

Meeting Minutes for Weaver Street Market's Board of Directors

Monthly Board Meeting, Panzanella meeting room, Carrboro, NC on April 25, 2012, 6:15 pm to 9:30 pm

Directors present: Curt Brinkmeyer (chair), Ruffin Slater (general manager), David Bright (secretary), Audra Marotta (treasurer), Lisa Best, Steve Bos, and Linda Stier.

Others attending: Karen Archia (facilitator), Ali Callahan (the new Chatham Market GM), Betsy Kraus (Chatham Market board member), and Brenda Camp Orbell (owner services coordinator/notes).

Attending remotely: Mark Goehring (board consultant).

1. Preliminaries

Owner Input: Betsey and Ali introduced themselves.

Agenda: There were no changes to agenda.

Minutes: Minutes from the March meeting were approved.

New Owners: There were no exceptions to the owner lists for March 2012: 93 new consumer owner shares, no new worker owner shares, and 16 refunded shares.

Decision: The Board approved the March minutes.

Decision: The Board made no exceptions to new consumer and worker owners.

2. Update on 2025 Vision

The General Manager reported on a study commissioned by NCGA that compares the impact of grocery co-ops with conventional retail grocery businesses. The study quantifies areas of impact such as how much organic food is being sold by co-ops versus conventional stores, overall but also by different categories, such as produce and dairy. The study shows that in a few areas, including produce, co-ops may be selling twice as much organic, but in other areas, such as meat, the difference is more like 200 times as much. The study also presents findings on wages, economic impact, and environmental measures, such as percentage of waste being recycled and energy usage. The GM sees the report as motivation and inspiration for the co-op redoubling its efforts to gather and communicate similar data and adding the data to the growing body of data being gathered among grocery co-ops.

The GM suggested several items to address in sharing the 2025 Vision with stakeholders, including the need to

- accelerate the process for talking about these kinds of studies and efforts so that all the stakeholders are update on what the co-op and Board are doing
- communicate why management and the Board feel motivated to “do more” in the future
- show why it makes sense for the co-op to expand its impact
- demonstrate how movement toward the vision will be measured

The June *Owner News* will kick off the process of bringing stakeholders into conversations about the 2025 Vision with a number of activities culminating in the Co-op Week/Annual Meeting in September. The plan is to engage staff, owners, and community leaders to gather their input and engage their help in achieving the Vision. The article in the Owner News will reach out to the community, portraying

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both where we are as a co-op and what we've done, and then suggesting the need for the co-op to step up its impact on local economies. The article is to be supplemented with information on the website, including a calendar for meetings with different groups of stakeholders. The GM suggested the work on defining the Vision will also help evaluate the ends statement. The Board consultant, concurred, pointing out the work should also provide solid data points to use in end tracking.

Board members were excited about the vision and offered feedback to be considered in the next draft of the vision. Some suggestions included focusing on community ownership, considering our voice beyond our own community, expressing our values and focus in bolder language, maintaining the transparency, and being open about how stakeholder feedback will impact the Vision.

The GM clarified that development of the Vision is based on the expectation that stakeholders will join as Vision "champions" who will not only share their knowledge and connections but will also serve on advisory groups, make presentations, give tours, etc. The GM identified six preliminary areas of focus for the 2025 Vision: Great Products, Great Customer Experience, Great Jobs, Owner/Community Involvement, Environmentally Sustainable, and Financially Sustainable. He also presented initial benchmarks for measuring progress toward the vision.

3. Owner Communications Update

The Owner Services Coordinator provided an update on owner events and communications. Board members are to participate in the upcoming Co-op A-Fair, which is part of the Cabot Community Tour 2012. WSM along with 40 other local cooperatives is partnering with Cabot Creamery, a dairy cooperative in Vermont, to host the Durham event on the national tour. The Tour and the major events celebrate the International Year of the Co-op 2012 with local communities from Florida to Maine.

Board members received a draft of the new owner brochure and a proposed outline for the Owner News. Both documents will be reviewed further at the May meeting. The Coordinator reported that the information segments of the owner database have been successfully moved to the same database that hosts the POS system. The move provides added functionality and reporting capabilities.

4. Board Process

Convene Elections Committee

The Chair convened the Election Committee. The Board approved Amy Lorang as the Chair of the Election Committee.

Decision: The Board approved Amy Lorang as the Chair of the Election Committee.

Report on Board Emails

The Board of Directors received no emails during April.

Follow-Up on the Agenda Planning Survey

The Board Chair postponed this discussion to a later meeting.

Task: Curt will report on the feedback from the Monitoring Report 4-14: Agenda Planning at a subsequent meeting.

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5. General Manager Report s

The General Manager answered questions on his monthly General Report. He stated that he would provide inflation figures in the next report.

General Report included a number of highlights:

- Sales growth in March continued to be strong, with sales in the three stores up 11 percent.
- Net profit through the end of the third quarter of the fiscal year ending in March is \$405,000 or 1.9% of sales. The net profit is expected to be at least double last year's net profit of \$247,000.
- About 41% of the dollar amount of the patronage dividend vouchers have been redeemed, up from 38% in the March report.

6. Board Monitoring Survey: Policies 4-3: Board Members Code of Conduct and 4-4: Board Member Responsibilities

The Chair presented a summary of the Board Monitoring Surveys for Policies 4-3: Board Members Code of Conduct and 4-4: Board Member Responsibilities. The Chair reported that the responses for Policy 4-3 were positive. The GM noted that directors sign confidentiality statements. The responses to Policy 4-4 were generally positive. Self-evaluation was identified as an opportunity for assessing preparedness. GM noted that committee members on NCGA comment at the beginning of each meeting on how prepared they are.

7. Open Board Time

One Director noted that his imagination had been sparked by Cindy Shea's story about the "green fund" funded through green savings and UNC student fees. He questioned how the co-op could do something similar. The Chair noted that he will miss the May meeting and be off from work at the co-op for 1 to 4 weeks for medical reasons.

8. Closings

Tasks and Decisions: The Board reviewed and confirmed its tasks and decisions.

May Agenda Items:

- Update on 2025 Vision
- Guest Patrick McDonough
- Owner News draft

Meeting Date for November: November 28

9. Executive Session