



**North Coast Co-op  
Earth Action Committee (EAC) Minutes  
August 9, 2017– Ten Pin Building Mezzanine, Arcata**

**EAC Members present:** Cheri Strong, Colin Fiske, Mary Ella Anderson, Leah Stamper (chair)

**Member-Employees present:** Nicole Chase, Emily Walter, Kiya Villarreal, Lauren Fawcett, Melanie Bettenhausen, Courtney Augustus

**Members present:** Roger

At 6:52 pm the meeting is called to order by committee chair Leah

**1. WELCOMES/INTRODUCTIONS/AGENDA REVIEW AND ADDITIONS:**

Roger doesn't like the bulk tofu labels, as they create waste.

**2. APPROVE JULY 12, 2017 MINUTES**

Consensus reached to approve the July 12, 2017 minutes.

**3. EUREKA REMODEL**

Kiya invited Lauren (prepared foods manager) and Courtney (communication project manager) for deli updates, specifically focused deli packaging.

- Leah is concerned that recycled packaging is getting too good of an image versus educating/selling reusable packaging.
  - o Melanie - discussed how this as a leveling up education. Get customers using the recyclable packaging first and next work to get them to use reusables. People need to feel comfortable with options and won't necessarily make the jump from single-use containers to durable containers. They need a middle step.
  - o Leah - disagrees with this method and referenced studies showing that if you advertise recyclable packing as being great, the use of it will skyrocket, versus people using durables. Leah wants easy to access durables.
  - o Colin - it's about making durable options the easy default thing to do.
  - o Melanie - staff have been looking at all the durable and upcoming compostable containers to replace current single-use plastics, which are no longer recyclable. The move to compostables is huge as we move away from plastic. Staff are currently working on menu boards that customers will see in-store. They plan to have images of durable containers on the menus, prioritizing their use.
  - o The group looked at plastic durable containers that will be used at the hot/cold bars. Folks will pay a minimal deposit for the containers. There will also be plates available for in-store use.
  - o Kiya is asking someone on campus about how these specific durable containers are working. How durable are they?
  - o The group looked at sandwich containers that are fully compostable.
  - o There is a plan to merchandise reusable bamboo utensils and stainless-steel containers.
  - o There will be 3+ options of containers near the deli food.
  - o People won't be able to serve themselves in their own durable container.
    - People could serve themselves on a durable plate and then dump their plate into their own durable container.
  - o Melanie - mentioned that we will be designing educational labels for packaging on some of the durable containers.
  - o Melanie - wants to make sure that customers don't feel judged. Messaging will need to be well thought out.
  - o Colin – thinks the biggest thing is what is most convenient and least awkwardly social = recyclables.
  - o Melanie - believes the need for grab and go will be reduced because there will be 5 different places to order food, versus just 1 currently.
  - o Colin - what is the barrier to putting grab and goes into the new plastic containers?

- Melanie- we don't know if customers will want to use the plastic containers
  - It's a culture shift and we need to ease people into it.
  - We'll learn a lot the first 30-60 days as far as what customers will and won't use.
  - Roger - would like to see an exit plan from plastic (i.e. auto companies announce when they'll stop producing gas run cars). The Co-op needs to be a leader in reducing the use of plastic.
  - Mary Ella - looks at the proposed model as a transition towards our ideal.
  - Kiya - wants to incentivize people to use durable containers. Make it easy and cheap to do.
  - Lauren - we want to use mason jars as much as possible in the grab and go. Staff are detailing how much storage will be needed for pallets of durable containers.
  - Kiya - talked with Jason about adding something to the system that will track the number of durables being used. Need to work on educating the cashiers to give positive feedback.
  - Melanie - mentioned the need for more internal education of staff about using durable containers.
  - Lauren - would like to have durable containers for large deli orders such as sandwich platters.
  - Melanie - the important outcome is that we open the doors to customers who want to be sustainable, make revenue, and then continue to tweak products, advertising and education to move toward our values.
- ACTION: Kiya will add newly available compostable items to the recycling boards at the stores.

#### 4. SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR UPDATE

##### Strawless Summer

- The *Strawless summer* campaign is going strong. The giveaway is on August 18. The cashiers have been helpful in announcing *Strawless summer* to customers.
- The next campaigns will hopefully be *Forkless Fall*, *Spoonless Spring* and *Waste-less Winter*.

##### Bulk

- Kiya is working on getting a "find this in bulk" sticker label. It will begin with blanket statements such as, "peanut butter available in bulk," versus a label for every brand of jarred peanut butter.
- Leah – we should be educating people that we have a bulk store within a store of other items.
- The group likes the idea of having a bulk department discount day. Such as *Bulk Thursdays* or a monthly discount like *Wellness Wednesdays*.
- Nic – let's do a member feature that only shops in bulk.
- Kiya passed out a list of all bulk items in the Arcata store. She still needs to inventory bulk in Eureka.
  - Leah - would like to see sliced meats and cheeses and tofu on the list.
  - Working on bulk labels, such as the ones for tofu, being recyclable.

##### Gloves in the Deli

- Bare hand food must be minimized with utensils but the only thing that can be used with sandwiches is gloves.
- Kiya is talking with the meat department about getting tongs to serve raw meat with instead of plastic sheets
- Melanie – mentioned that the glove discussion is not over but the deli department is too overwhelmed right now for big changes that involve training. Employees can only handle a certain amount of change at once, and currently there is a lot of change with the remodel.

##### Misc

- Kiya - put a new compost bucket in the Ten Pin and is working on implementing training about composting for all new employees.
- Leah – why is the basil being wrapped in plastic in Eureka? This does not happen in Arcata.

ACTION: Kiya will investigate the plastic wrapped basil.

- Kiya - part of the net zero impact plan is tracking single use packaging. There is no electronic way to do this. She will have to track by invoices quantities for both stores.
- Melanie – reported that the city of Eureka is agreeable to do a Zagster Bike kick off in May and will contribute \$4k. Still communicating with the City of Arcata about an Arcata station.
- Kiya - is in touch with the City of Arcata about upcoming zero waste events to be involved with.
- Kiya - will be at a Co-op booth at the Sustainable Living Expo in October.

- Kiya - is working on a sustainability update for the annual report.
  - o Melanie- mentioned the 20-year statement of sustainability would be helpful for Kiya while writing the annual sustainability report.
- Kiya - registered the Co-op for Coastal Clean-up day in Samoa, off Bay Street.
  - o Leah has a magnet on wheels that could be borrowed for finding nails.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

None

**6. DISCUSS AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING:**

- I Street visioning session (30 minutes)
- Arcata Parking Lot

**7. REVIEW:** Next meeting will be September 13 at 6:45pm

Meeting Adjourned at 8:21 pm

*Minutes by Emily Walter*