

**Frederick County Consumer Cooperative
Board of Directors Meeting**

March 28, 2024

Board Members Present: Megan Schneebaum, Julie Richards, Toby Schermerhorn, Alecks Moss, Kai Hagan, Joe Eastwood, Juan Ducos

Board Liaison Present:

Staff Members Present: Román Diaz, Nick Fitzpatrick, Grace Scott, Ana Palacios, Susan Schulman, Amanda Harmon

Owners Present:

The meeting was called to order at 6:08pm by Julie Richards via Zoom.

Approval of Agenda: Juan motions to approve the March 2024 Common Market Co-op Board of Directors meeting agenda. Toby seconds, all Board members vote in favor.

Quick Check in.

Consent Agenda:

- February 22 minutes ***Owner refunds: #3280 (moving); #9500 (moving); #0947 (other); #9521 (found co-op closer to home) **
- Request for early redemption of C-shares, \$1,500: #8475 (equity refund was approved via consent agenda in last month's meeting)
- The Owner Refund Form, instead of being edited as previously indicated, will be left as is. Under the approved section, the monthly board meeting at which the refund is approved will be noted, in lieu of the Board President's initials.

Owner comment period:

Staff-Board Liaison Update: Is Common Market in compliance with the minimum wage increase? Since Maryland raised the minimum wage Jan. 2024 to \$15 per hour, some staff have suggested that Common Market should also increase wages. We have been hiring for the most part above \$15 hr. for the past 8 months since our minimum wage has been \$15 for a while. The Common Market is looking into adjusting the minimum wage and working on a wage compression scale which would adjust salaries of employees who make similar or less than new employees' minimum wage. The Leadership team talked with Weavers Way Co-op when they visited PA last month and would like to create a similar scale.

A staff question came through the Board Staff Liaison about why the written responses to the Staff Survey were not published. In response, written responses to the Staff Survey have never been published; trends from the survey responses have been published and the 2024 survey followed this pattern. We are working on reviewing comments and will post summaries of relevant comments in the near future.

Financial Dashboard Update: Román presents the financial dashboard update.

Staff Department Focus: Ana Palacios, Wellness Department Manager at the 7th St. Store, has enhanced her department's success through the following strategic improvements:

- Department Reset: Optimized layout for improved customer experience.
- New Product Introduction: Expanded offerings to attract and retain customers.
- Product Knowledge and Staff Training: Ensured staff proficiency for better customer service.
- Personalized Support: One-on-one coaching to cultivate team effectiveness.
- Inventory Management: Avoids overstocking, optimizes inventory levels through collaboration with Tracey, the Wellness Buyer.

Ana's initiatives have driven efficiency, customer satisfaction, and sales growth within the department.

10-Minute Break: 7:15pm

Employee Directors - Compensation and Compartmentalization of Roles: Board members discussed whether Employee Directors should be required to use their personal PTO when attending Board related training and events.

GM Monitoring - B8 Membership: Román discusses Membership and reports overall satisfaction with room for improvement in the following areas: Voter participation, reconsidering the effectiveness of mailing postcards and increasing overall owner social participation.

Alecks motions to approve the GM monitoring report on policy B8 Membership. Joe seconds, all Board members vote in favor.

Board Monitoring D8 - Board Recruiting, Development, and Expenses: Annual check in about Board compensation to be put on April Agenda.

Alecks motions to accept the revision of Policy D1. Toby seconds, all Board members vote in favor.

Board Policy Updates: (post-retreat action): Megan shares her screen with the Board and highlights changes made to policies.

- B8 - Ownership (revision of current B8.2)

Julie motions to accept the revision of Policy B8. Kai seconds, all Board members vote in favor.

- D2 - Board Job Description (addition of new sub-policy)

Kai motions to accept the revision of Policy D2. Julie seconds, all Board members vote in favor.

- D10 - Board Meetings (New D Policy to codify how the Board currently makes decisions)

Kai motions to accept the revision of Policy D10. Julie seconds, all Board members vote in favor.

Strategic Planning Discussion: Román discusses new equipment that will be implemented at Rt. 85, cafe bowl program, marketing will focus heavily on 85, goal to increase basket size by 90 cents, incentive for community room (catering) and overall improvements for Community Room space.

Odds and End:

- Ownerfest/Annual Meeting - Would like to change the date from 12th October to 19th October. All Board Members approve of the new date.
- LGBTQIA+ 101 Training Update (Feedback on training at Route 85 on 03/25; next training is at 7th Street store on 03/29 at 3pm)
- In Store Events: Saturday 13th April, Co-op Clothing Swap; Saturday 27th April, Plant-a-Palooza (VOLUNTEERS NEEDED PLEASE!) and Earth Day Celebration; Saturday 29th June, Yoga & Wellness Event; Saturday 24th August 50th Anniversary Celebration

- Spoonful - April 15 deadline for May/June issue: Juan Ducos (Thank you!); we require a volunteer to write the Board column for the July/August issue Alecks: Deadline June 15th | Julie Deadline: June 12th.
- *The Beet - Board contributions* Board is welcome to Include any information they wish to communicate with the staff. Alecks suggests the Board and Management provide answers to staff questions in the newsletter.
- Social Media posts involving the Board: Please respond to Kayleigh Montgomery's correspondence ASAP
- In-Store Live Streaming of Board Meetings with Refreshments
- Board Development Update- Alecks suggests quotes from the board about why voting and being a board member is important.
- Lunch with Leadership May 23rd 85th (Kai) and May 16th 7th St. (Joe)
- CBLD Training Calendar (Armando, report on CBLD 101 training; 04/02 - Leadership Learning Circle: Intentional Communication 2-part webinar; 4/20 - Virtual CBL 101: Foundations for Directors; 04/23 - Leadership Learning Circle: Change & Resistance, Am I Immune to Change 5-part webinar; April - 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge <https://columinate.coop/events/>
- CCMA 2024 in Portland Maine: May 30th - June 1st (Board members interested in attending should have already responded to Blair)
- CDFs 2024 Co-op 5K on May 4th in Washington D.C.
- Board Retreat 2025: January 25th & 26th (dates are confirmed) Román and Sarah invited on the 25th.
- Bathroom update
- Quarterly Board Working Meeting: Thursday 11th April, 7pm - 9 pm
- Good of the Order

Follow up work/next steps:

- Alecks to research and contact Co-ops that have Board Employee Directors
- Incumbents need to declare if they plan to run again by the 25th
- Megan to potentially switch seats with Employee Seat (make decision next Board Meeting)
- Spoonful Article by April 15th
- Alecks to generate thoughtful questions for Board Members to answer
- Board Compensation on Agenda for next month

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm by Julie Richards. Executive session followed. Meeting minutes recorded by Amanda Harmon.