



Member Action Committee (MAC)

Minutes – December 12, 2018

Ten Pin Building, Arcata

Present:

Board Members: Cheri Strong, Colin Fiske, Leah Stamper, Robert Donovan

Member-Employees: Emily Walter, Laurie Talbert

Members: Jacky Schuler, Anna Anderson, Sherry Skillwoman

1. **Welcome:** At 5:31pm Laurie welcomed everyone and went over the ground rules for the meeting.

2. Approve Minutes

Consensus to approve the October 2018 meeting minutes.

3. Member Comments

- Laurie – I'm reporting on the status of the Support our Co-op campaign. There are now sandwich boards in front of both stores as well as signs on the doors with information about the campaign. Information is also on the homepage of the website and SMS screen in stores. The actual displays will continue to be moved around due to holiday promotions. The senior discount generally ranges between 2-2.1% of sales. Following implementation of the campaign it was down to 1.9% of sales. We can't say for sure if this is due to the campaign or not.

Laurie passed out pictures of the signs in the stores.

- Leah – I don't think these signs communicate the urgency of the financial situation.
 - o Laurie – most of the detail is on the display itself and the individual cards.
 - o Sherry – agrees that visibility is important.
 - o Laurie – the media attention has been the biggest factor in getting the word out. We're trying to not be too casual or too alarmist. We want to ask for support that is doable.
 - o Jacky – it's important that members are actively made aware and be proactive about this.
 - o Emily – what about including up-to-date/timely information with the display that people can grab to read on a weekly/biweekly basis? Kind of what Roger was alluding to at the December board meeting. Something more than the quarterly Co-op News. It could be in several places in the store, including the Co-op News rack.
- Jacky – Can members be asked to round-up at the register?
 - o Laurie – we have an existing round-up program and Share the Spirit happening.
- Shelly – all the ways to support the Co-op involve members putting more money in but they don't involve getting members to attend meetings and being engaged and being informed.
 - o Colin – the current campaign to raise moneys from members was member suggested to target the financial aspect of the situation.
 - o Jacky – when I became a member, I had no idea it meant I was a member owner. I had no idea what it meant to be a member.
 - o Laurie – the very low \$25-member cost is very casual and lends to people not getting involved.

4. Non-organic Local Produce

This is an item brought to us by member Jacky and was discussed at a previous MAC meeting. Jacky would like for small local farmers to be able to sell their non-certified organic produce at the Co-op. The produce would still be produced using organic methods, it just wouldn't be certified organic.

- Laurie – we just had our organic audit for the stores. One of the certifications is that organic and conventional never touch. There must be a separate sink for washing non-organic produce. Perhaps there could be an individual refrigerator for non-organic produce to keep it separate from organic produce.
- ACTION – Laurie will talk to Alisha Hammer and make sure her, and Jacky can communicate. Jacky would like to know what the limitations are.
- Jacky – mentioned that Alisha had also mentioned some sort of computer issues.
 - Colin – so we're looking for a protocol for small local farmers that want to sell non-organic produce. If MAC is going to continue discussing this, it would be helpful if Jacky first has direct contact with Alisha to see what they can work out on that level and then see if the topic needs help from the board.

5. Community Building Events

This agenda item comes from board correspondence at the November 1 board meeting where a member requested the Co-op think about fun Co-op events that would create community and create income.

- Laurie – the Eureka store is having some upgrades done including a new hot bar going in this week. A kitchen upgrade will create more food. Many co-ops have a community dinner night and we're exploring doing the same on Thursdays with a \$5 set price. There would be a set menu. Shoppers are encouraged to sit and eat their meal at the store. Management is looking to expand seating at the Eureka store to accommodate more people to stay and eat. We would focus on items that are low cost to produce. We'd rather break even and have people there than make a big profit. We wouldn't want to lose money, but we wouldn't need a high margin. Thursday is the slowest day in the store which is why we'd choose that night for this promotion.
 - o Jacky – maybe have more incentives like a raffle or talk, so that people don't just leave with their food.
 - o Colin – or only serve the dinner on a real plate.
 - o Laurie – other co-ops will offer tests of bakery items while people are eating.
 - o Jacky – what about other food producers doing demos?
 - o Laurie – we won't be able to do this in Arcata yet. I have a vision of turning the employee bike room into a sitting area, which it used to be.
 - o Jacky – I think it would be great to have a community dinner with a sliding scale. Nobody turned away. Take donations. Have an incentive for people to pay more.
 - Colin – that type of model often works well. People often pay on average more.
 - Emily – what about something where you buy a dinner and the Co-op donates something to the foodbank? Or some type of giving, like Toms shoes structure or the like?
- Laurie – I'd also like to see the Annual Membership Meeting in one of the store parking lots.
 - o Cheri – that has been done in the past. On years with bad weather it was awful.
- Jacky – I miss having a community kitchen and cooking classes. What about renting kitchens after hours, like Café Phoenix?
 - o Sherry – one of the Granges might work for a cooking class space. The Bayside Community Hall is central and set up well.
 - o Laurie – we will continue looking for space for cooking classes.

6. Member Survey Question

The group brainstormed questions for the upcoming Co-op News.

- Which member discount is most valuable?
- Do you care more about organic or local produce- specifying produce or dry goods?
- Where else do you shop and why?
- What items do you buy that you can't get at the co-op?
- What are your priorities when you buy groceries?
- What kinds of products would you like the Co-op to carry more of?

7. Video Recordings of Board Meetings

This agenda item comes from a recent board meeting where several members were interested in recording meetings to post videos or audio online. One reason was so that members that aren't able to attend meetings can watch or listen to them. The committee touched briefly on the unknown legalities of posting audio or video in the state of California. It is something that we would need to look into further. Aside from possible legalities the group continued discussion of this idea.

- Laurie – you must be a Co-op member to attend meetings. If we post meetings on the website anyone, members or not, would have access to them.
 - o Robert – IT could create a member portal with password to get access.
 - o Colin – there are technical hurdles to record the meeting with everyone being heard and seen. It would require multiple cameras and microphones. The board approved a new policy last week that someone will write a brief summary to be posted quickly following each committee meeting.
 - o Leah – the amount of technology to make it a useful tool exceeds our ability at the moment and I think it would be a small utilization.
- Laurie – having experience with this at a public agency we found some people have a difficult time speaking in front of a crowd, and if the meeting is being recorded in any way it's an even bigger turn off for some people to speak. People don't feel comfortable on video or audio.
- Leah – what about an option for members to call in to a meeting if they can't attend in person?
- Jacky – I think you just need to go to the meetings. If you post a video, then anyone can see it.

Due to limitations of our current meeting space and sound recording system led the group to set the topic aside to revisit after the Co-op vacates the Ten Pin building and secures a long-term space for its meetings.

8. Agreements

- Laurie will facilitate connecting Jacky and Alisha to discuss produce.
- Revisit video and or audio recordings when we have a more permanent meeting space.
- Laurie will write the MAC summary report.

9. Next Agenda Items

- Employees at the Annual Membership Meeting
- Local produce?

10. Roles & Responsibilities

Consensus reached that Jules will facilitate the January meeting.

Consensus reached to adjourn the meeting at 6:40pm.

Minutes by Emily Walter