

Oneota Community Co-op
Minutes for Regular Board Meeting

September 25, 2018 5:30 PM

Kitchen Classroom, 308 W. Water St.

Board Members Present: Brita Nelson, Flannery Cerbin-Bohach, Scott Hawthorn, Emily Neal, Scott Timm, Dennis Pottratz

Board Members Absent: Aimee Viniard-Weideman

GM Present: David Lester

Co-op Staff : Nate Furler (Marketing Manager), Niki Sanness (Finance Manager)

Member/Owners Present: Jeanine Scheffert (Bd Admin Asst)

NCG Staff Present:

1. Call to Order

Nelson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Board Learning -

2.1 Discuss Member Loan Campaign Documents

Lester shared a workbook outlining a member loan campaign. He outlined the roles and made suggestions of who would fit well within those roles.

Bill Gessner, author of the workbook, has been in the cooperative world for years. He retired, then came out of retirement to help co-ops. He helped with Oneota Co-op's last relocation and was involved with that member loan campaign as well.

Board feels like this is a good workbook and feels good about where we are already in terms of knowing what to do and having the people to do it. One of the things the workbook talks about is what Board will do vs. what Consultant will do.

Nelson talked to CDS consultant, Ben Sandel, who was trained by Bill Gessner. There are other consultants we could work with within CDS, but they would all be similar. We could also get quotes from consultants outside of CDS. The consultant would lead the campaign and work with a core group of people from our co-op.

The core Oneota Co-op group would be a combo of Board, staff, and potentially some member-owners. They would meet twice a week and would follow the workbook, working closely with the campaign coordinator. A coordinator would provide us with the campaign timeline and we'd use the built-in owner/investment document. If we go help from a CDS consultant, there would be an online training with the "Call Team" and the consultant would create copy for appeal letters and marketing materials. Hiring a consultant would make the campaign coordinator's (likely Board member) job easier.

Michelle Schry felt strongly that Ben Sandel was the best fit for us. Board feels strongly we should get quotes from other consultants, as well as references from others who have worked with any consultant. Board would like to know why Ben is the best fit. If hiring through CDS, consultant could be hired by the hour or for a “package.”

Board also discussed the possibility of hiring someone locally. Board recognizes it would be a lot of work and would want it to be someone with a significant amount of fundraising experience. Campaign coordination is a huge responsibility overseeing a complicated process; however the workbook provides a good framework. Board discussed the possibility of having the campaign coordinator and CDS consultant meet in person, but there would be additional travel expense for an in-person visit.

Lester is about to go to the NCG conference where he will also ask 2 or 3 Co-ops who they used. Nelson will get another coordinator quote from CDS.

In terms of Board and staff involved on a campaign, Furler will be in charge of marketing and messaging, Sanness will oversee the accounting and organizing of member loans and legal documents. Other staff members could help with the calling for a couple of months. The Board will mostly be in charge of calling. Lester and Nelson will do the big asks. The big question is who will be able to be the campaign coordinator. We'd like to get these things all in place in November so we're ready to start in January. Board would also like to see an outline of time involved for event planning, speaking to membership, making calls, etc. The handbook mentions it could be 3 hours a day for 4 weeks, just of calling. It will be an intense lift and it will be important to know what we are committing to.

Board would like to make a decision during the October Board meeting to do leg work before the holidays – information circulating and schedule calls. Board notes this is a preference, not a necessity. Also, important to note, the final financial quote will be ready by October 15.

2.2 Review Call the Question procedure

Nelson reminded Board of the “Call the Question” procedure under Robert’s Rule of Order: When a conversation is getting exhausted or circular, a Board member can call the discussion to question. If 2/3rds of board members vote favorably to the call, there is no more debate about the question on the table. Nelson encouraged the Board to use this procedure in meetings, if needed.

3. Member Comments - none

4. Disposition of Member Comments - No member comments

5. Agenda Review

Motion: Neal moved and Hawthorn seconded to **Approve Agenda**. Agenda **passed** by a vote of 6 aye, 0 nay.

6. Approve Minutes for August 2018

Motion: Timm moved and Neal seconded to **Approve August 2018 Main Meeting Minutes**. Motion **passed** with a vote of 6 aye, 0 nay.

7. Consent Agenda - none

8. Reports

8.1 GM Report

Financial Snapshot:

August sales are slightly negative. We ran a report today through September and it looks to be slightly positive, so September probably will be positive. We're headed in the right direction. We're coming up on our one-year anniversary for having no evening hot bar. The fact that the deli is going from double-digit negative to hopefully a double-digit positive means a big shift in both sales and morale. The only other departments still having negative sales are Wine & Beer and Bulk.

We hope the end of Q3 will be at \$140,000 or a little higher. Cash is moving in the right direction.

New members are at about the same number as 2016 with 170 or so. It is still really good for our store's size.

Member equity is higher than it was at this point last year.

Top 5 sales include nutritional supplements, frozen, packaged grocery, we just added fresh salmon and catfish from sustainable resources, and cheese. Our packaged grocery is the largest department in store, so it is great to see sales growth there.

Last week we went up 4%. The last time that happened was end of March.

Overall, we're managing loaded labor well, but there is still room for improvement on unloaded labor. Produce and Admin still need changes.

Community/Outreach/Other Store Happenings:

As we said last month, local sales are down in part because apple sales. We are stabilizing the bakery section.

Physical Store Update:

We're getting two bids on the tunnel project.

Marketing/Special Projects:

This Saturday is Live on Water Street and we're looking for volunteers. It will be fun and low key. The Loop-de-Loop race is ending with us and participants will have a voucher. Farmer's Market ends right when we start. It is a well-coordinated event and should go really well.

8.2 L2: Staff Treatment

Motion: Cerbin-Bohach moved and Pottratz seconded to **Approve L2: Staff Treatment Motion passed** with a vote of 6 aye, 0 nay.

This report's purpose is to portray an accurate picture of how staff are feeling so that the Board has good idea of the staff's happiness level. We pay a CDS consultant to create this report every other year. The Co-op HR Coordinator reports the other years. The CDS version is extremely confidential. If there was something in the survey that indicates a problem, we would pay extra for the consultant to go in and do interviews with staff to get a better picture of what is going on. 96% of employees participated this year. Overall, the report indicated very high satisfaction. That is encouraging when going into a big project. Organizationally, were in good shape. There is always room for improvement, but it is encouraging to see. We're well-rated compared to other Co-ops too; in the top quartile.

This also shows an injury report: we have 3 recorded injuries, none of them resulting in lost workdays. That helps with our insurance workers comp rate.

Other Co-ops rate low in the question of managers responding to issues and evaluating employees regularly. We have a really good yearly schedule where all employees get evaluated.

Board raised the question of one person answering "2" on scale of being treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender, etc. and wants to know if there is a way to know more so we can follow up. Lester says unfortunately we don't know more; the person doing the report gave no follow-up and there have been no reports of grievances.

Everything else looks really terrific and everything except one moved higher than last report. One especially impressive area is the really high score we received in employees knowledge of corrective action being handled fairly and consistently. We have great procedures in place if someone is not performing well or not doing pieces of their job - we take the time to make sure they understand what is happening.

Safety concerns are good and we are also scoring really high there compared to other co-ops.

Supervisors address issues promptly and effectively.

8.3 L3: Compensation and Benefits

Motion: Hawthorn moved and Cerbin-Bohach seconded to **Approve L3: Compensation and Benefits**. Motion **passed** with a vote of 6 aye, 0 nay.

L3.2 shows data Lester collects information from US Dept. of Labor. We submit info to the state and they produce these reports. The report breaks it down by pay grade to compare to other employers offering similar work. Overall, we pay our employees pretty well compared to other employers for similar work. We scored lower in benefits than we had hoped. We are not below the critical 3.25 point, but it is an area we'll be paying attention to. Living wage has been updated for Winneshiek County to \$10.16/hour. 98% of our employees are at or above this living wage and we're proud of that. Board asked about the living wage and points out that the average living wage for Winneshiek County would be below the living wage for Decorah. Lester agrees and says the Decorah Chamber doesn't direct a Decorah living wage report.

9. Action Items

9.1 Consultant

Board will seek out more consultant bids and project coordinator possibilities by Oct. 15 to circulate for review prior to next board meeting. This will include reaching out to other Co-op GMs, ISU, and CDS. Board members will give to Nelson and share on Google Drive folder. We're getting information on consultants and project coordinator possibilities as well as asking what other co-ops did. Nelson will work on drafting a basic RFP and rest of board can look at it and add to it.

10. New Business

10.1 GM Contract Renewal Process Review

David is in his 5th year of a 5-year contract. Prior to this, he had two 2-year contracts. There is no formal process to review, but in order for Board and Co-op to budget, we will need to go over an RFP in the next two weeks. We'll give Lester an RFP and he'll give us a proposal in return. There will be executive sessions in October and November to discuss and finalize this. There is intent to finalize in November.

11. Next Monitoring & Other

11.1 [G6: Governance Investment - Cerbin-Bohach]

11.2 [L5: Financial Conditions (Quarterly Report) - GM]

11.3 [GM self-evaluation - GM]

11.4 [Nomination progress report - Hawthorn]

11.5 [Treasurer presents draft board budget (discuss and vote to approve)- Neal]

12. Next Meeting - Tuesday, October 23, 2018 @ 5:30PM

Ad-hoc Financial Committee will meet October 16th and 22nd. With the plan coming in on October 15th, this will give the committee time to discuss and come to the board meeting with a recommendation. Neal is coordinating this meeting.

November meeting will be held November 20th at 5:30 p.m.

December meeting will be held December 18th at 5:30 p.m.

13. Executive Session - Discuss GM Contract RFP

Motion: Hawthorn moved and Neal seconded to **Adjourn to Executive Session**. Motion **passed** with a vote of 6 aye, 0 nay. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

14. Self-Evaluations - done via internet

15. Adjourn

Motion: Neal moved and Hawthorn seconded to **Adjourn Meeting**. Motion **passed** with a vote of 6 aye, 0 nay. Meeting adjourned at 7:23pm.