

MINUTES

Weavers Way Cooperative Association Spring General Membership Meeting

Saturday May 19th 2007 at 5:30 pm
Summit Presbyterian Church

After thanking the band Acoustic Jam for performing, WW staff members Bonnie Shuman and Karen Edwards for preparing the delicious food, the Environment Committee for providing reusable dishes, and the cooperators, Board, and committee volunteers who helped organize and set-up, the meeting was called to order by Board Vice President Nancy Weinman at 5:35 p.m.

Approve Minutes of Fall 2006 GMM

The minutes of the Fall 2006 General Membership Meeting were approved as written.

Report from the Board President

Board President Stu Katz discussed the co-op's strong financial condition, and the commitment of the Board to engage in dialogue with members as it contemplates expansion to a second store. Together with VP Nancy Weinman, he presented tribute honoring the services to the Co-op of former President Bob Noble and founding member and Board member Dorothy Guy.

Report from General Manager

General Manager Glenn Bergman presented a financial report showing a 10% increase in sales during the first quarter compared to last year. He noted accomplishments such as the establishment of Weavers Way Community Programs, the Shuttle becoming monthly, and the addition of more local food suppliers. Future plans include automating the membership system and providing further customer service training for staff. Regarding expansion, he reviewed the results of a recent market study that suggested the possibility of opening an additional store in the Chestnut Hill area, and, later, in Germantown/East Falls. A broker has been contracted to explore real estate options. He noted, however, that there are many unknowns and the co-op may find that expansion is not affordable at this time.

Vote on Proposed Bylaw Change

There has been a problem with some members not redeeming the cash portion of their patronage rebate. Therefore, WW management and the Board proposed that subsection "g" be added to Article IX-Disposition of Net Savings (see bold text below):

4. Written Notice to Members—An allocation of patronage rebates shall be evidenced by a written notice within eight months and fifteen days after the end of the fiscal year stating:
 - a. The amount of net savings assigned to that member's reserve capital account as part of the patronage rebate;
 - b. The amount of net savings assigned to that member's regular capital account as part of the patronage rebate;
 - c. The amount of net savings being paid to the member in cash as part of the patronage rebate;
 - d. The total of a, b, and c designated "total patronage rebate";

- e. The member's total reserve capital account;
- f. The member's total regular capital account;
- g. That the cash portion will be assigned to the member's regular capital account if not redeemed within four months of the date of this notice.**

Member Action: By voice vote, the proposed bylaw change passed as written.

Breakout Discussion and Reports on Values/Ends

In small groups, members engaged in a discussion of cooperative values and Ends policy. The results were then presented to the larger group, a selection of which appears below:

Values

1. Democracy: Membership input is important. Democracy assures that Board reflects the membership.
2. Consensus was that equality/solidarity are more important than democracy.
3. Group help and group responsibility is outgrowth of self-help and self-responsibility. Co-op supplies the community or solidarity (more than individual can do alone).

Missing from the statement of values: We need to focus on long term values more.

Ends

E-3 – This is the basis. If this doesn't work, the other ends don't come into play.

E-6 – Is one of the most important. It defines "high quality" (E-3) and fosters loyalty to the coop.

Missing from the ends: Sustainability which includes a balance between environmental responsibilities and economic responsibilities. Integrity of values makes people loyal.

E-1. Does treating everyone equally promote diversity or must coop be more proactive in promoting diversity (such as highlighting food from different cultures)? How do we know what members value so that we can promote diversity?

E-5 People need education on issues and to exchange ideas as much as they need good products.

Group consensus was that good food at fair prices is important because without that, members will shop elsewhere. At the same time, what makes people loyal is the coop's commitment to use products that are healthy, grown locally, and help sustain the environment (the earth). Group thought we should educate the public more about why we buy and sell what we do because that would attract more members.

Values: Trust (extra one of our own); Various meanings of Equity: financial, shared interest, sweat equity; Fairness; Participation; Building community wealth; Integrity (in conjunction with food integrity); Fair trade; Organic farming.

Ends:

E1. Not living up to that. Are we working on it? Are we doing better or worse than other co-ops?

E4. Re-word; make clearer. Need statistics to show how we contribute to the success (GNP) of Mt. Airy. Count number of community groups. Wages of local vendors. Money employees take home. Circulate back in to the local economy.

Should growth be part of the ends goals? More service/products for member, it would be a risk not to grow as well as a risk to grow (it must be analyzed). Co-op can be seed for a better world.

National & political issues need to be added as ends, related to social responsibility

VALUES: I asked the group to describe those values they considered most important before looking at those listed. All those items below underlined were not on original list.

Most important value was “sustainable food system” : (eating regionally, from decentralized farms, using as little fuel as possible and not depleting the soil). Next was diversity of membership , Social responsibility, Cooperation, Community Building , Educating the Community (about the environment and healthful eating) Making healthy food available.

They agreed with the values listed as well, thought they were all important, though not always sure of definition.

ENDS: (Again we began by creating our own ends, then looking at those listed)

Eat locally, think globally; Do what is possible on a small scale first; Have a sliding scale membership to increase diversity; Have sustainable product line guidelines. (Co-op has done this in past); Sustainable packaging; Review product selections; Have a balance between diversity and sustainable fair-trade products.

I. Values

1. Most Important Values--Votes

- A. Self Responsibility - 1
- B. Democracy - 1
- C. Equality - 2
- D. Equity - 1
- E. Honesty - 2
- F. Social Responsibility - 3

2. Are These Right for Weavers Way?
 - A. Yes – All of them.
3. Missing Values
 - A. Trust, particularly at the management level
 - B. Community
 - C. Inter - Dependence

II. Ends

1. Most Important--Votes
 - A. Ends #1 – Not Achieved but most important—9 (unanimous)
 - B. Ends #2 – 2 (second most important)
 - C. Ends #3 – 4
 - D. Ends #4 – 1
 - E. Ends #5 – 1
 - F. Ends #6 - 1
2. Are These Right for Weavers Way
 - A. Yes – All of them.
3. Missing
 - A. Become more politically educated
 - B. Don't lose sense of values with expansion
 - C. Pay attention to distance/miles traveled for our produce

Announcement of Board of Directors Elections

The Weavers Way Board election results were compiled by Sylvia Gentry, Leadership Committee member and chief teller for the election. Asterisk denotes winner:

At Large Director (4 elected)

Jeanne Allen 52
 Sylvia Carter 100*
 Edward Case 59
 Afshin Kaighobady 76*
 Garvey Lundy 80*
 David Woo 79*

Staff Director (1 elected)

Josh Giblin 80*
 Dave Tukey 46

There was also one write-in: Jenny Godwin: Total ballots counted: 136.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.