

# TPSS Board of Representatives Meeting

## April 20, 2023

### Open Session Minutes

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Date/Location/Time: March 16, 2023 meeting 6:42 pm\*

Board present: Bob Gibson (BG), Elizabeth Teuwen (ET), Susan Cho (SC), Taylor Dibbert (TD), Orly Keiner (OK), Katea Stitt (KS)

Staff present: Mike Houston (MH), General Manager, Chloe Thompson (CT) Community Engagement Manager

Not present: Esteban de Dobrzynski (ED), Adam Frank (AF)

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

*\*Meeting held at Historic Takoma and remotely, by zoom*

#### **Board ACTION:**

- The Board approved the March 16, 2023 Open Session Board meeting minutes as amended.
- The following items were tabled: reconsidering amendments to policies B-7 and C-2 and of reviewing policy C, Global Governance Commitment and C-1 Governing Style.

**Housekeeping:** BG updated the Board that the GM's Ends and Indicators Report would not be presented in this meeting. BG noted that, with all the topics scheduled for discussion at this meeting, both the agenda items of reconsidering amendments to policies B-7 and C-2 and of reviewing policy C, Global Governance Commitment and C-1 Governing Style would be tabled.

**Open Member Forum:** No members presented questions or comments.

**Board Survey of Member Engagement:** ET reported that the 2023 Member-Owner Engagement Survey had been drafted and would be offered to TPSS Co-op members. Board members confirmed reviewing it and agreed it was ready for circulation.

**Earth Day - April 22/Board Participation:** The Board reviewed their plan for participating in the Co-op's Earth Day event, including informing members and shoppers of the day's events, OK's in-store tour, and the upcoming Member Appreciation Day and raffle. OK described the tour she planned to lead to demonstrate how to use various Co-op items to shop for a week's worth of meals without using plastic. OK and ET also planned to set up a pin board with recycled paper bags for craft activities. The Board discussed using the iPad at this and other events to do membership signs and enable people to write reviews if they like.

MH summarized the full plan for TPSS Co-op's, April 22, Earth Day event. The mayor, Talisha

Searcy, State Delegate Lorig Charkoudian (District 20), and Mike Tabor will attend and speak. Three bands spaced over the course of the day, will perform. Cheryl's Kitchen and Cookie Yay will be present as food vendors.

**Member Appreciation Day (Spring meeting)–May 24:** ET shared the MCAC’s plans for Member/Customer Appreciation Day, which is scheduled for Wednesday May 24th, 6-8pm at the Takoma Park VFW. It will include food and tickets for drinks for both TPSS Co-op members and customers, human bingo, and a raffle drawing (for members who have completed the member survey), a member forum and remarks from BG and MH.ET described human bingo as an ice-breaker that facilitates interaction among attendees.

**Board contributions to the blog and website:** CT shared that the blogs written by Board members OK and TD, and included in TPSS Co-op newsletters and posted in the website, have been a success, with individual pieces recording as many as 300 views and driving higher than normal web traffic. There was discussion over whether to limit blogs to two a month. MH agreed to not cap the number of postings.

**Board and In-store Participation:** BG encouraged Board members to continue volunteering for in-store, meet and greet hours and informed them there was no limit on the frequency of Board members taking turns with this effort. CT observed that customer traffic is generally higher during the weekends.

**Mid-Atlantic Food Co-op Alliance meeting, South Philly Food Co-op, Philadelphia, April 29:** Several Board members and CT discussed attending.

**Other Membership Committee (MCAC) Business:** OK and ET shared that the Membership Committee is organizing a community event on sustainability. OK has recruited experts from a non-profit Zero Waste DC to serve as speakers at a TPSS-sponsored in-person educational session. The MCAC is considering a date in late June.

ET reported that the MCAC hopes to form event plans for the rest of the year during the June MCAC meeting. TPSS considered sponsoring a showing of a film recently produced by the Takoma Park African American Oral History Project, but logistics prevent the Co-op from hosting a viewing in the Co-op parking lot.

ET also shared that the MCAC would like to do more work on issues of food justice. KS reported that she and CT discussed diversity, equity, and inclusion training and in wanting to do a deeper dive, possibly by doing a series called “Beyond DEI”, examining food justice as an issue. KS described TPSS Co-op as a community and encouraged the Board to recognize themselves as community organizers on such an issue.

**Membership Committee Charter:** The Board planned to review the draft Charter and vote by email.

**GM Report/Open Session:** MH reported that the Montgomery County Food Council will do a site visit of the Co-op on May 19th. BG shared that he planned to attend the annual opening of the Crossroads Market on April 26.

In response to a question about whether there has been an increase in theft in the store, MH noted that, generally the Co-op is lucky in this area. CT shared a recent incident of theft of a large amount of meat by a lone individual.

MH reported on the two architectural firms' proposals to renovate the store. One firm proposed closing the store for six months. The proposal from the second firm, which has strong experience in similar renovations, included a much shorter closure period. MH recommends that TPSS engage the latter firm. TPSS has, and will continue to receive, significant assistance from the National Cooperative Grocers on the renovation project.

A Board member inquired about the monetary benefit from the renovations. MH stated that TPSS Co-op will draw down \$500K from a state of Maryland grant, which will be matched by the Co-op. He believes that the many improvements will save money on utilities and maintenance, as well as increase customer traffic with an attractive interior.

Furthermore, MH explained that the store's equipment has been fully depreciated, so there is no loss in procuring new equipment now.

In regards to communication to prepare members for the changes and allow for feedback, MH shared that suggestions will be welcomed and taken under advisement. MH noted that once the architectural plans are complete, the Co-op will post pictures.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm

#### **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) AA, TD, BG, 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	Mar	April
Amin	*	*	*	Ex	*
Cho	*		*	*	*
de Dobrzynski	*	*	*	*	Ex
Dibbert	*	*	*	*	*
Frank	*	*	*	*	Ex
Gibson	*	*	*	*	*
Keiner	*	*	*	*	*
Stitt	Ex	Ex		Ex	*
Teuwen	*	*	*	*	*

(Ex=excused)

**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
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