

# **MINUTES**

## **Weavers Way Cooperative Association**

### **General Membership Meeting**

### **Sunday, November 7, 2010**

Eighty member households enjoyed the eat and greet at Summit Church

The meeting began at 6:05 PM. Board of Directors Vice President Margaret Lenzi welcomed attendees and reviewed the agenda.

#### **President's Report**

Board president David Woo recognized immediate past president Nancy Weinman's outstanding service for the past two years. Since the opening of the Chestnut Hill (CH) store, 1,200 new members have joined and Weavers Way (WW) projects \$14 million in revenue from the three stores in FY 2011. In addition, other local groups are working to start food co-ops in Elkins Park (Creekside Co-op), Lehigh Valley and Kensington. The Mid-Atlantic Food Cooperative Alliance, a newly created group of established and burgeoning co-ops throughout the Mid-Atlantic region, now boasts 30 groups that meet regularly to support one another to maintain cooperative principles.

David announced Board elections in 2011 and requested that members participate by running or at least voting. He stated that the member loan and the "We Love You More" campaigns have been successful, raising \$600,000 for WW. David encouraged members to take advantage of these opportunities. David thanked members for attending, reminding them of WW's ability to influence policy on a national level.

#### **Katherine Gajewski, Director of Mayor's Office of Sustainability (MOS)**

Katherine Gajewski distributed the Mayor's 2009 Executive Summary and 2010 Progress Report for Greenworks, the City's sustainability plan that is creating a buzz worldwide. She touched on the many goals, targets and initiatives, focusing on food-related issues. For example, one of the targets is to ensure that access to healthy, local food is available within 10 minutes of 75% of Philadelphia residents. She also described initiatives to use city-owned land for gardening and urban farming to improve access to healthy food and also to education students about health issues.

In response to members' expressed interest, Ms. Gajewski also discussed the new "big belly" solar trash compactors, recycling efforts, the use of biodegradable trash bags, and composting.

#### **Approval of Minutes from Spring 2010 General Membership Meeting (GMM)**

The minutes of the Spring 2010 GMM were approved unanimously.

#### **General Manager's Report**

Glenn read WW's "Ends," which are goals developed by the Board to guide the general manager. He distributed index cards, each of which contained a statement illustrating how WW

meets each of the Ends. The Ends report was also available for review. Members read from index cards as follows:

- E1. WW provides meaningful jobs, benefits and has low job turnover. We work with Philadelphia School for the Deaf, local schools and organizations, and partner with the American Red Cross summer blood drive. Expansion to Chestnut Hill has created jobs.
- E2. We offer the lowest price for local apples, created a farm in an urban area, offers fair trade chocolate and a full array of reasonably priced organic produce.
- E3. We work with the Philadelphia Horticultural School, provide free flu shots, and a successful cat adoption program.
- E4. Mission statement and Ends are posted prominently. We are on Facebook and Twitter, and have committee meetings.
- E5: More than 60 people are involved in WWCP and the farm at Stenton manor, even though not required to members still do, bulletin boards are in place and suggestions are solicited.
- E6: We receive revenue for recycling batteries, cork and plastics, encourage biking, sell septa tokens and compact fluorescent bulbs, recycle broken electronic equipment. Rain barrels are located at CH. We have installed low-flo and dual flush toilets and a composting at the farm.
- E7: In 2010 48 new members joined at Ogontz, an active diversity committee, with Ogontz and CH adding to the diversity. Bylaws were changed to open WW to the community

Communication Director Jon McGoran announced the winner for “Why I Am a Working Member.” Jennie French will receive a WW fleece shirt. Jon distributed a “Talk to us, Talk to each other” flyer illustrating ways for members to communicate with board, each other and staff. He said that although there is no guarantee, letters to the editor that are not offensive are always printed in the Shuttle. An online discussion forum and suggestions in the Shuttle are additional ways to share information. Jon encouraged members to participate and offer input for the GMM agenda.

## **Financial Report**

Ned Case reported that FY2010 sales were \$9.3 million with net income of \$0.3 million including \$0.6 million of pre-tax grant income without which the Co-op would have reported a loss. Results in the first quarter of FY2011 ending September 30, 2010, had net income of \$0.2 million on sales of \$3.4 million. Cash at September 30 was \$1.6 million, reflecting the receipt of grant funding, equity from new member households, and the “We love you more” equity campaign.

Despite growth in sales, Ogontz could still lose money. Jennifer Kulp, Ogontz’s new manager, has made great strides to improve the store. We’ve learned from our mistakes at Ogontz and now there exists a good fit of product and management. Suggestions for how to improve were solicited.

Q&A responses follow:

- Glenn described activities that have enabled CH, MA and Ogontz staff to intermingle: a gathering at Earth, Bread and Brew and a bonfire planned at the farm with folks camping out overnight. Some staff work at both stores and one works at all three.

- Jon Roesser reported that WW health insurance is limited to employees; legislation may allow extension of these benefits to members in the future. Both part-time and full-time employees are eligible to receive benefits. Currently, the cost of benefits to WW is \$30,000/month.
- Customers may park in the lot behind CH only during the day.
- Kirsten reported that approximately 30% of the 1,200 new members have chosen to be working members. Currently, we have a total of 55% working members; the higher percentage of non-working members are at CH.
- The Shuttle has a positive cash flow from advertising net of printing and distribution expenses, but the positive cash flow is somewhat less than the staff costs to prepare the newspaper. Other area newspapers have complained our advertising rates are too low.
- Dorothy Guy, who started the Shuttle, described some of its history. Glenn thanked members like Dorothy who made WW what it is today.
- Glenn advised that financial reports may be accessed online; however, details can be shared only upon request.
- The Environment Committee has discussed possibilities for members to collaborate in efforts to spearhead sustainability projects.
- To publicize improvements and advance outreach, Shuttles are being distributed in the Ogontz neighborhood. Jennifer has been attending local business meetings and maintaining involvement with MLK High School students. Good customer service and flu shots are being offered. Flyers to community will be distributed in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM.