

TPSS Board of Representatives Meeting Open Session (public part of meeting)¹ Minutes

Date/Location/Time: June 18, 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), Katherine Tsantiris (KT)

Board absent: Katea Stitt (KS)

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

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

Meeting held by Webex and telephone connection.

Board ACTION:

- The Board approved the May 21, 2020 open session Board meeting minutes.
- The Board accepted the GM's Monitoring Report: Policy L2-Staff Treatment as submitted, with a waiver of one requirement that could not be satisfied due to the Covid-19 emergency.
- The Board agreed that the spring interval submission of the *Ends and Indicators Report* is excused and will not be expected for submission until the next regular reporting interval in October 2020.

Housekeeping:

- Due to the COVID-19 emergency, the Board held the June 18, 2020 meeting by Web-x and phone.

Action Item review: The Board reviewed former action items, and DC urged Board committee chairs to review the list, take care of committee work, and mark tasks as completed.

Open Member Forum: No other Co-op members present. Board members shared their observations about the on-site re-opening of the store. Various Board members remarked that upon patronizing the Co-op, people appeared happy to be shopping inside again; the store looked great; and both indoor and outdoor procedures seemed to run well.

GM Report: Monthly GM Report: MH also noted positive feedback regarding the store's re-opening. MH commented that they had asked everyone to be calm; and, thus far, possibly because operating a physically accessible store is what people are used to, re-opening has been unexpectedly smooth. MH stated that they are encouraging staff to utilize time off, so not to have too many people on the floor at once.

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

MH emphasized that the Co-op is continuing to offer Co-op to Go-op and online shopping options. MH shared that since the previous Monday, the Co-op's been tracking the hourly customer count closely and observed less customer presence at the end of the day. MH estimated that, in addition to the online and Co-op to Go-op and shoppers, the Co-op is serving approximately 200 people in the store each day. MH more specifically estimated that the Co-op is receiving about thirty shoppers an hour, and, while following the limited entry practice, shoppers are averaging a half hour to complete their shopping. MH confirmed that since re-opening, the online orders have dropped some but still constitute a good number of purchases and still average a larger basket size. MH confirmed that with resuming indoor shopping in addition to online shopping, the Co-op is doing significantly better.

MH confirmed that the Co-op is training staff to help customers maintain awareness of the COVID-19 safety protocols, such as using the lane lines and socially distancing while shopping inside and waiting in line outside. MH confirmed that there are arrows on the floor throughout the store and that the wellness section is only accessible to staff, because it is a difficult section to navigate. MH took feedback from board members, including a request for more signage regarding gloves in the bulk section. In response to a comment suggesting telephone service in the wellness section, MH stated that offering this as a large-scale service would be too challenging.

The Board and GM discussed how they wanted to send an email blast to numerous listservs to highlight the re-opening of the Co-op, the steps the Co-op has taken throughout the pandemic, the community-focused work the Co-op performs, and the donating the Co-op does.

L2-Staff Treatment, Monitoring Report: MH reported compliance with L2, the Board policy regarding staff treatment, with one exception: he was unable to fully demonstrate compliance with L2.4, which requires the GM to ensure that the staff will not be exposed to unsafe, unhealthy, or illegal conditions. MH explained that it is impossible to make this assurance during the Covid-19 epidemic, given the extraordinary health risk. Nevertheless, he reported taking a range of measures to protect the staff as much as possible. The Board agreed to waive compliance for L2.4.

DC shared that she provided the Co-op's attorney a copy of the L's policies (which are also public) so the attorney could specifically review L2.5.4 of L-2 policy. The attorney's recommendations will be taken up at the next Board meeting.

The Board confirmed with MH that the "General Manager Orientation" page and the "TPSS Covid-19 Response" page were part of this monitoring report. MH explained how, currently, it's his/the GM's practice to review policy L-2 with new hires during their orientation with the GM.

In response to a question regarding the report's "Food Service Facility Inspection Report" pages, MH explained that the blank areas were part of a standardized form that didn't need to be filled

out. In response to a question regarding whether the health inspector would be returning now that the store is physically re-opening, MH shared what he knew about it: the Co-op passed the customary health inspection in January 2020, but an unannounced inspection can always occur.

The Policy Committee reported that L2's requirements referenced a 2009 report that was missing from all of the Co-op's records. Since the GM was providing all of the same types of data that had been presented and accepted by the Board in the years since 2009, the requirements were deemed to be appropriate and sufficient. The Board accepted the monitoring report for policy L-2, with a waiver for L2.4 as discussed above.

Ends and Indicators Report: The board previously postponed this report, and agreed to excuse it until the next scheduled reporting interval in October 2020.

Board Business:

Committee updates:

Membership and Community Affairs Committee (MCAC): FF reported that the MCAC met in June and circulated minutes for this meeting. FF shared that the MCAC has said to the Policy Committee that the MCAC members recognize there are valid concerns with the current language in the register relating to the Membership Committee. FF stated that many of these concerns were to be addressed in the five year planning process, which has been postponed. The MCAC recommended to the Policy Committee that the committees set aside the issues raised concerning this language for now. FF shared how the MCAC also discussed the topic of membership communication and that with the membership/community there is a lot of discussion about food justice right now.

SK confirmed that the food distribution work continues and that she is still volunteering with the Small Things Matter, which utilizes Co-op space as a pick up location and storage space. MH confirmed how at different times throughout a year, the Co-op offers to match the charity donations shoppers make when they round their purchase up to the next full dollar figure. FF noted that Co-op shoppers are now able to make a small donation when they are placing on-line orders.

Nomination Committee: SK summarized how the draft nominations election solicitation notice, for to the Co-op's website, was provided for this meeting and that DC forwarded revisions. DC shared that she edited the notice to reflect more current circumstances.

The GM and Board members gave feedback regarding the proposed dates for the end of the election period and suggested moving it by a week. The Board also discussed how the Co-op's by-laws recognize staff's ability to serve on the Board, providing that they are member-owners, and with the explicit understanding that they are representing the member-owners, rather than the staff.

Policy Committee: The Policy Committee reported that they met and circulated minutes. They also shared that the Co-op’s Columinate consultant Martha Whitman had located the missing October 2009 HR audit report referenced in policy L2 and planned to review it.

Personnel Committee: No report for this meeting.

Board Development Committee: No report for this meeting.

CCMA, summary and reflections: BG reflected that this year’s CCMA focused on how co-ops are functioning in the current environment of the COVID-19 pandemic. BG summarized how conference attendees saw the positive of the crisis as pushing co-ops into e-commerce and finding innovative ways to serve customers. BG also stated that participants at CCMA believed the crisis challenged food co-ops to think about their mission and how they address economic strain and racial inequality. What extra steps can co-ops take to serve communities in unique and beneficial ways?

BG shared his observation that some co-ops took steps similar to TPSS while others did not and there have been differing economic outcomes. Using information to date, BG shared the impression from the conference that the co-ops that remained open had some of the best sales; but, it’s still unknown if it came at cost to their communities.

The Board planned to continue to use and evaluate web-x, zoom, and other platforms.

7:45 pm 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	April	May	June
Cho	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Curran	*	Ex	*	*	*	*	*

Feinstein	*	*	Ex	*	*	*	*
Frank	Ex	*	*	*	*	*	*
Gibson	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Kamara	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Lowen	*	*	Ex	*	*	*	*
Stitt	*	Ex	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