

Common Ground Food Co-op  
 Board Meeting Minutes  
 January 8, 2018  
 6:15 pm to 8:15 pm  
 Urbana Civic Center, Urbana Illinois

Present: Karen Carney, Magdalena Casper-Shipp, Charles Delman, Margaret Johnstone, Keith McKenney, Karen Medina, Marissa Stewart, Kristin Walters, Julie Zilles

Absent: None

Others Present: Tim Sullivan, Interim GM  
 Colin Dodson, Interim IT Coordinator/Owner  
 Sam Ihm, Employee/Owner  
 Stuart Levy, Owner  
 Jason Reinglass, Employee/Owner  
 Z Snyder, Owner  
 Jeffrey Chandler, Minute Taker

Proceedings	
<b>Meeting called to order</b>	<b>At 6:17 pm by Julie Zilles</b>
<b>1. Preliminaries</b>	<p><b>A. Guests/Owners</b>            Tim Sullivan, Interim GM            Colin Dodson, Interim IT Coordinator/Owner            Sam Ihm, Employee/Owner            Stuart Levy, Owner            Jason Reinglass, Employee/Owner            Z Snyder, Owner            Jeffrey Chandler, Minute Taker</p> <p><b>B. Public Comment</b>            None.</p> <p><b>C. Agenda Amendments</b>            None.</p>
<b>2. Board Study</b>	<p><b>Visioning Working Group</b></p> <p><b>A. Visioning &amp; Democracy Project History</b>            Julie Zilles advised Jacqueline Hannah was supposed to present this portion but is ill, so she would fill in as much as possible. She also noted she posted documents on basecamp for review during the meeting.</p> <p>Julie reported that based on last month's meeting the working group was unsure</p>

regarding the board's desired direction for the group. This led the group to review their charter, which will be voted on later.

Julie reviewed information regarding the 2011 visioning process and information collected. She advised the process included a good cross-section of owner demographics as well as staff for input collection. Julie reviewed the steps she was aware Jacqueline and the board took after reviewing this information, but noted Jacqueline would know more about the staff efforts at the time. Julie noted some of her personal takeaways from the process include a need for more consistent input gathering, whereas this process was one and done, and that the input they received was not directed more towards feasible projects for the co-op at that time.

Julie continued by reviewing the Democracy Project, which was a project Jacqueline initiated shortly before she resigned. Julie reviewed topics covered at the original meeting included increasing owner engagement, owner input gathering for more inclusive decision making, and competition preparation. She noted the group also discussed the dual meaning of democracy as defined then.

**B. 2017 Democracy Project Recap**

Kristin Walters presented a review of the work of the 2017 Democracy Project Working Group. She reviewed the majority of the work last year was devoted to information gathering, including a board and staff survey to evaluate short and long term goals for feasibility. She also reviewed owner input strategies, including a survey, the FinMOO, and vestibule questions. Kristen also reviewed some of the top ideas for both short and long term goals.

	<p><b>C. 2018 Focus, Charter</b></p> <p>Karen Carney reviewed the outline the working group developed to help determine ways the committee should pursue obtaining information from owners and staff. Karen Medina expressed concerns about previous information gathering techniques. Julie added the board also consults with Todd Wallace for information collection strategies.</p> <p>Julie requested input regarding the goals presented prior to the meeting. There was discussion about having independent long term and short terms goals, or having short term goals serve as steps toward the long term goals. Magdalena Casper-Shipp asked if the group committee was looking for additional long term goals or if they wanted to focus on the one presented, Karen C. clarified they would like to focus on one, but are open to other goals if they arise. Keith McKinney asked what was meant by “strong inclusive leadership” and Karen C. noted that referred to key stakeholders, including staff and owners. It was noted the process is designed to be as inclusive as possible in input gathering campaigns. Magdalena noted she appreciated the charter specifically requires work with the standing committees.</p>
<p><b>3. Consent Agenda</b></p>	<p><b>A. Public Minutes from December Meeting</b>  <b>B. Private Minutes from December Meeting</b>  <b>C. MORE Report</b>  <b>D. Monthly Financials</b></p> <p><b>Action Taken</b></p> <p>The board approved the Consent Agenda as a whole. Charles Delman abstained by absence from vote.</p>

<p><b>4. GM Monitoring</b></p>	<p><b>A. Interim GM Monitoring Report</b></p> <p><b>Action Taken</b> The board unanimously approved the report as in compliance.</p> <p><b>B. EL B2 Budget</b> Tim Sullivan reviewed the changes from November, noting changes to enrollment, sales, labor, lease and overall budget.</p> <p><b>Action Taken</b> The board unanimously accepted the report as in compliance.</p>
<p><b>5. Board Monitoring</b></p>	<p><b>A. BP C2 Board Job Description</b> Keith noted he felt owner relationships require more focus. Marissa Stewart reviewed the outreach efforts of the previous year. There was discussion and general agreement owner relationships require focus, which was sent to the Owner Outreach committee to bring a plan and timeline to March 2018 meeting.</p> <p><b>Action Taken</b> The board found themselves in compliance with the exception of owner relationships. The board also charged the Owner Outreach to bring a plan and timeline for a return to compliance to the March 2018 meeting.</p> <p>Julie opened discussion regarding the policy itself, citing previous discussion comments from Keith and Karen M. Julie took an informal poll regarding concerns about the policy, and with around half of the board showing concerns the policy was referred to the Policy Committee for review.</p>
<p><b>6. Committee Updates</b></p>	<p><b>A. Board Development Committee</b> No report.</p> <p><b>B. Owner Outreach</b> Kristin reported the committee is meeting this week regarding marketing and the newsletter.</p>

	<p><b>C. Policy Committee</b></p> <p>Charles proposed the committee review all policies this year. He noted a full review has not been completed in five years, currently the committee does not have a long to do list, there have been many policy questions lately, and CGS just released a new template. Magdalena noted concerns about the time line of the project and if the project would lose steam if committee member’s terms ended. Charles advised their strategy would be to evaluate policies as they appear on the board calendar, so when the board reviews a normal report they can thoroughly review the policy at the same time. Julie noted during the previous review all changes were noted throughout and one large vote was taken upon completion. Julie advised this is a large project and requires board approval.</p> <p><b>Action Taken</b></p> <p>The board unanimously approved a full policy review by the Committee.</p> <p><b>D. Visioning Working Group</b></p> <p><b>Action Taken</b></p> <p>The board approved the Visioning Working Group Charter, Keith McKinney abstained.</p> <p><b>E. GM Search Committee</b></p> <p>Marissa reported the committee is holding interviews this week, and if all goes well may have finalists to present to the board. She noted they have 3 interviews and that the recruiting consultant is still actively looking.</p> <p><b>Action Taken</b></p> <p>The board unanimously approved the GM Search Committee Charter.</p>
<p><b>7. GM Update</b></p>	<p><b>Food Hub Feasibility</b></p> <p>Tim Sullivan began his presentation noting co-ops were founded as a place where consumers could get goods not found elsewhere, but as the marketplace gets more competitive, how will co-ops survive? He notes a goal is to sustain a local food market.</p>

	<p>He has been having discussions with producers regarding a need for a better way to distribute their goods. Tim feels if a food hub is needed it will come, and we can either be a part of it or gain another competitor.</p> <p>He presents a business model where consumers who are interested in particular local items or local producers could place an order through a central hub, the co-op, who would then obtain/buy the goods from the producer and distribute/deliver them. He did also note no other co-ops do this currently and NCG actually does not advise it because they have not seen it to be a proven money-maker yet.</p> <p>Kristin asks about steps to determine feasibility including a market study and conversations with local groups and community members. There was also discussion regarding the positive sustainability potential with the project. Tim also noted institutional (school, hospital) distribution and food preparation as an opportunity. There was a discussion regarding the difference between this hub and an aggregation hub.</p> <p>Tim reviewed his proposal to have a market study performed and to continue to have discussions with producers to gauge feasibility. Julie also noted organizational readiness needs to be researched as part of feasibility.</p> <p><b>Action Taken</b></p> <p>The board unanimously voted in support of Tim proceeding with a feasibility study.</p>
<p><b>Closing</b></p>	<p><b>8. Next meeting February 12, 2018</b> Urbana Civic Center</p> <p><b>9. Outreach calendar assignments</b></p> <p><b>10. Other tasks and assignments</b></p> <p><b>11. Go around for comments</b></p>

**12. Meeting Adjourned**

**At 8:21pm by Julie Zilles**