

Meeting Minutes for Weaver Street Market's Board of Directors

April 2019 Meeting

Monthly Board Meeting, April 10, 2019, Hillsborough Store, 6:00 to 7:30 pm, and WSM Admin Center, Hillsborough, NC, 8:00 pm to 9:30 pm.

Directors present: Ruffin Slater (general manager), Alice Ammerman, David Bright (secretary), Glenda Clare, Jon McDonald (chair), Linda Stier, and Charles Traitor.

Others attending: Susan Sachs (facilitator), Brenda Camp (notes).

1. Preliminaries

Owner Input: There was no owner input.

Agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

Minutes: Minutes from the March meeting were approved.

Decision: The Board approved the March meeting minutes.

2. Debrief the Pre-Meeting Tabling

The Board hosted an owner tabling event in the Hillsborough store prior to the Board business meeting. The theme for the event was “Co-ops as Actors of Change.” Three topics were featured: responsible packaging, worker-owned businesses, and healthy eating. The Board’s goals for hosting the event were to 1) engage owners in conversations about what’s possible in each of these areas, 2) listen to owners’ ideas and thoughts about the issues, and 3) encourage owners to participate in actions related to the issues.

The Directors discussed their experiences at the store event and assessed whether it met the desired outcomes. Highlights of the discussion include:

What worked well:

- The tables were beautifully done. The visuals and food were very effective in engaging shoppers.
- Shoppers who interacted with the Board Directors were interested and engaged.
- It was beneficial to be in the store and to have a physical presence.

Suggestions for future store events:

- The question was raised whether the results were worth the investment. Traffic on a weeknight was light, and shoppers were focused on getting food for dinner. *Try hosting the event on a Saturday when there are more shoppers and when shoppers are more open to conversations.*
- *Reconsider the worker owner topic*—it was not easy to bring people to the table to engage in conversation. Mostly the Directors at the table engaged with workers. Set up the table so that it’s clear what we’re talking about—perhaps with the question, “Did you know that we’re a worker owned co-op?” Workers were proud to learn that most food co-ops are not worker owned as we are.

April 2019

- Explore how to make the event more participatory.
- Consider offering Board-sponsored orientations each quarter for new owners.

The Board agreed to do tabling event in Carrboro with a number of changes: The event will be held on Saturday, July 20 rather than before the July 10 business meeting. It will be on the lawn rather than inside the store, and it will include a celebration of the Carrboro lawn renovations. (Prior to the lawn renovations, the Board hosted tabling events about the renovation plans on the Carrboro lawn and at the Co-op Fair.)

Decision: The Board will host the Carrboro store tabling on Saturday, July 20.

3. Hillsborough Store Stats

As part of the store visits, the GM provided information about the Hillsborough store to help the Directors better understand the store's history, trends in sales, and survey results. Alice Ammerman asked if the store reports could include the turnover rates of employees, and Linda Stier asked if the survey segment could include the percentage of survey participants who rated Overall Value as a 4.

4. Board Business

2019 Call for Candidates

The Board reviewed the 2019 Call for Candidates Application Packet and requested minor edits.

Decision: The Board approved the 2019 Call for Candidates Application Packet with minor edits.

2019 Elections Procedures Manual

Linda Stier, Chair of the Elections Committee, highlighted the nature of changes made in this year's elections manual. She noted that the revisions addressed items noted in the 2018 Elections Report and also eliminated mail-in ballots, removed references to multiple owners, and removed references to software no longer in use. The Directors approved the 2019 Elections Procedures Manual

Decision: The Board approved the 2019 Elections Procedures Manual with the approved 2019 timeline and Call for Candidates Application Packet in the Appendix.

5. GM Reports

GM Report

General Manager Ruffin Slater presented his 2019 April General Report. Highlights include:

Sales Growth: Sales grew 6% over last year for the quarter ending in March, with Carrboro up 4%, Southern Village up 5% and Hillsborough up 10%.

Raleigh: We are installing refrigeration cases in the new Raleigh store. Opening is now projected for early June.

Carrboro Lawn: Construction on the Carrboro lawn is proceeding well. The pavers are now being installed. Target date for reopening the lawn is May 1.

April 2019

New bag program begins on Earth Day April 22. We started advertising the change in the store 30 days in advance of the start date. The new bag options will be:

1. Bring your own bag
2. Buy a Weaver Bag for the new lower price of 99cents
3. Buy a bring-it-back sack for 15 cents.

Owner loan update: We are up to \$300k in new owner loans out of our \$2 million goal.

Monitoring Report B4 – Owner Rights

The General Manager answered questions on “Monitoring Report B4 – Owner Rights.”

[Decision: The Board accepted Monitoring Report Policy B – Owner Rights.](#)

6. Open Board Time

Charles Traitor reported that he had spoken with owners last month who did not know whether they receive owner communications or not. Also, he asked why we do not allow owners from other co-ops to benefit from our owner specials. Charles also reported attending the community workshop “Orange County Charity and Justice.” He reported that the organizations involved wanted to make structural change and advance beyond charity.

Jon McDonald reported that he and Charles met with a Board Member from the Durham Co-op Market. The DCM Board is interesting having the two Boards interact and for their worker-owner Directors to meet with Weaver Street’s worker-owner Directors.

Ruffin Slater reported that he attended the annual meeting of the Cooperative Council of North Carolina. He described guest speaker Doug O’Brien as providing a compelling historical view of cooperatives with a particularly powerful story about the electrification of rural America through cooperative action.

7. Closings

Decisions and Tasks

Next Month’s Agenda:

Meeting Evaluation: