

Spring General Membership Meeting Minutes May 19, 2013
Weavers Way Cooperative Association
Approved at 2013 Fall General Membership

Welcome & Introduction

One hundred and ten member households attended the Spring General Membership Meeting at Summit Church, Greene & Westview. The 'Eat & Greet' before the business meeting featured beverages and food from Weavers Way Prepared Food Department, local beer from Brewers Outlet, and coffee and desserts from the Night Kitchen and High Point. Jared Blumer, acoustic guitarist, provided music.

Vice President Nathea Lee called the meeting to order at 6 PM. She welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda.

President's Report

President Margaret Lenzi first addressed the state of Weavers Way. WW is now a \$17 million local business with a huge impact on its community. WW has 145 employees- 94 Full Time and 51 Part Time- and more than 5,000 household members. Financially, our sales continue to go up, but we have had additional expenses this year due to renovation of the Mt. Airy store. WW continues to be involved in the community through many partnerships with such groups as Awbury Arboretum, Wyck House, the Food Trust, and Pa. Horticultural Society. The President attributed WW's continued growth and development over its 40 years of existence due to its visionary and future directed orientation.

Next, the President's Report highlighted the huge impact that WW has on the local economy and in the promotion of locally produced food. A 2012 study by the National Cooperative Grocers Association measured and social and economic impact of Food Co-ops across the nation and found that co-ops generate 17% more economic activity in their local economies than conventional groceries; co-ops support local producers more than conventional groceries, and co-ops treat their employees better than conventional groceries, in terms of both salaries and benefits.

Approval of Minutes from Spring 2012 General Membership Meeting

The minutes of the Spring 2012 General Membership Meeting were unanimously approved.

Featured Presentation: Strategic Planning

Fran Johnston from the consulting group Teleos gave some background on the strategic planning process. She said that WW's previous strategic plan resulted in the creation of the farms and WW Community Programs and the opening of additional stores (although one store subsequently closed). She explained that there had already been significant input from staff, members and other stakeholders, and that there will be

additional opportunities for member input after this meeting. She reminded the audience that the plan is a guide but is not meant to bind the organization.

Fran outlined the phases of the strategic planning process: research and input; analysis; creation of the plan and communication of the plan to the members; and finally, providing an operational plan for WW management.

Fran said that five themes emerged: identity, growth, membership, efficiency and diversity. Cutting across these themes were five focus areas or goals: expansion internal operations, member engagement, farms and community. After the presentation, members had an opportunity to discuss the various focus areas with staff, during brief break-out sessions.

Fran thanked the members and said she looked forward to our continued input. There will be 5 meetings in the next month which will get further input from members on five principal areas of the Strategic Plan.

General Manager's Report (including Finance, Farms and WWCP)

Glenn started by thanking the strategic planning committee, including Lindsey Bingamen, who used to work at WW but now works with Fran at Teleos. Glenn also announced that Jon McGoran, previous communications director, who recently left WW to work as editor at Grid Magazine, just got married. Glenn welcomed the new communications director, Mary Sweeten.

Glenn then highlighted some of WW's advocacy work, specifically on the issue of GMOs and the local issue of urban farming, which was under threat due to a proposed city ordinance which was withdrawn.

Mike McGeary, WW's CFO, explained that the co-op's sales are up over last year but net income is down due to various expenses, including the renovation of the Mt. Airy store, the purchase of some equipment, patronage rebates to members, and salary increases (including bonuses).

Nina Berryman, Farm Manager, noted that the Henry Got Crops CSA is full! However, she said that the farms' new tractor still needs to be paid off. She described some of the challenges and rewards of the farm and farm education program which is now in its fifth year.

Jill Fink, the new executive director of WW Community Programs, spoke briefly about her vision for strengthening WWCP and its relationship with WW. WWCP started 6 years ago and became a separate non-profit. Programs include farm education, High 5, and urban farm ride which will take place on Sept 7 this year. She would like to explore how WWCP and WW can work together to accomplish their goals and this will be part of a strategic planning process that WWCP is starting in the near future. She also

presented a video on Henry Got Crops program which will be submitted in a competition next year.

Vice President's Remarks

Nathea Lee thanked the outgoing board members and mentioned the recent Food Justice course, and she told members to watch for a food justice committee, which we hope to form soon.

Election Results

Past President David Woo said that 1,184 ballots were cast in the election for board of directors, representing 22.57% of the membership - nearly double the amount (and percent) from last year. He said that only 98 ballots were paper. He thanked the Leadership Committee as well as David Chaplin-Lobbell for his work on the online voting system. He thanked all of the candidates for their interest in serving on the board. Finally, he announced the four new members of the board of directors: Chris Hill (849 votes), Laura Siena (821 votes), Stu Katz (591 votes), and Lisa Hogan (577 votes).

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.