

TPSS Board of Representatives Meeting
Open Session Minutes¹

Date/Location/Time: May 21, 2020, meeting (held remotely, on-line) 6:30 p.m.

Board present: Diane Curran (DC), Fred Feinstein (FF), Adam Frank (AF), Susan Cho (SC), Bob Gibson (BG), Sawa Kamara (SK), Susanne Lowen (SL), Katea Stitt (KS), Katherine Tsantiris (KT)

Staff present: Mike Houston (MH), General Manager (GM)

Minutes submitted by: Solveig Mortensen (SM), Board Administrator

Meeting held by Zoom and telephone connection

Board Actions:

- The Board approved the April 16, 2020 open session Board meeting minutes, as amended.
- The Board accepted the GM's Monitoring Report for Policy L-1, Customer Service and Value, as submitted.
- The Board checked the reporting status for the bi-annual Ends and Indicators update report and deferred its submission.
- The Board moved the review of the GM's Monitoring Report for Policy L-4 to the closed session of the Board meeting.
- The Board approved the submitted Board budget.

Housekeeping: DC announced that CCMA will hold their conference online this summer, and she planned to send details to the Board. The Board discussed edits for the topical calendar and the new formatting for the action item list. DC asked Board members to follow a procedure of reviewing the action item list every month and crossing out any items that have been completed. (Items should be crossed out in suggestion mode so all can see they have been completed. They can be deleted after the next board meeting.)

Open Member Forum: No other Co-op members present.

GM Updates:

Monthly GM Report: MH shared news of three new initiatives:

¹ *Monthly Co-op Board meetings have open and closed portions. Member-owners are welcome at the open portion of meetings. The closed part of the meetings is reserved for discussion of finances, personnel, and legal issues.*

1. USDA recently approved the State of Maryland's request for a waiver that would allow SNAP beneficiaries to make their benefit purchases online. Lorig Charkoudian, Walmart, Amazon, and many vendors and people invested in food security collaborated to push this new SNAP legislation through. The Co-op is now doing paperwork to implement the online SNAP purchasing program.
2. Beginning May 23, all Co-op shoppers can now walk up to a terminal outside the store, order off a menu, interact remotely with a cashier, and pay right there. The Co-op is calling this new feature "the Co-op to Go-op."
3. Also starting May 23rd, the Co-op will offer pre-packed food bags and bring back single, a la carte produce selections.

MH confirmed that the Co-op will be alerting and emailing the Co-op membership about these developments. MH shared that BG and SK spoke to the Community Engagement Manager and took flyers regarding the developments with the SNAP program to Crossroads. They also planned to give food and information out at Victory Towers.

MH shared that the Co-op switched credit card processors back to First Data from Paypal for reasons of cost and ease. MH explained that Co-op management had intended to return to First Data and temporarily switched because when they unrolled the online system, paypal performed the quickest. However, First Data allows a shopper to just use a credit card account; whereas, Paypal is set-up so that all transactions, whether a shopper signs in with Paypal or not, are processed by Paypal.

L-1 Monitoring Report, Customer Service and Value: MH and the Board observed that, looking back on the majority of the year, the report largely covers a time period when the store was still physically open. Board members gave feedback regarding contact information for departments, some terminology in the report, and some items to include on the Co-op's website.

Ends and Indicators Update-Report Status: By request from Mike and agreement of the Board, Ends and Indicators report submission is postponed due to other management priorities while the Co-op continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Board Business:

Evaluation of Member-Owners meeting: The Board gave the feedback that the solid member turn-out showed that people are invested in the Co-op. Board members noted the lack of member-owner participation for this meeting and considered people's busy schedules and/or the need to do outreach to achieve regular meeting participation. MH planned to send the Board the names of the people who had agreed to do the work on the five year plan and to check for wellness related listservs that the Board could utilize.

KS offered to explore the possibility of WETA's doing a public service announcement on the Co-op's collaborative work to allow SNAP benefits to be utilized online. Diane planned to provide the Board with more listserv information. BG planned to post MH's statement re: the developments with the SNAP benefits and other developments to listservs he knew.

KS also offered to send a message to the DC teachers union, which they could pass onto the DC public school system.

Review draft Board budget: The Board approved the Board draft budget.

Committee Updates:

Membership Committee: The Membership Committee met on May 12th and minutes from the meeting were circulated. FF discussed the membership committee policies listed in the policy register. FF reflected on how those policies include aspirational language and good information, but their content seems to deviate from some of the broader principles in the policy register and their inclusion seems tenuous--no other Board committee has directive policies in the register. FF noted, when these policies were reviewed in the past, the question of whether something should replace them arose. The Board determined that the Membership Committee would put forward a recommendation to the Policy Committee on how these policies should be handled.

FF shared that following the idea of the Co-op's providing SNAP program outreach to the community, BG and SK completed a three and a half hour SNAP training program. MD Hunger Solutions suggested the Co-op might qualify as a community based organization (CBO), and the Co-op's Community Engagement Manager is submitting an application for the Co-op to be established as a CBO. Once the Co-op is recognized as a community based organization, it can formally provide outreach and help people understand the eligibility criteria and apply for benefits. If the CBO application is approved, the Co-op plans to inform the farmer's market of how the Co-op will be supporting SNAP initiatives.

FF brought up the question that one Spring member-owner's meeting participant posed re: what Co-op members, community members could do at this time. One idea that the Board President has been in communication with the GM about is utilizing the list of 100 people from the recent survey who said they wanted to help. FF further explained that the survey's call to action was focused on the five year planning process, but the wider Board emails would go beyond those hundred people and the Board/Co-op could be broadcasting as specific message amplifiers. A Board member gave the feedback that for the 100 who say they want to be part of the strategic planning process, the Co-op can designate them as Co-op ambassadors.

Nominating Committee: FF shared that the Committee has already drafted this year's notification mailing; this mailing initiates the nomination process.

Policy Committee: SC reported that the Policy Committee went through all the L policies, which were essentially the monthly monitoring reports provided by the GM, and made sure each was still relevant. SC explained that two of the L's policies mentioned volunteers, and there needed to be clarification that the Co-op does not have a volunteer program, but there are people that do volunteer for discrete tasks. The Board heard that at one point in the Co-op's history, there had been a volunteer discount compensation program, but that program is gone.

SC also shared that the L-2 policy requests data that was recommended by an HR consultant in a report dated Oct 2, 2009. However, even past Board members are unable to locate this report. SC will look at what data was used for the last submission of L-2.

Board Development Committee: No new updates to present.

Technical Platform decision: DC proposed that the Board not make a decision on the preferred platform yet, but for Board members to keep experimenting with both the Zoom and Web-Ex for meetings and decide later.

8:20pm Meeting adjourned

Board Representatives' Committee Memberships:

Membership and Community Affairs Committee: FF, SK, BG, DC (FF Chair)

Audit and Finance Committee: AF, SC, BG, KT (AF Chair)

Personnel Committee: DC, SK, KS (DC Chair)

Policy Committee: SC, AF, KT (SC Chair)

Nominations Committee: SK, FF, BG (SK Chair)

Junction Committee: FF, SK, KS (FF Chair)

Expansion Committee: AF, SC, SL (AF Chair)

Board Development Committee: DC, AF (chair position shared)

Term 2019-2020 Meeting Attendance:

	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Cho	*	*	*	*	*	*
Curran	*	Ex	*	*	*	*
Feinstein	*	*	Ex	*	*	*
Frank	Ex	*	*	*	*	*

Gibson	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kamara	*	*	*	*	*	*
Lowen	*	*	Ex	*	*	*
Stitt	*	Ex	Ex	*	Ex	*
Tsantiris	Ex	*	Ex	*	*	*

(Ex=excused)

Board Terms:

Board Representative	Term:	Term Ends:
Cho	3 years (consecutive term)	2022
Curran	3 years	2020
Feinstein	3 years (consecutive term)	2022
Frank	3 years (consecutive term)	2020
Gibson	2 years	2021
Kamara	3 years	2021
Lowen	3 years	2020
Stitt	3 years	2021
Tsantiris	3 years	2022

