

# TPSS Board of Representatives Meeting

## February 16, 2023

### Open Session Minutes

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Board present: Bob Gibson (BG), Elizabeth Teuwen (ET), Adam Frank (AF), Esteban de Dobrzynski (ED), Ami Amin (AA), Susan Cho (SC), Taylor Dibbert (TD), Orly Keiner (OK)  
Board members absent: Katea Stitt (KS)  
Staff present: Mike Houston (MH), General Manager (GM)  
Minutes submitted by: Solveig Mortensen (SM), Board Administrator

*Meeting held at Historic Takoma and remotely, by zoom; called to order at 6:30 pm*

#### **Board ACTION:**

- The Board approved the January 19, 2023 open session Board meeting minutes as amended.
- The Board approved the monitoring report for Policy B-7, Communication to the Board.

**Debrief on 2023 Board retreat (February 4):** Board members received the notes of the retreat facilitator and Columinte consultant, Jade Barker. Board members expressed positive feelings about having an in person retreat, the array of topics covered, and the amount of time.

#### **Membership and Community Affairs Committee (MCAC):**

**Date for the Spring Member Meeting:** Board members planned to send suggestions for the agenda to ET, discussed locations, and considered holding the meeting on a weeknight in May.

**Debrief on TPSS engagement/education event on The Hunger Cliff:** ET shared discussions from the most recent MCAC meeting, where they assessed the Hunger Cliff Event. Seventy people registered and thirty-three attended; many were very engaged and seemed pleased with the content. The meeting's recording will be on the TPSS Co-op website.

**Board Blog Posts:** The Membership Committee recognized that TD completed a blog on the Hunger Cliff Event for the Co-op's website, OK completed a blog on packaging and sustainability, and BG will complete a piece on the Fredericksburg Co-op. The MCAC noted the goal of generating Board blogs and articles for the TPSS website and newsletter and encouraged Board members to continue to participate as a means to keeping a connection with the Co-op membership.

At the last MCAC meeting, the Committee also drafted a list of ideas of what the MCAC could be focusing on going forward. The member engagement activities of the Board should reinforce the values expressed in the Co-op' Ends Statements.

**Board Committee Charters:** Per bylaw requirement, there are three standing Board committees. The remaining ad-hoc Board Committees do not necessarily have charters.

**Review Action Items/Topical Calendar:** BG shared that the June Consumer Cooperative Management Association in Sacramento may be a valuable event for a Board member to consider attending. BG also recommended three upcoming online educational trainings from Columinate, including one on financing, which are available at no charge for Board members.

BG confirmed that the Board will re-commence reviewing policies B, C, and D from the policy register and that he and the Board administrator, SM updated the Topical Calendar to reflect this.

**Takeaways from visit to Fredericksburg Food Cooperative:** BG gave a short recap of a recent visit to one of the nation's newest food co-ops in Fredericksburg, VA. Fredericksburg Food Co-op opened in 2021 after seven years of a grassroots community effort, capped by a successful membership loan campaign to underwrite more than half of the capital costs of start-up. The Fredericksburg Co-op studied the success of TPSS and other regional food co-ops and received significant help from the non-profit Food Cooperative Initiative (FCI), which has assisted in the opening of 167 food co-ops in the U.S. since 2005 (TPSS is a supporter of FCI).

The Fredericksburg Co-op occupies a store that is twice the size of TPSS, with a little more than 3,000 members and less than half of TPSS Co-op's annual sales. The 'jewel' of the Fredericksburg co-op is a cafe with indoor and outdoor seating, used for a variety of community and co-op events every month.

### **GM Updates:**

**GM Report:** MH updated the Board on the April 22 Earth Day event, which will include bands, speakers, and family focused activities. Presentations will include one by the Compost Crew on zero waste. ET noted that the Board will have a table to discuss store initiatives and inform people of the spring member-owners meeting.

MH provided an update on the proposals being received for the store remodel project. Given the time required for permitting once a firm is engaged, he estimated that the project will probably happen next spring or summer.

MH reported that the shopper survey scheduled for later this year will be conducted by the University of Wisconsin. TPSS’s Human Resources Manager, Irene Cox is managing a staff survey for this year.

**Monitoring Report, Policy B7:** The B7 report on Communications with the Board was reviewed and accepted.

**Board’s Policy Review:** The Board reviewed B7 policy and determined the policy as written is meeting its purpose and needed no changes at this time.

7:40 pm meeting adjourned

Board Representatives’ Committee Memberships:

Annual Meeting Committee: BG (Chair), TD, MH (GM), and Chloe Thompson (Co-op staff)

Board Development and Elections Committee: AF (Chair), BG, TD

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: KS (Chair), SC, ED, AF, ET, and Chloe Thompson (Co-op staff)

Finance and Audit Committee: AF (Chair) BG, AA, MH (GM), and Yodit Gebremeskel (Co-op staff)

Membership and Community Affairs Committee: ET (Chair), ED, BG, OK, MH (GM), Chloe Thompson (Co-op staff) and Diane Curran & Fred Feinsten (former Board members)

Personnel Committee: BG (Chair), ET

Retreat Planning Committee: AF, ET, MH, OK, (and the Columinate consultant, Jade Barker)

**Term 2022-2023 Meeting Attendance:**

	Dec	Jan	Feb
Amin	*	*	*
Cho	*		*
de Dobrzynski	*	*	*
Dibbert	*	*	*
Frank	*	*	*
Gibson	*	*	*
Keiner	*	*	*

Stitt	Ex	Ex	
Teuwen	*	*	*

(Ex=excused)  
(Re=Resigned)

**Board Terms:**

Board Representative	Term:	Term Ends:
Amin	3 years	2025
Cho	1 year (appointed term)	2023
Dibbert	3 years	2025
de Dobrzynski	3 years (term after appointment)	2024
Frank	3 years (consecutive term)	2023
Gibson	3 years (consecutive term)	2024
Keiner	3 years	2025
Stitt	3 years (consecutive term)	2024
Teuwen	3 years	2023