

**High Falls Food Co-op  
January 2017 Board Agenda**

**Welcome and Announcements – Present were: MaryJo Johnson, Ilona Ross, Adriana Magaña, Dglas Boyd, Jodi Fogel, Holly Downie, Sibyle Schubert, Ruth Molloy , Kelly Collinson, Chris Cruz, Kristen Avery, Kenny Rowe, Daisha Sen, James Saul-member, Cari Heberger , Steve Goodman and Matt Berlin via phone.**

**Approval of December Minutes** - Still in process. Adriana will send out the minutes again via email and ask board to approve.

**Manager's Report** – Ruth read the attached managers report and a lively discussion followed as noted below

Matt reiterated concerns that the staff knows proper legal procedures with regards to security issues. Jodi confirmed that they are consulting with security firm for proper training and then following proper legal channels. All staff will be trained and understand the law regarding security/shoplifting etc.

Cameras will be installed and many wondered if members should/would be informed. Steve felt that once the signs go up people will potentially be upset and that we should have prepared statement that cashiers can tell members/customers.

Holly stressed that one of the reasons we installed cameras is for safety of employees and to make sure that anyone inquiring know this.

Should we also post this info in the newsletter?

Matt commented on Manager's report regarding Gift certificated that \$630 more were used than bought in comparison to previous years.

**Finance and Mission Effectiveness Report** – Matt commented on the attached finance report and said that we are doing very well overall. After the bridge closed sales are up! The issues still needing sorting are clarifying basic financial report and point of sales reports so that everything is consistent. We are in a better place for this now that we have the inventory done.

MaryJo wanted to know what was needed to move forward and rectify this issue.

Matt wants to know why there are people in the system who look like they are getting discounts but aren't up to date with membership.

Daisha responded with several answers for why this might be going on: duplicate memberships, intimidation, perhaps senior discounts (member or not) on Tuesdays?

Matt says that this data base is confusing. He has requested to be informed of possible discrepancies so that he can make the numbers all add up consistently. Matt says he wants to talk soon with Holly, Jake, Jodi, and Daisha to make a plan to solve this problem.

**They are scheduled to talk Friday the 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Communications and Membership Report** – Dglas read the attached report.

MaryJo suggested a way that people can sign up to get our newsletters from Facebook. James Saul recommended a Call to Action on Facebook pages to sign people up for newsletter.

MaryJo requested that we arrange a time to organize a current list of present members/lapsed members/shoppers in separate lists. Emails and newsletters should be able to go out to anyone who wants to see it as opposed to just members. This is a continuation of our project to collect emails.

Adriana wanted more details about the customers who have intimidated cashiers and if any follow up has happened with the scam-artist customers. Daisha explained HFFC protocol.

Ilona brought up training for various situations.

Jodi answered Dglas question that emails are required for membership. Should we consider adding email requirement to bylaws? Email address is primary and physical address is secondary.

Matt says we only have email addresses for 50% of our members.

Holly asked if we should have a member update drive?

MaryJo says that we should collect the emails when they renew as a baseline. We could flag them at the register to collect updated info.

Ruth wonders if this is a good time to enlist a working member to gather emails from customers? Dglas will coordinate meeting with staff about getting member info updated and complete.

### **Food Standards**

The HFFC board is looking to spearhead an event for us all to better understand organic and HFFC food standards.

This event would staff and board to mingle, bring in vendors and get us all moving in the same direction. We are considering having a panel discussion with Adriana, MaryJo, Becky (Old Ford Farm), MaryBeth Wehrung etc. MaryJo passed around a list of questions regarding this proposed event, and asked for the input of those present. The

event is tentative at 90 minute time frame, with presentations, questions, and refreshments. We would prioritize questions for lack of time.  
MJ read questions.

Daisha thinks that we are trying to create a local and regional network. Can we get larger group together to make this happen at a later date? The co-op could benefit from this.

MJ said that we had talked originally about getting Rosendale Theater to do a larger community event. We could talk about how it could potentially expand. We would come up with limited number of targeted questions and would use video to promote and share with others.

“Clearing the Air on Organic Food” is one possible name for the event.

This is for education for board and staff because we are coming from different places with regards to our buying and advocacy.

Kenny did some more research on Whole Foods unacceptable ingredients list and passed the list around.

Lots of ideas were passed around about vendor presenters to invite.

Sibylle says that staff should have a statement they could use to reply to customers with regards to naturally grown foods not using pesticides.

Ruth asks if it is reasonable that we get our questions a little more honed down?

Kenny wanted to know if this could be part of the board meeting? MaryJo says that the board has too much work to do at the meetings with to have it be part of them. There are many people that will be potentially showing up for this event and for shaping our group vision for the community. She says it training for us and an event for community and to grow ourselves as a co-op.

Ruth says narrow it down to 4 vendors

We will video this and put up on Youtube for another social media presence and connection layer.

Panel date and location:

Review questions and develop resource list

## **Co-op By-Laws and Governance**

Ilona talked about bylaws other co-ops have. Some are short and sweet. HFFC had a member/lawyer work on our present by-laws. Ilona says our by-laws are too big and too much. Less is more in her opinion.

Date for bylaw review – MJ will contact anyone and everyone who wants to work on by-laws and when we will meet.

### **Business Plan Review, Priorities and Goal Setting**

**Next board meeting: February 13<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30 @ The Barnabas**

**Mid cycle board mtg to talk about bylaws and governance – MJ will contact Matt to figure out date that works with him. Kristen Avery said that she would like to work on by-laws. Daisha as well.**

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### **Management Report for December 2016 January 16, 2017**

**There are no staffing changes to report!**

#### **Department Head Meeting**

A meeting was held on 1/5/17 which included most department managers, with the exception of one person on vacation.

-Most content had to do with reorganizing areas in the store and how to maintain those reorgs.

-Ruth spoke about using timecards with the goal of being compliant with DOL standards. By the end of January, all time recording will meet this goal.

-Buttons with logo have arrived. In addition to these, staff elected to wear aprons (available in two styles) or lanyards to pin their buttons on.

-In order to better satisfy customer product inquiries, the topic of sharing one another's schedules was discussed. Jodi will disseminate schedules to each department.

-We discussed follow through regarding the topic of expansion from last month's BOD meeting. It was decided to postpone this topic until February's meeting to allow staff time to hone their specifications.

### **Inventory**

In Jake's statement, he states that "inventory was completed on 1/7/17. Most department heads completed the inventory count for their own departments or submitted worksheets to me with the inventory quantities." After the counts were entered, all negative quantities were zeroed out.

2017 is the year for complete use of the POS for sales and inventory tracking.

### **In-Store Repairs and Improvements**

- Replaced backstock shelves in upstairs walk-in cooler
- Lowered drip shelf in liquid bulk room
- Replaced safety stripping on stairs
- Removed shelf in downstairs walk-in for more efficient use.

### **Holiday Gift Items**

Best sellers this year were books, candles and date books. Incense and sage were slightly higher than normal. We have noticed a lack of interest in calendars over the past three years, and will not be carrying them again. Tee-shirts and HFFC bags were also low in sales.

### **Bridge Update**

Crews and heavy machinery are hammering and removing concrete decking. They have installed a reasonably-sized roll-off to accommodate the refuse. Next steps are implanting explosives into the pilings. Implosion is scheduled for 1/25/17 at 7:30am!

**Vector Security** reported to Jake that it will be another two weeks before they will be able to install interior cameras, bringing the expected date to 1/31.

## **December 2017 HFFC Financials**

The Coop has had a very profitable year due primarily to the huge increase in sales (15%) but lower increases in the cost of things sold (11% -- meaning that the coop is now keeping 34% of the cost of the things it sold, a 12% increase from last year)) and other expenses (9%).

Note that this does not include depreciation, if that is factored in the Coop is still profitable, but less so. That profitability this year was greatest in April - July. August - November profitability has been lower, November - December were very poor and we lost money in January probably due to the bridge closing.

The Coop also apparently paid bonus totaling \$10,000 to staff this year.

But the Coop has used most of these profits to pay its vendors and build reserves. "Working capital" (the amount of money we have in the bank less the bills we owe immediately) has historically been negative at the coop but this year the coop has worked to get working capital close to zero.

There is still work to do on the financials, depreciation is not properly recorded, we seem to be in the habit of revising numbers after months are over, I cannot tie our reports out to 2015, etc. It is not normal to continue to have these challenges.

*Financial Charts attached in separate PDF file.*

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## **Action items from Previous Board Meetings:**

### 1. Finance and Mission Effectiveness Committee:

- Matt will work with Jake to research and develop POS reports
- Research for compensation review continuing in November

### 2. Member communication:

- Adriana will get minutes from Ilona, Donna, Ruth and post online
- Website will be updated and warmed up by James, Adriana will assist

- *Collecting member emails - Flag and call individual emails, cashiers could add emails into system; important to distinguish member emails from shopper emails. In future of allowing people to sign up online.*

-*Ask Jake what happens to emails of customers have lapsed that haven't renewed. Need to have current list of active members. Can happen online.*

-Develop "Welcome to the Co-op" letter that goes out to new members

-Staff will discuss getting ID Badges

-*Publish Co-op Almanac*

#### 4. Bridge Closing:

a. Maps showing detour

b. Remind people why they shop at the co-op (social media, newsletter)

c. Bridge the Gap meetings--Jodi and Ruth will let board members know about meeting dates and times

5. Tent events: Offer therapists, herbalists, and other vendors an opportunity to participate for percentage of sales

#### 6. 40th Anniversary Celebration!

7. Membership Orientation: we need a group to work on membership - if we collect member emails we could send out a monthly member orientation to new member/owners. We have many legal obligations to our members (voting on bylaws is one).

8. Handbooks, Manuals, and Documents: MaryJo will carefully review employee handbook with Ruth and Donna and begin by-laws research with Ilona

#### 10. Re-usable Packaging

*Statement of Initiative: We the board request and wholeheartedly support management's decision to recommend and purchase nontoxic and as locally sourced as available containers for soup, coffee, beverages and a plan to encourage shoppers to bring their own containers and bags by providing a bag/container refund.*

-Chris Cruz will get in touch with Equal Exchange about coffee cups and check into materials.

-Kenny will look for a local source: paperware, soup bowls, utensils, bags

-Managers will consider re-usable bag credit

<b>Initiatives</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Deliverables and Measures</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Internal Operations</b>	Finish HR manual	October, 2016	In Edits	Ruth
	Operations manual	Dec, 2016	10% complete	Ruth
	Job Descriptions	June 15	90% complete	Ruth
	Build and report on annual budget	April 1	90% Complete	Matt and Holly
	Complete Board Operations Manual	April 30	75%complete	Mary Jo/Laura
	Complete Current Org Chart	March 30	Complete	Mary Jo, Ruth, Jodi
	Complete Projected Org. Chart (enter into SP)	Dec 1, 2016	50% Complete	Mary Jo, Ruth, Jodi
	<b>Revise bylaws</b>	Dec 1, 2016	10% complete	Mary Jo and Ilona
	Clear understanding of member ownership	Dec, 2016	10% complete	MaryJo and Ilona
	<b>Visit and prepare “reports” on 5 other co-ops</b>	December 2016	Visits and reports on 4 complete	Mary Jo and Ilona
	Prepare worksheet for visits	April 30	20%	Ilona/Adriana
	<b>Performance Measures</b>	Ongoing		
	Increased membership		TBD	Steve
	Membership retention		TBD	Steve
	Increased gross sales	Yearly	6.7%	Jodi and Ruth
	Increased cost of local goods purchased	Yearly	3%	Jodi
	<b>Increase Employee Salaries</b>	Yearly	TBD	Holly/Matt
	Conduct compensation review	Oct, 2016		Jodi, Ruth, Holly, Finance Committee
	<b>Write vendor policy agreement</b> What are the roles and responsibilities?	May, 2016	Not Started	Sybillie and Jodi
	<b>Staff and Board Training and Development</b>			



	Establish standard staff training program	November 2016		Ruth and Jodi
	Establish standard board training program	Ongoing		Mary Jo
<b>Financial</b>	Complete business plan	TBD		Matt
	Establish Yearly Cash reserve goal	Ongoing		Holly/Matt
	Establish what POS reports we need on a monthly basis	May 2016	TBD	Holly
<b>Bridge Closure</b>	<b>Develop a plan to address opportunities in bridge closure September 2016</b>	July 16	Written plan	SP group
	Bulk and Case Online Buying	TBD	Research	Not Assigned
	Possible Kiosk in Kingston	TBD		
	Traveling truck for delivery	TBD		
	Possible building purchase	TBD		
	Survey shoppers regarding shopping habits	TBD		
	Generate budget based on plan	TBD		Matt/Holly
<b>40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</b>	<b>Develop a plan for 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</b>	April 15, 2016	Written plan	Ruth/Steve/Adriana/Jodi
	Tent events and store signage			
	Generate budget			
<b>Membership Outreach Member Base</b>	<b>Membership Development</b>			
	Develop an outreach/ orientation plan	March 2017		Membership committee
	Update the membership list so we can reliably email 100% of the membership	Jan 31 2017		James, Jake, Matt, Dglas, Daisha
	Sign up for newsletter on line	March 2017		Dglas, Adriana, James

	Sign up for membership on line	March 2017		Dglas, Adriana, James
	<b>Member Manual</b>			
	Clear understanding of member ownership	February 2017		Membership Committee
	Begin monthly member emails by June 15	Completed July 2016		
	Create member policies/manual	June 2017		Membership Committee
	<b>Member Orientation/ Events</b>			
	Develop agenda for member orientation gatherings	September 2017		Membership Committee
	Schedule regular get-togethers for members	October 2017		Membership Committee
<b>Physical Expansion</b>	Monitor immediate opportunities that could be “too good to pass up”	Ongoing		Adriana
	Complete research into parking and septic requirements for current location	April, 30		Adriana
	Prepare a “case statement” for a new building or expansion to branches	April 30	Written case statement	Matt/Ilona
<b>Education and Outreach</b>	Create education plan including in-store signage, tent events, etc	Ongoing		Steve, Mary Jo
	Newsletter and content generated monthly	Monthly		Adriana, Ilona, and other staff

## **Parking Lot**

Have a Bridge Closed Discount Day, possibly Wednesday?

Co-op To Go

Solar panels for the Co-op?

501c3 for Education (Ilona)

List of foods/ingredients that the Co-op does not carry and why

Member work hours at associated nonprofit organizations (Jodi)

Health Tidbit section of newsletter (Ilona)

“Did you know” section on Facebook, Newsletter related to products

Extend hours on Friday and Saturday

Lighted sign for Co-op