

The General Meeting Minutes of the
Common Ground Food Co-op Board
Urbana-Champaign
December 10, 2007

This meeting of the CGFC Board was held in the Illinois Disciples Foundation on Monday, December 10, 2007 at 5:30 PM.

Board members present: Katrina Bromann, Clint Popetz, Richard Antisdell, Ben Galewsky, Lisa Bralts-Kelly, Tim McHenry

Agenda Amendments

There were no agenda amendments.

Blog Assignments

12/14—Tim (equity)

12/21—Richard

12/28—Holiday; post something merry from the board

1/4—Clint

1/11—Lisa (new membership linkage)

1/18—Katrina

1/25--Ben

GM Monitoring: EL #2K, #2L, Environmental Responsibility, Social Responsibility

Jacqueline sent two reports to the board and was found to be in compliance with both policies.

Finalize Wording of Board Relocation Vision Statement

Clint passed out a version that he had typed up from the board retreat on Saturday, and we performed a collective edit to get to a finished statement.

Plan Member Linkage “New Member Event” for January

We brainstormed ideas for a new member event, including bowling, skating, potluck at the IDF, and pool at Jupiters. We decided on bowling, on January 28th. Katrina will get the new member list from Jacqueline after January 1st. The board will split up the list and make calls to invite new members from the past year.

Self Monitoring: GP #2g Cost of Governance (Board Budget)

The board came up with a tentative budget to present to Jacqueline:

\$60—Wiki (\$5 per month)

\$40—Survey

\$300—Catering (2 new member linkage events and 1 board retreat at \$100 each)

\$500—CCMA (for registration; travel not included)

\$2160—Board compensation (\$30 per month per member; 6 members currently)

\$XX—General Membership Meeting (Richard will provide this figure)

\$2000—Director’s Insurance

\$XX—Board consultant to come once a year

\$XX— Audit

\$100— Books/educational materials

Review Ends with Regard to Size and Diversity of Community Served

The board reviewed the ends policies, in particular Ends #2a.

In response to various blog comments, the board considered a suggestion that increasing diversity is at odds with the type of products we sell, in particular with regard to economic diversity. A long discussion ensued about whether economic diversity could realistically be achieved through a change in product selection, whether this impact would have a negative effect on our co-op, and whether diversity was actually a goal of the co-op. Everyone agreed that diversity is a goal, but not necessarily a goal upon which we want to sacrifice other ideals, e.g. by carrying more conventional food for which consumers aren't paying the "true price," or for which the environmental and social impact is negative. It was noted that multiple ends policies, like multiple bottom lines, have a natural tension between them, since resources devoted to one often means resources aren't devoted to another. The current policy on product selection requires the GM to balance the health of the store, the needs of members, and the ends, and the current store is doing a good job of maintaining this balance. For example, as more affluent people shop at the co-op, and demand higher-end goods, there is a pressure to carry those goods. However, it was noted that the co-op actually has **greater** bulk selection than it has had in the past, so this effect doesn't seem to be squeezing out more affordable items. It was also suggested that education can make "good food" more affordable (for example by cooking rather than eating packaged foods), but we agreed that we don't want to get into the position of claiming that we can solve the problems faced by lower income people by suggesting changes to their lifestyles, and that in fact lower-income people often have **less** time to cook, not more. We also considered the idea that diversity as a goal isn't measurable (without quotas) and that therefore it was not something to which we could hold a GM accountable. However it was agreed that many of the ends statements are unquantifiable in nature, and that this doesn't make them unimportant. Advertising and outreach, which the co-op hasn't been able to afford much of in the past but will in the near future, can help increase diversity, and the choices made with regard to where and how to advertise will make a big difference, and those choices can be guided by policy.

In the end, the group decided that diversity is still a goal of the co-op, that it isn't at odds with the other ends policies or the mission, but that a natural tension exists between expanding diversity and selling goods that by their nature (having positive environmental and social impacts) are more expensive. The group believes that the existing product selection policy strives for a balance among these goals while still meeting member needs.

The next scheduled CGFC Board meeting will be held January 8th, 2008 at 5:30 PM at the IDF. Bring food for the potluck!

Respectfully submitted,

Katrina A. Bromann

Common Ground Food Co-op Secretary