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**Present:** Eva Schectman, Jen Porrier, Julia Scheier, Steven Farnham, RJ Adler, Lauren Antler, Olivia Dunton, Catherine Lowther, Andrew Sullivan.

**Staff:** Kari Bradley, Jay Wisner, Elly Wood, Mary Mullally.

**Staff Representative:** Nick Sivret

**Facilitator:** Mark Simakaski

**Note Taker:** Rowan Sherwood

**Guests:** Steven Sease, Chip Stone

## I. Introduction

### 1. Agenda review and time allocation, guest policy review 5:30PM (0:00:08)

Mark commenced the meeting, asking if there were changes to the agenda. There were none. He reviewed the guest policy.

### 2. Cooperative Community Comments 5:32PM (0:01:17)

Steven Sease spoke first. A long-time co-op member, he expressed concern that unvaccinated employees present a risk to staff and shoppers. He believes all employees should be required to be vaccinated to ensure the safety of everyone, and that the co-op should hold itself to a higher standard than other stores in this area. Chip Stone spoke next and echoed Steven's sentiments. He believes vaccination is important, especially for customer facing employees.

## II. Regular Business

### 3. Consent agenda – minutes, equity refunds, monitoring report 5:41PM (0:11:05)

**RJ moved to approve the consent agenda. Jen seconded.**

Discussion: Steven asked if there was any feedback on the new format for the minutes. Folks liked it. **The motion to**

**approve the consent agenda passed unanimously.**

### 4. Committee Work 5:43PM (0:12:27)

Mark asked if there were questions on the committee reports. There were none. Eva informed the group that she is seeking to post more committee info on the website, and finding more ways to share council information with staff, perhaps by including meeting minutes in the Chronicle.

### 5. GM Rep report 5:48PM (0:17:20)

Kari shared his appreciation for staff and all that they accomplished over the last few weeks. He reminded the council that the deadline for Shopper Survey input is January 18. Next week (January 10) there is a special meeting on the solar project. They will review the purchase agreement with a lawyer and request authorisation for a loan. He mentioned that January will likely be a rough month in terms of Covid and we may need to adjust operations to meet the needs. We have a pandemic response plan in place that will guide decision making.

Julia expressed her gratitude for our co-op, especially after seeing how HMC is

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performing compared to some other co-ops.

Andrew asked if we had a guaranteed 5% return on investment for the solar project. Kari confirmed this is true, and said that the net present value of the investment is very good - approximately \$150,000 over 20 years. He shared that the Public Utility Commission still needs to approve a new group that encompasses all of our power sources. This is a technicality and does not present any legal jeopardy to the project. Steven asked if we had a sufficient number of subs to cover staffing gaps caused by Covid. Kari responded that it varies by department and it depends on the number of illnesses.

Steven asked if council could help and Kari explained that there are subs already trained for this.

Andrew commented that the new employee in the cooperator position is great and is very helpful throughout the store. He wondered if we have subs for that position. Kari responded that that position is in a 90-day trial period and if it proves successful, then we will hire more people into it.

### **6. Staff Rep report 5:59PM (0:29:00)**

Nick referred to his report and asked if there were any questions. Andrew asked about ways to make staff more aware of committee meetings. Nick said he would post council minutes around the store so staff knows what is going on and can then choose how to engage.

### **7. JEDI Education 6:06PM (0:35:32)**

Eva introduced this new element to council meetings. The group utilized breakout rooms to discuss the podcast or movie that all viewed. Groups were asked to think about what was interesting about indigenous food ways

and what was surprising. After ten minutes in breakout, the full group reconvened to discuss.

Jen shared that she was amazed to learn that it was white people impacting food access for indigenous people that had the greatest effect on the dissolution of their culture, not disease.

Steven offered that JEDI education reveals the biases of American History courses. He wondered if the indigenous ways would still work given that climate change has altered the environment.

Mary noted how we've become out of balance with the Earth.

Julia was struck by the science proving that native foods are healthier. She was fascinated by the interplay between indigenous knowledge and science.

Eva appreciated doing this work with the group.

Lauren noted the link between indigenous food sovereignty and local food systems and wondered what role the co-op plays in promoting that.

Kari noted how food sovereignty is central to so many other issues, like food, health, culture, economy, identity and how it parallels the co-ops mission.

Catherine appreciated the reminder of how we used to live and that we need to move towards a more local food system.

Elly wanted to know what pre-contact foods the co-op could carry.

Andrew was inspired to explore the Abenaki seed project.

Jay wants to apply big picture ideas to our local area.

Nick wondered about indigenous food ways as a means to address climate change.

Liv was struck by the simplicity of things we can do to tackle these complex problems.

RJ wondered if the co-op could promote an indigenous foods challenge of some

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sort. We may not be able to go back in time, but we can use this information to move forward.

\*\*\*\*\*6:37PM (1:07:00) BREAK\*\*\*\*\*

### III. Special Business

#### 8. Retreat Planning 6:45PM (1:14:50)

Eva explained the plan thus far. The retreat will be held remotely, in two three-hour sessions. The first will be facilitated by Jade Barker and will focus on group dynamics, teamwork and council development. The second session will focus on concrete topics that are still being determined. There was some discussion about how the council will choose what to focus on in the second session. Eva asked that the group send ideas to her and they can discuss in the first retreat session. Some ideas that were tossed around were sales growth, a food hub, the co-op's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and the possibility of a gas station.

#### 9. Committee Formation 6:55PM (1:25:01)

Eva began with the topic of creating a more robust whistle blower policy. She asked the council if they would prefer for the council to form a committee to research policies or if they wanted to direct staff to research it. The group agreed that they wanted staff to research and report back to the council, Mark asked for a motion. **Eva moved to direct Kari to research whistle blower policies. RJ seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

The council then proceeded to populate existing committees.

General manager Evaluation Committee: Eva, Jen, Steven.

Recruitment: Eva, Andrew, Lauren, **Robyn Pierce (staff) was added to the**

**committee subsequent to this meeting; she will be the CR representative on this committee.**

Annual Meeting Committee: Liv, Jen, RJ, **Rowan Sherwood (staff) was added to the committee subsequent to this meeting; she will be the CR representative on this committee.**

Ballot Committee: Andrew. Need at least one more.

Eva reviewed the rest of the committees and instructed folks to let the chair know if they are interested in serving.

Julia asked about the relationship between the council and the HMCCF. Kari explained that the HMCCF Committee is an advisory committee. Andrew asked if there was a limit on the funds. Kari responded that there was, and the amount varies each year.

Steven reminded folks that you don't need to be on a committee to sit in on the meetings if you want to learn more about their activities.

Andrew asked where the bylaws revision process stands. Steven said that the revisions are complete, but because of CoViD, meeting logistics need to be determined. Kari agreed.

Andrew wondered if the bylaw meeting could be tied in with 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events.

#### 10. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning 7:17PM (1:47:36)

Kari referred to Stephani's memo and highlighted the two main tracks – event planning and the fundraising component. He expressed that it would be great if the council could support the activities. He explained that we are looking to increase the endowment of the HMCCF to make the fund more stable into the future. **Jen moved to allocate uncashed patronage refunds to the**

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**endowment this year. Eva seconded.**

Discussion: Steven questioned the wisdom of building an endowment versus applying raised funds directly to more pressing present day and near future needs. Kari explained that there is still money left over from last year that can go towards funding this year's projects. RJ asked if it was a tax-deductible donation? It is.

RJ expressed concern that our fundraising goals are a bit ambitious for the capacity we have. Kari responded that we recognize this and will be looking for low hanging fruit. He recognized RJ's experience in development and acknowledged that the campaign will not be to that level. He also mentioned that we have some strong community partners and some leverage to make some bigger asks. RJ agreed to help with this.

Andrew said he thought we should bring it to a member vote.

Lauren likes the idea of building the endowment because it leads to tangible and visible good in our community.

Julia asked if 10k was the distribution goal for HMCCF each year. Kari said that would allow us to keep funding similarly to what we have been.

**The motion to allocate uncashed patronage refunds to the endowment passed unanimously.**

**IV. Closing**

**11. Action Items 7:34PM (2:03:20)**

Eva asked if anyone wanted to help organize the next JEDI education segment.

Mark asked how folks like the new meeting format. People indicated that they liked it. Steven thought there would be more on the monitoring reports.

**12. Adjournment 7:42PM (2:11:15)**

**RJ moved to adjourn the meeting. Jen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Action	Who	Notes
Fix Nick's Microphone	Kari/Nick	
Email council last year's shopper survey questions	Kari	
Finalize first retreat date/develop agenda	Executive committee	
Organize first committee meetings	Chairs/Kari/Rowan	
Draft committee charters	many	
Recommend whistleblower response procedures	Kari	
Follow up on uncashed patronage refund decision	Kari	
Develop next JEDI education segment	Eva, Elly, Lauren	
Remove Julia and RJ from daily update, Send Chronicle to everyone	Kari	