

TPSS Board of Representatives Meeting

March 24, 2022

Open Session Minutes

Board present: Bob Gibson (BG), Elizabeth Teuwen (ET), Adam Frank (AF), Susan Cho (SC), Fred Feinstein (FF), Kathy Tsantiris (KT)

Board members absent: Diane Curran (DC), Esteban de Dobrzynski (ED), Katea Stitt (KS)

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

Members present: Mary Muchui (MM), Mark Sherman (MS)

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

Meeting held by zoom and called to order at 6:30 pm

Board ACTION:

- The Board approved the February 24, 2022 Open Session Board meeting minutes.
- The Board approved the monitoring report for policy L-9, Membership, as submitted by the GM.

Review outstanding action items and topical calendar: Recently, BG updated the topical calendar with several Columinate meeting dates. BG shared that he completed two of the three Columinate policy governance trainings and informed Board members that they could still join. BG also encouraged Board members to consider attending the virtual June 9th-11th CCMA conference.

The annual Mid-Atlantic Food Cooperative Alliance (MAFCA) meeting will be hosted by the Common Market in Frederick on September 11, 2022. SC described her prior experience attending MAFCA as positive, where participants enjoyed a tour and various GMs and co-op boards discussed the co-op trade.

Open Member Forum: AF expressed appreciation to the Co-op for having Passover food items available in advance of Passover. MM asked the Co-op to hire people with disabilities and recycle plastic bags.

MS submitted a pre-recorded clip entitled *Sherman Testimony for March 24, 2022*. In the video testimony he urged TPSS to consider purchasing the automotive business now for sale on the east side of the city-owned lot, as a proactive business investment for the Co-op. He suggested that if the lot were obtained, the Co-op could consider expanding on the Sycamore side parking and use the Johnny's Auto service space for parking.

The Board thanked MS for his presentation.

GM Report: MH highlighted points from his most recent GM report, including the Co-op's new newsletter, the next inventory, Earth Day planning is underway, and a meeting with the Penn Branch Citizens Civic Association (PBCCA) of Washington, DC.

MH explained that some PBCCA members had been to the Co-op and approached him with general questions about starting a co-op, as a potential means of bringing a retail grocery to its location in Southeast DC. MH provided insights into cooperative and community-owned groceries and connected the civic group with the Food Co-op Initiative.

MH also met with the new GM of the Greenbelt Food Co-op, a person with experience in managing a natural foods market in Austin, TX. MH says the Greenbelt Co-op is planning to add more organic products to its conventional mix, and do more to attract younger members and shoppers. That co-op has taken over management of the New Deal Cafe in Greenbelt.

Policy L-9, Membership Monitoring Report: MH summarized that this report reflects how the Co-op is resuming events, but, otherwise, shows content similar to that in the prior year's report.

In response to Board inquiry, MH explained that the old ATM in the Co-op was replaced before the pandemic, is separately managed (by a credit union and appears to get regular patronage).

A Board member asked about changes in percentage of sales to members during the pandemic and if this is continuing. MH said that was the case but in 2021 the portion of sales to non-member shoppers began to rise towards pre-pandemic levels.

In regards to a question about outdated events still appearing on the homepage of the Co-op's website, MH explained that the website software for the "Happenings" and "Blog" pages retains the five most recent postings. MH and the Board discussed the Co-op working to add new content to those pages to keep the information as current as possible.

MH shared that the Co-op's database was updated when the online ordering platform was created and typically is revised during each election cycle. The Co-op will explore using other opportunities to update the database.

The Board discussed how policy L-9 touched upon the Board's role in membership engagement. The Board continued the plan to address membership engagement after completing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training and by doing a "policy blitz" later in the year to update policy governance language and content.

A Board member positively appraised the work of the Co-op's new communications team. MH noted that the Co-op communications work is in transition, with hiring of new staff expected in the near future.

Committee Updates:

Membership and Community Affairs Committee (MCAC), Committee Report: FF reported that the MCAC discussed invites for the May spring membership meeting. The Board will help promote the meeting by issuing personal invitations and sharing notices via community listservs. FF clarified that the spring membership meeting will be in-person in a sheltered space at the rear of the fire station and will not be a hybrid virtual event.

FF relayed that the MCAC also discussed plans for Earth Day, where Board members will staff a table within the TPSS tent. The Board and MH plan to acknowledge the Co-op's 40th year anniversary at the event and the membership meeting will focus on the topic of the next 40 years.

Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee-Reflections on Training: BG summarized that most all the Board and Co-op staff have now participated in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training. He noted that it has been good having Co-op staff and Board collaborate on an exercise together. The Board recounted the plan to take insights from the training and work on integrating those into the Co-op's mission, goals, and end statements.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm

Board Representatives' Committee Memberships:

Membership and Community Affairs Committee: (FF Chair) FF, DC, KT, ET, ED

Finance and Audit Committee: (AF Chair) AF, SC, BG, KT, ET (DC, as ex-officios)

Personnel Committee: (BG Chair) DC, KS

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

Nominations Committee: (BG Chair), AF, DC

Junction Committee: (FF Chair) FF, DC, BG, KS, ET, ED

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion KS (Chair), SC, BG, AF, KT

Expansion Committee: (AF Chair) AF, SC, BG, ED

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

Term 2021-2022 Meeting Attendance:

Board member	Dec. 2021	Jan. 2022	Feb. 2022	March
Cho	*		*	*

Curran	*	*	*	ex
de Dobrzynski	*	*	*	ex
Feinstein	*	*	*	*
Frank	*	*	*	*
Gibson	*	*	*	*
Stitt	*	ex	ex	
Teuwen	*	*	*	*
Tsantiris	*	ex	*	