

High Falls Food Cooperative Meeting Minutes  
May 19, 2014  
Marbletown Community Center, 7:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Chloe Annetts, Wilton Duckworth, Joan Ewing, Patricia Hasegawa, MaryJo Johnson, Donna Perry, Marybeth Wehrung, Pat Yorks. Absent: Gary Donelian, Ryan Fitzgerald (staff representative), Henning Greutz.

Marybeth convened the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

**1. Manager's Report (Jodi Fogel):**

- A. During the first week of May, the new roof was completed. Breakdown of bill:
- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Replace roof with standing seam galvalume: | 10,000.       |
| Install new gutters:                       | 1,500.        |
| Install snow rails:                        | 2,800.        |
| Install and paint new siding:              | <u>2,000.</u> |
| Total payment:                             | \$16,300.     |
- B. Because of custom built plant stand, we are experiencing better sales with almost no losses to date. According to customers, it adds to the beauty of the front of the store.
- C. Eileen, our produce manager, has been out of town and is returning tomorrow. She is also a landscaper and will be involved in our spring clean-up, directing either paid staff or working members as to what needs to be done to keep up the lovely appearance of the Co-op.
- D. We are beginning the last phase of the downstairs renovation prior to the kitchen remodeling. This area is where we bag fruits and nuts; cut, wrap and weigh cheese; bag and weigh meat; and where the deli department thaws and bags bread and cuts up baked goods, etc. After this revamping is complete, we will be ready to begin planning out the new kitchen area. This includes contacting co-op member Kurt Sutherland, an architect very familiar with the Co-op layout. Depending on the extent of required work, there is a good chance he will do work for us in exchange for work time or a combination of work time and payment, as he has done in the past.
- E. Staff Issues: Chris is still out collecting workman's compensation for a herniated disc and torn muscles. Andrew Harned is beginning his vacation this week. Anne Lane gave notice three weeks ago and will continue to do fill-in work when she can. She took another job closer to her home (Dutchess County) and was able to train her replacement, Annie Pierse, during her last two weeks here. Management is working towards creating more efficient staffing, while presently reviewing staffing needs and changes that are occurring during the next few months.
- F. Attending the UNFI Trade Show in Connecticut, we were able to place orders on products at 30-50% off. Many are products that we already carry, and some are new to the Co-op. They will be shipped to us beginning the end of June.
- G. The next Bridge the Gap meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, at 6 p.m. (Donna said she could attend).

2. Marybeth introduced Chris Hewitt, publisher of Country News, who spoke about the Hudson Valley Current. This is a new complementary currency that lets businesses patronize one another without spending U.S. dollars. The goal is to keep currency local. MaryJo, Chloe, and Marybeth participate already. Chris distributed information on the concept and answered questions from the group, including how it works with taxes (the IRS recognizes it and it works with the national currency); how it relates to U.S. Currency (same value). Chris said there are 110 business members currently, including Kelders, Saunderskill, Pugh Farm, the Alternate Baker, and the Big Cheese. He added that a member of their board (Cheryl Schnyder) is connected with MacWorks and creates POS systems (which we at the co-op would like to have). Membership is free until they do the launch in July. Some businesses start with the system slowly, by accepting currents one day a week, for example. The Board thanked him for coming and agreed to look into this further.

### 3. Financial Report (Patricia Hasagawa)

- April sales hit a seasonal high of \$175k for the second month in a row, bringing the Co-op's year to date (YTD) revenue to over \$600k. Sales grew at 5%, which is slower than last year's sales growth of 14.6%. Produce holds the largest revenue share with non-tax bulk second.
- Membership discounts YTD is \$25k. Membership discounts continue to climb with sales, but at a much slower rate: 1.8% over previous period figures.
- Cost of Goods Sold (COS): Has a steady trend of being low for several months and then having a spike. April was the spike month with COS being 71.4% of income. YTD COS is at 69.20% of sales which is below 2013's COS year end. We are now seeing a very controlled COS.
- Gross Profit came in a bit lower than first quarter at 28.6%. The goal is 30%-33%. Yet YTD Gross Profit is hitting that target at 30.80%.
- Expenses were very steady, as usual.
- Net Income showed a profit of \$4,660. This is the fourth straight month of profit for the Co-op. Last time this happened was the first four months of 2012. Total YTD net income is at \$29,500.
- Membership fees are at 11k for the year, which is slightly less than last year.
- Current assets at 100k, which is stronger.
- Accounts payables were slightly higher at 61k. Something to watch, but they will probably be lower next month.
- Over all, the continued profit and the controlled figures testify that management and Holly are doing a great job.

Pat added that the trip to look at the POS system got postponed until June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **4. CCC Meeting:**

Joan and MaryJo met with Jodi about some issues, including job descriptions and an employee manual. The sign project is also on the agenda.

#### **5. Old Business:**

Henning has been looking into Solar for the Co-op. There are rental options—like Solar City. If you buy the equipment, you would save more, however. Marybeth read Henning's email: He is assembling and analyzing the different solar proposals. He has been in contact with five different installers, with different takes. One has yet to come to investigate the property. He would like to digest and prepare this before he does the sign project. He will be away for a month after May 26<sup>th</sup>. He would be the custodian of the sign project later in the summer. He also noted that we could use a back-up generator.

#### **6. Sign Project:**

Simon did work on this and we have been trying to figure out what the next steps are. We have to get the permits and figure out how to get the signs made. We should get competitive bids and ask sign makers to do the signs. Chloe would do this, but she wants help. **Action Step: Joan and Pat will ask about signs and get back to Chloe. Jodi will get information, too. All will email Chloe with the information on signs.**

7. **Approval of March and April minutes:** March and April minutes moved and approved.

#### **8. Bridge the Gap Meeting.**

Mary Collins led the group at the last meeting. Mike, the Supervisor was there; they talked about letters. Most hadn't written them. Patricia read our letter. The group liked it and had a few suggestions, which we are incorporating, including breaking out the percentage of our members who go over the bridge. g. They want it on one page and on Bridge the Gap stationery. They feel that everyone should require a meeting with the department of transportation and possibly the transportation and planning board. We might have an attorney go with us to the meeting. Break out the percentage of people who go over the bridge. By the end of the month, everyone will have their letters written and submitted. Next meeting is Monday, June 9th.

#### **9. New Business:**

Board is looking for some opportunity to share our visions and collaborate between Board and management. We are looking into options for doing this, at this important time for the Co-op.

Marybeth thanked Pat, Wilton, and Joan for being on the board. They each shared their feelings about how good they feel the board is now. Other board members thanked them for all they have contributed; Marybeth talked about how, in particular, the three of them helped her. Wilton's steadiness, Joan's way with people, and Pat's hutzpah will be missed by all of us. Led by Paul Tobin, we sang a round in tribute to them.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m. Next meetings will be June 16<sup>th</sup> and July 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 p.m.

Submitted by Donna Perry, Secretary