

## **Frederick County Consumer Cooperative**

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

**August 22, 2024**

**Board Members Present:** Julie Richards, Alecks Moss, Kai Hagen, Armando Martinez, Joe Eastwood, Juan Ducos, Megan Schneebaum

**Board Liaison Present:** N/A

**Board Members Absent:** Merrick McKelvie, Toby Schermerhorn

**Staff Members Present:** Román Diaz, Armando Martinez, Amanda Harmon, Susan Schulman, Sarah Lebherz, Blair Barnes, Grace Scott, Lara Ecker, Wren Laxton

**Owners Present:** Annie Marshall, Cynthia Diamondstone, Nina Carr, Matt Montemurno, Melissa Moschella, David Cloutier

**The meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Julie Richards via Zoom.**

**Approval of Agenda:** Joe motions to approve the August Common Market Co-op Board of Directors meeting agenda. Alecks seconds, all board members vote in favor.

#### **Consent Agenda:**

- July 25 minutes - approved
- Owner refunds\*\*\*: 11641 (moving, appreciates that there was always someone on staff who could sign); 11177 (workplace relocation); 10838 (no reason); 5991 (no longer able to drive due to injury); 4865 (no longer able to make the drive)

#### **Owner comment period:**

- Wren expresses their concerns regarding the changes of the bathroom signage and is disheartened that the Co-op decided to reverse the decision of the gender neutral bathroom signage. Annie echoes Wren's concern regarding changing of the signage.

#### **Owner Comment Box:**

- Why does the Board get a stipend? Julie confirmed this question was answered in the The Beet Newsletter
- Why did the gender neutral bathroom signage get changed back?
  - The signs were changed due to the feedback that was received regarding the signs being unclear and causing awkward and uncomfortable situations
  - Roman confirmed that we are looking into budgeting for a single stall gender neutral bathroom or both stores

### **Staff Department Focus:**

Nick Fitzpatrick provided an update on store operations in all departments. In Produce ongoing efforts have been implemented to improve quality control, staff training, ordering, and workflow. In Meat and Seafood, there has been a noted decline in seafood sales across many co-ops, prompting a focus on marinated meats, soup starters, and building local brands like Autumn Olive. The Wellness department has introduced an "Owner Pre-Shop" system to streamline purchasing and prevent stock shortages during Owner Appreciation months. Café and Bakery have rolled out new menu items, including a new sandwich menu, bowl programs, new pastries, and grab-and-go burritos. Overall, the store is building infrastructure for the MOD program, creating staff development opportunities and efficient training for all staff.

### **GM Monitoring B2 - Financial Planning**

Román reports overall satisfaction regarding policy B2 - Financial Planning. All criteria in this report meet standards.

**Kai motions to approve the GM monitoring report on policy B2 - Financial Planning to the Board. Joe seconds, all board members vote in favor.**

### **Break 7:36**

**Board Monitoring D7 - Relationship to Member-Owners:** Megan shares her screen of policy D7 - Relationship to Member-Owners and asks for Board reflection on Board performance in regard to policy.

Discussion Focus:

- Specific emphasis on policy 2.3: Ensuring effective communication of the co-op's vision and mission to Owners.
- Noted that the Board could improve its promotion of cooperative principles to Owners.

Suggestions for Improvement:

- Collaborate with the marketing team to promote co-op principles more
- More signage within the store
- Conduct an Owner Survey to better understand Owner values and needs, considering options like a 3CRX Survey
- Roman to explore potential survey platforms or options

### **Review of Board Calendar for 2024-2025 Fiscal Year:**

- Confirmation of date for next MAFCA meeting in Philadelphia, PA is Sunday 13th October

### **GM Check-in:**

- With two consecutive positive income quarters and 44 days of cash on hand, the co-op may reduce its cash reserve to 8%, returning a 100,000 security deposit. This is under review by NCG's CFO and risk committee.
- Staff Survey feedback highlighted that staff training could be approved upon. It will be required that all staff members do two paid training sessions a month in paylocity.
- CRX survey shows that we need to focus on greeting customers throughout the store not just at the registers
- Extra OAD Aug. 22nd-25th
- Goal 51% of sales from Owners (Owner Only Specials) (Extra Discounts) (Grow through trainings)
- 25,000 subscribers received the FNP insert magazine 10,000 copies to be delivered for Marketing to disperse

### **Odds and End:**

- Board Elections update (Meet the Candidates scheduled for 08/24 during 50th Anniversary Celebration; voting ends on 23rd September)
- Lunch with Leadership @ Rte. 85 in September (TBD) Sept 5th 12:30 pm Alecks
- Spoonful Magazine: Thanks to Megan and Merrick. The September/October Board column is on fire - it will be a 2-page spread! (Deadline for the Nov/Dec issue is 10/15) Julie to write column for Spoonful
- UPDATE on 50th Anniversary Celebration: Saturday 24th August @ Rte. 85 (12-3 pm) BOARD VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
- In the Streets: 14th September 2024 (11am-5pm)
- Ownerfest and Annual Meeting: Saturday 19th October @ Rte. 85 (12-3 pm)
- 2025 Board Retreat: 01.25 and 01.26.2025
- Habitat for Humanity/ReStore (exploring how other organizations recruit Board members) - <https://habitat-wc.org/about/board-of-directors>
- Co-op helping co-ops: CM staff and steering committee for co-op in Annapolis area; Sarah presenting at Up & Coming conference in Kalamazoo, MI in September
- CBLD Training Calendar: CBLD 101 Virtual 10/26; Finance Training for Directors 09/17; Effective Meeting Facilitation W/Shop 08/27; Facilitation Fundamentals Webinar Series 09/05; Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication 09/16 (<https://columinate.coop/events/>)

### **Good of the Order:**

- Joe's last day on The Board is Sept. 7th.
- Julie plans to step down from the Board President position in December when Executive Committee elections are held.

### **Follow up work/next steps:**

- Amanda to send In the Streets schedule to Julie and Board
- Fiscal Calendar check-in in six months
- Armando to send Retreat possibility to Susan and Amanda
- Alecks to attend Lunch with Leadership if Toby cannot attend
- Román to look into CRX survey to see if we can pull Owner Only information from survey

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm by Julie Richards. Executive session followed. Meeting minutes recorded by Amanda Harmon.**