconded. All voted in favor. Marketing will work with Megan and Mary on a timeline and messaging.

Strategic Plan Discussion

Brief Board discussion about the need to include in a strategic plan, Bylaw revisions and discuss Board Member retention.

DEI Update

Next meeting – Monday, February 7 @12:30 PM. Next Food for Thought Speaker – Partners in Care Frederick.

Alcohol Sales in Grocery Stores

John B. discussed the Maryland House Bill that was presented in support of allowing beer and wine to be sold in grocery stores in Maryland. John B. testified at the Feb. 19 hearing via Zoom. His testimony focused on the Common Market being able to support local Maryland wineries and breweries. The next reading of the bill is in April.

Odds and ends

- Lunch with Leadership 12:00 noon: Feb 24 @ Rt. 85 Mary and John B will attend. Mar 3 @ 7th Alex & John C will attend.
- GM Vision – Román will distribute hard copy to all staff mailboxes
- Beer and Wine Bill – John B. still following process, now going through Ron Young's office. Trying to get an appointment with lawyer, Lian.
- Green Committee – Need Rt. 85 rep. Next meeting Feb. 4 @ 11 AM.
- CBL – Mary & Joe went to CBL 101, it was an invaluable experience and amazing resource.
- Lovettsville – Common Market donated a \$100 gift certificate to their groundbreaking event. They are still selling C-shares.
- Jim Hanna passed away. Common Market will donate to charity.
- MAFCA – still planning for a date in May 2022.
- Spring Retreat – May 14 & 15.
- Follow up
 1. Megan will email Board asking for feedback & strategic plan input.
 2. Megan will talk to Joe about how best to follow up with Staff feedback and input.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Executive Session Followed.