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Council Meeting Minutes February 6, 2023

Present: Eva Schectman, Jen Porrier, Steven Farnham, Julia Scheier, RJ Adler, Lauren Antler, Catherine Lowther, Ashley Muscarella, Jeff Roberts.

Staff Representative: Genevieve Cambron

Staff: Kari Bradley, Stephani Kononan, Mary Mullally, Jay Wisner

Guest: Abbi Jaffe

Facilitator: Elly Wood

Note taker: Rowan Sherwood

[Meeting Audio Here.](#)

1. Check-in 5:30PM

Steven moved to enter executive session to build interpersonal relationships. Eva seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

5:49PM Eva moved to exit executive session, Jen seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Welcome, meeting ground rules, agenda review 5:50PM 0:00:00

Elly welcomed everyone and Ashley recited the meeting ground rules. No changes to the agenda were offered.

3. Cooperative Community Comments 5:53PM 0:01:47

There were none.

4. Meeting Process Discussion 5:54PM 0:02:30

Referring to a memo in the packet, Eva proposed addressing administrative matters outside of the monthly meeting to allow more time for discussion. There was tacit agreement that that was acceptable. The council discussed what to do when the ground rules are broken. She asked how folks felt about the proposed process, noting some things may need to be addressed outside of the meeting. Genevieve offered that sometimes a reformulation may be

offered instead of an “oops” or “ouch” in order to gain more clarity. Eva agreed that that was part of the plan. Again, there was agreement that the council can use this process.

Lastly, Eva addressed check-ins, and noted Steven’s idea of entering executive session for check-ins to ensure privacy and encourage openness among council members in the service of team building. She mentioned recording of the council meetings, noting that it was established 4 or 5 years ago for transparency and accessibility, and asked if the council wanted to continue this practice.

Jay explained that when entering executive session, vigilance is needed to avoid admitting guests who are not part of that process.

Lauren asked how many folks access the recorded sessions, noting that if recording stops, folks wouldn’t like it. She thinks we should continue. Steven supports continuing recording, clarifying that in a meeting, council member statements are made on behalf of the entire membership, and council members should articulate themselves as if all 10,000 members are listening. Genevieve seconds what Steven said. Catherine supports continuing and

APPROVED

agrees with Steven. Jeff is in favor of continuing recordings, adding that the written minutes could include less detail. Julia was not in favor of recording, but is ok with continuing. Ashley agrees with Julia and noted that most other organisations do not record meetings. Jen has mixed feelings, but stands mostly in favour of recording. RJ likes the idea of archiving after minutes are approved. Kari is not necessarily in favour of it. He worries that it inhibits discussion. Eva recommends maintaining recording and noted that the majority of council members support that. No policy changes will occur at this time.

5. Consent agenda 6:14PM 0:23:39

RJ moved to accept the consent agenda. Eva seconded. Kari gave details on equity refunds. Steven asked why we get a line of credit with a private bank instead of a credit union which is another cooperative. Kari responded that we have a long-standing relationship with Northfield Savings and the co-op is on good terms with them. Steven acknowledged that. RJ indicated a good banking relationship is important and takes time to build; if that is the case with Northfield, we should stick with it. The motion to accept the consent agenda passed unanimously.

6. Household membership/Shopping privileges 6:19PM 0:28:40

Kari suggested that the terms of Co-op membership could be updated to allow a member to assign shopping privileges to others in their household, noting this is a more inclusive approach. He recommends adopting the change but suggested giving it a month for consideration. Steven wondered if we could conduct a poll of the membership to see what kind of feedback we get. The chance for input could avert some pushback.

Kari responded that staff decided against including a question in the shopper survey because there is a fair amount of context needed to make an informed decision. Catherine asked what constitutes a household. Kari clarified that one option would be for an individual member to be able to assign up to two others with whom they reside and share significant expenses to use that member's privileges when shopping. Ashley asked if this would affect the cost of membership, and a reduction of members? Kari isn't concerned about it; there is plenty of equity, and no immediate plans for investing it. Eva thinks Kari's recommendations are a good compromise between maintaining memberships and the members need for flexibility. Kari said it will be reintroduced next month in context with other member benefits.

7. Council Retreat Planning 6:28PM 0:37:26

Eva reviewed the plan. It is ambitious but she thinks the council is up to it. Elly asked for a motion to accept the plan. RJ moved and Steven seconded. There was no discussion. The motion to accept the plan passed unanimously.

8. Annual Meeting Committee Report 6:35PM 0:44:48

Jen explained that we are considering moving Annual Meeting from November to September and outlined the hybrid (indoor & outdoor, in person and online) vision for it. She reviewed pros and cons, and supports the change. Kari added that this is the most inclusive option. Jen also raised the possibility of hosting a dinner and discussion in May. Julia offered a recommendation on timing of the annual meeting based on the Jewish holidays. Steven moved to adopt this with one change: a keynote speaker instead of a panel

APPROVED

discussion, suggesting we'd benefit from the infusion of new thinking coming from outside our immediate community. Eva noted it shrinks the council year by only one month is doable. Eva moved to accept this proposal. RJ seconded. Ashley added that we should be mindful of accessibility and ADA compliance if the meeting is held outside/inside. Ayes: 7, Nays: 1, Abstentions: 0. The motion passed.

6:46 BREAK 0:55:30

9. Mini training: Balance Sheets 6:56PM 1:05:45

Kari introduced the exercise presenting 3 points about the balance sheet: it's a snapshot in time, changes every day, and it's the accumulation of all the activities over the history of the organisation. Small groups were formed to discuss, and a short debrief followed.

Steven commented that graphs would be helpful in tracking movement over time. Kari agreed that was a good idea.

10. Monitoring Report L4 Employee Compensation and Benefits 7:14PM 1:24:52

Steven moved to accept the report. RJ seconded. Kari explained the report – it is loaded with information. He noted that it is trying to meet a lot of needs and life is getting more expensive. As such, it has become harder to provide what we wish for our employees. He noted that in this instance union negotiations around benefits and pay are helpful because the stakeholders arrived at a shared agreement. Kari noted that performance evaluations are all caught up.

Steven noted the comparison of wages to sales. He asked about how we compare on wages to other co-ops. Kari referenced the study conducted last year which compares

us to the industry, not specifically to other co-ops. Eva appreciates the thorough report and likes the transparency the wage scales bring. The motion to approve the report passed unanimously.

11. JEDI committee charter 7:25PM 1:34:53

Eva explained that the JEDI charter is revamped to address the current needs of the council, and reviewed the new charter. Steven moved to accept; RJ seconded. Steven noted that a link provided was not working. The motion to approve the charter passed unanimously.

12. GM evaluation committee report 7:29 PM 1:39:00

Eva reviewed the timeline and process for the committee's work and asked if there were any questions/comments. There were none.

13. Meeting evaluation 7:35PM 1:44:25

Jeff – Intense meeting. Thank you.

Jen – Not sure what we are looking for in this section of the meeting. She liked learning about balance sheets. Check in took too long.

Lauren – Balance sheet training was good. Also, the detailed pro and con list around AM. We need better prioritizing when we have so much on the agenda.

Catherine – Well organized, on time.

Genevieve – Good meeting.

Steven – Covered a lot efficiently.

RJ – Calendar link was confusing.

Ashley – Appreciate the clear packet. Announcing the page of the packet we are on is helpful. Doesn't like being read to.

Kari – Liked the check in, thinks it's working - except for the time it takes.

Julia – Sometimes info in the packet being reiterated in the meeting is redundant.

APPROVED

Eva – Appreciates thoughtful responses and general responsiveness. Something that needs work: if she doesn't read what is presented, she gets a lot of questions that reflect that they haven't read the packet. Needs to find a balance between that and the reading.

14. Wrap 7:46PM 1:55:06

Eva will send retreat info with the final agenda. Ashley asked how we will determine the council retreat time. Eva said a doodle poll will be circulated.

15. Cooperative Community Comments 7:48PM 1:57:25

Steven addressed the issue mentioned in the January 13 employee update regarding customers eating product(s) prior to paying

for them. What if a customer eats a muffin, but declares and pays for it at the register. Eva referred to the recent termination situation and believes that was the context for the question. Genevieve said there was no coherence in passing the responsibility for dealing with it on to the MOD. There is not a clear rule to follow. Kari clarified that the expectation is that customers should pay before they consume. It's more delicate because they are customers, and they may not know our policies. This will be addressed in relation to employees at housekeeping meetings.

7:53PM 2:02:44 Steven moved to adjourn. Rj seconded. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:53PM.

| Action Items | | |
|---|-------------------|-------|
| What | Who | Done? |
| JEDI committee charter | Kari, Eva | |
| LOC signatures | Kari, Eva, Steven | |
| Bring member privilege list to March meeting | Kari | |
| Retreat next steps, Logistics, Coordination | Kari, Eva | |
| Dinner and Discussion next steps | Kari and staff | |
| Annual Meeting next steps | | |
| Answer: Average increase from last wage scale increase? | Kari | |