



December 15, 2014 Board Meeting, 7:00 pm, 486-12th Street, Astoria

Present: Allie Evans, Beth La Fleur, Matt Stanley, Angela Sidlo, Libby Lawrence, Norma Hernandez, Brad Hill

Excused: Hilary Herman, Sam Seulean

Public present: No one from the public was present.

Call to order: Allie called the meeting to order. The Board reflected on the recent Board retreat in Chimacum, WA and reviewed the retreat Summary packet. There was a discussion of our observations of the Port Townsend Co-op, including topics of operations, store layout, and their expansion progressions and challenges. Libby mentioned the importance of building flexibility into a plan (example, movable walls) and Brad mentioned the idea of building large and leasing out space so that an entity has the option for expansion and future growth in its current space.

Allie pointed out where we are in the Strategic Planning timeline. We are just about on-track. Matt wrote a recap of recent events and retreat for the staff in an email. He would like to do a staff meeting and share the member survey results in a structured way. Information gathered through the survey will guide Board and management strategic planning and future actions. Matt reminded the Board that there will always be 1%-2% of survey-takers who feel it is a sounding board to be critical in a nonconstructive way, and to remember this percentage does not represent the entire or even majority of membership. Norma stated it may be important to share with staff some of those comments. It could give context to what the staff hears in the store, while out on the floor. Matt agreed, and that in a structured process and format, it could be productive. Brad mentioned he recommends giving the 1%-2% acknowledgement because otherwise it looks like we're glossing over their concerns. Matt agreed. This led into the next discussion of how the Board and Matt, as the GM, will deal with receiving owner/member comments. Currently people can submit comments via various emails found on the web and facebook pages. These get directed to Matt. Then, within 24 hours, Matt sends or calls with a response. He will also inform the Board President of his response. The owner is invited to the next Board meeting and can share unresolved concerns during the public comment period. This process allows the General Manager to handle these types of matters without actively engaging the entire Board at the outset. There may be times when it may be necessary for the Board to actively resolve matters.

Matt briefly reviewed the letter from owner Christopher Paddon who was critical of the Co-op carrying cosmetics. The Co-op has been carrying cosmetics for at least ten years. The Board expressed support for the way Matt handled the situation, which was per the process described above. Norma and the Board concurred that it is important for the Board to be aware of these matters, so including letters and pertinent information in the Board packet is worthwhile to do. Allie added that it is important to always treat owner comments respectfully, and suggested running our process by Holly O'Neil, and meanwhile we will continue to forward to the Board, all issues or comments that pertain to or require Board acknowledgement, discussion or action.

Logistics: The next Board meetings are planned for January 22, February 26, and April 7, 2015. Board meetings will take place at 486 12th Street, at 7 pm.

Matt will be on vacation during the second half of May 2015.

Minutes: Beth asked for a motion to approve November Board minutes, with minor correction of spelling error. Norma made the motion to approve, Libby seconded, and all approved.

Manager's Report: Matt discussed the first draft of the business plan. Next month he will provide a final version and provide a corresponding budget. Matt asked for input from the Board about areas we should be spending time on (this would help implement the "Board Development" piece). Libby suggested more time on understanding financials, and perhaps bringing in a professional to give us a crash course in business accounting. Allie added we could spend time at a Board meeting doing that, or find time to meet outside of a Board meeting. Matt said he can also bring in a laptop to the Board meetings and connect remotely to access the financials during our meetings. This would also parallel board development and we can take chunks of the "expansion tool kit" section in our Board binders to discuss and get ready for next steps.

Matt added we should also be thinking of Board elections and put the nomination process into the newsletter. We discussed term years and length of service. Currently, the terms are as follows: Allie Evans, elected 5/11 and 5/13. Beth LaFleur, elected 5/12 and 5/14. Norma Hernandez, elected 5/13. Libby Lawrence, elected 5/13. Hilary Herman, elected 5/14. Angela Sidlo, elected 5/14. Brad Hill, elected 5/14. Sam Seulean, elected 5/14.

Matt reviewed the financials with the Board. "2nd Quarter Profit Loss" is mislabeled and should read Year to Date (Jan through end of September) Profit Loss. Brad supports keeping employees happy because that keeps costs down (ie turnover is expensive) and keeps a happy workplace. Though labor is biggest expense after cost of goods sold, we don't want to tinker with benefits. Instead, we want to use creative productivity. For example, we are absorbing tasks as attrition happens to be creative and to be able to keep good wages and our good workforce. We want to keep good people.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth La Fleur, Board Secretary