



**Council Meeting Minutes**  
**June 22, 2020**

**Present:** Scott Hess, Katie Michels, Pat Siergiey, Steven Farnham, Olivia Dunton, Julia Goldstein, Eric Jacobson, Eva Schectman, Andrew Sullivan

**Staff Representative:** Jess Knapp

**Staff:** Kari Bradley, Stephani Kononan, Mary Mullally, Lisa Rochelle, Tim Wingate, Jay Wisner

**Facilitator:** Elly Wood

**Note Taker:** Rowan Sherwood

Because connectivity malfunctions delayed start of meeting after recording began, note that actual meeting begins at time 8:24 in the recording.

**1. Welcome, agenda review, time allocation, guest policy review 5:39PM (0:08:24)**

Kari requested two items be added to Other Business: a discussion of video conferencing and GM evaluation. Lisa is familiar with the guest policy.

**2. Cooperative Community Comments 5:42PM (0:11:26)**

On behalf of member **Richard Hoffman**, Kari expressed concern regarding HMC's donation to Black Lives Matter Mr. Hoffman believes the donation should have been more local. Julia added that she is also concerned with donating to Black Lives Matter because of alleged anti-Semitic comments made on one of their their web pages. Council members expressed interest in this content; Julia agreed to forward it to Council.

**3. Consent Agenda: Approval of minutes, equity refund requests 5:47PM (0:16:14)**

**Scott motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Pat seconded.**

Discussion: Kari mentioned that because we're meeting early this month, he'd not yet circulated an equity report. That said, we did receive one request for equity refund of \$180. Scott amended his motion to include approving this, and seconder (Pat) approved of this change. Steven pointed out in the minutes from last meeting, there was a decision on a bylaw matter where no motion had been made or seconded. He requested clarification for the minutes. Steven also requested it be clarified if it was Pat or Julia who seconded Item 7 (Committee Reports). Also in the last item (Other Business), was non-yea vote an abstention or a nay? Kari said he would get clarification on these items for the minutes of last month's meeting.

Andrew clarified that he supports the work of the bylaw committee; he just does not think we should hold a vote on the whole package remotely this fall.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**4. CCMA Debrief 5:56PM (0:24:44)**

Several Council members attended the virtual CCMA conference. Those who attended found it quite valuable and will send links to the webinars to the whole council.

Scott recommended the session about affordability and discounts. Steven took detailed notes on all of the sessions and he will share that with council members. He would like more time to talk about these topics, as there is a lot of juicy material that could be of benefit to the Co-op. He liked the “basic bag” idea put forward by one co-op as an efficient way to get food to folks. Eva and Pat also liked this program, especially since it included recipes for using the food in the bag.

Julia took away that it is hard to make a profit on these programs.

Steven wondered if there is a way to subsidise these programs with grant money to make them more sustainable.

Overall, when compared to what other co-ops are doing, it feels like we are doing a good job meeting customers’ needs.

Eva agreed that we could use more time on this discussion. Steven added that we could link this to after-COVID planning discussions.

#### **5. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – next steps for our co-op 6:11PM (0:39:47)**

Eva thought that while it was nice to make a sizeable donation to Black Lives Matter, it would be good to think about ways to offer ongoing support to organizations run by and for people of color. She shared that “Movement for Black Lives” is a sort of umbrella organization that supports others doing racial justice work.

Eric added that we could reach out to co-ops outside of our bubble to see what kind of assistance we might offer in terms of alleviating food deserts.

Katie would like to see the co-op staff and council more closely reflect our larger community. She also wondered if we could incorporate more products made by people of color.

Scott gave as an example that we could carry more products for the Indian community in town. Eva agreed and thought we should revisit the idea of a community survey. Eva reminded the group that she got a list of specific Indian ingredients from someone and we are not able to get a lot of those products through our distributors. Olivia stated that it is hard to balance affordability with diversity – we do not have a lot of room for new products in the store and so something would have to go.

Katie and Eva agree that the diversity committee should start to meet again. Kari said the implicit bias trainings will resume at some point.

#### **6. Bylaw Committee Report 6:24PM (0:53:09)**

Scott reported that the committee met twice since the last council meeting and has finalised a plan to present to the council. At the annual meeting, present the changes to the membership and start preparing them for a special meeting to vote on them in the spring. Kari is developing a campaign plan that includes a lot of outreach and education. Steven suggested that we try to have a couple larger virtual meetings before the Annual Meeting to test, and familiarise our with, the technology.

**Scott moved to accept Bylaw Committee’s recommendation. Eva seconded.**

Andrew asked about the timeline and activities and Scott clarified that the changes will be introduced at the Annual Meeting, followed by outreach and info sessions, culminating in a special meeting – most likely virtually.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

Kari said that we would need to adjust the Annual Meeting agenda to accommodate this presentation. The Annual Meeting Committee will meet over the summer.

**7. FY2021 Interim Business Plan 6:33PM (1:02:30)**

Kari explained that due to the high level of uncertainty we are facing, the plan is taking a different form. We will use a 6-month time frame as a bridge to longer term planning.

The budget is for one year and using conservative assumptions we are planning for a loss, but we are well positioned to weather it.

Eric asked about assets from investments, noting that T-bills have bottomed out. Tim responded that while interest rates have gone down, they are still relatively safe. The finance committee will look at investments during their August meeting and other council members may attend. Kari added that losses are driven by operations, not return on investments.

Julia asked if the worst-case scenario was based on the PPP loan not being forgiven; Kari responded in the affirmative.

Steven asked how much better is the scenario if the PPP loan is forgiven. Tim responded.

Steven asked why we suspended equity payments. Kari explained that at the time the decision was made it seem prudent given the level of financial uncertainty.

Eva asked what the addition of Supervalu products would look like. Kari responded that staff will consider that when details of the new products are available.

Steven asked for clarification on what constitutes customer count. Kari explained it is the number of transactions, not identifiable individuals. He continued to explain that while customer count has halved, basket size has doubled, resulting in similar sales to last year.

Olivia shared thoughts about the council's role in supporting the Co-op – both staff and community. They could talk to folks, conduct surveys, gather info, host monthly themed roundtable discussions. Eva and Steven agreed and thought these ideas could offer a way to test offsite meeting technology.

**8. Monitoring Report: L6 Business and Financial Planning 6:50PM (1:19:20)**

**Scott moved to accept the report. Steven seconded.**

Discussion: Kari talked about how policies require interpretation, and we have had to adjust interpretation of this policy and our planning process given the unusual circumstances. He explained how he used very conservative assumptions in the planning process so that we would be prepared for all scenarios.

Steven wondered if the council should approve any changes to policy. Kari confirmed that the council could approve a policy interpretation or not, and they must approve all changes to policy. Steven wondered if we should add something about interpretation in calamity so that Kari does not have to make so many qualifying statements. Scott suggested Steven draft something for the next meeting.

**The monitoring report passes unanimously.**

**5 Minute Break**

**9. Recruitment Committee: Design a better Board activity 7:00PM (1:33:54)**

The activity was designed to elicit qualities needed to make the board more well-rounded and versatile. Members responded in round robin format to several prompts, including qualities,

skills and experience that are appreciated in a board member. The group was then asked to determine what its strengths and needs are, and to think about recruitment in this way.

**10. Staff Rep Report 7:35PM (2:08:16)**

Jess reported issues that have become familiar through the pandemic. Low staffing and burnout continue to be problematic. Some people are concerned that, at times, there may be too many customers in the store. Pat asked about the customer count in the store and Kari explained that we *are* counting, the limit is 40, and it is hard to control movement through the store.

Eva and Julia inquired about general morale and the reasons for low staffing levels. Elly shared that many are returning, and we are hiring as well. Kari addressed the challenge of the situation, noting that we have suspended enforcement of our attendance policy to avoid incentivizing staff to come to work sick. While we do need more staffing in the store, if everyone came back, there would be too many people.

**11. GM Report 7:42PM (2:15:37)**

Kari shared that the MOU with the union has been extended and the main components of that are extended benefits and flexibility in work assignments. The feeling of burnout is mounting as this drags on with no end in sight. We need to prepare for an extended period of uncertainty.

The new bag law goes into effect on July 1. The bags are taxable, and so the charge will charge 0.11 per bag. Steven asked why we do not charge the full cost of each bag (0.17) and Kari said to reduce sticker shock.

**12. Wrap up: Action items, communication, calendar 7:47PM (2:20:18)**

The recruitment committee will meet before the next meeting. CCMA synthesis and sharing. Follow-up on last months minutes. Finance committee will meet. Steven will draft policy updates. Next meeting will be August 31. Bylaw Committee will meet before then.

**13. Meeting Eval 7:51PM (2:24:28)**

Steven is concerned about the technology piece. His connection was dropped several times during the meeting.

**14. Council or Cooperative Community Comments 7:52PM (2:25:35)**

Since we are not opening the café, Steven asked about outdoor seating. Kari said there is some available. Steven asked about the deck and Kari explained that with customer limits in the store we do not want people lingering.

Katie shared that she got accepted to grad school and so will resign her post on the council.

**15. Other business 7:55PM (2:29:00)**

Kari brought up meeting technology, and asked the group if they thought Zoom was more reliable than GoToMeeting. Steven thought Zoom recovers more readily and would like to try it. Folks are open to trying new platforms, but Andrew does not want to spend more money.

APPROVED

Kari mentioned that while the requirements for evaluations have been suspended, he would like feedback from the council. Scott said there could be an executive session during the August meeting to do that.

**Scott moved to adjourn the meeting. Eric seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned. 8:02M (2:35:35)**

### **Action Items**

<b>Who</b>	<b>Do What</b>
<b>Julia</b>	<b>Circulate Link to anti-Semitic content on BLM webpage.</b>
<b>Kari</b>	<b>Clarification of three items from June 1 minutes.</b>
<b>Steven</b>	<b>Draft Policy re: Calamity interpretation.</b>
<b>Pat</b>	<b>Circulate list of Desired Qualities in Board Members.</b>
<b>Bylaw Committee</b>	<b>Meet before August Meeting.</b>