

Meeting Minutes for Weaver Street Market's Board of Directors

September 13, 2023 Meeting

Board Business Meeting, September 13, 2023, online via Teams, 6:00 to 9:00 pm

Directors present: Ruffin Slater (general manager), Deborah Gibbs (consumer owner), Allannah Hines (worker owner), EmJ Jakubowics (worker owner), Susan Singer (consumer owner), Amy Wares (consumer owner), and Anna Cates Williams (consumer owner).

Others attending: Mark Goehring (consultant/facilitator), Brenda Camp (notes), Caroline Anders (worker owner), Willow Dees (worker owner), Portia Hackett (worker owner), Amy Lorang (worker owner), Tony Preiss (worker owner), Carolyn Twesten (worker owner), and James Watts (worker owner).

1. Preliminaries

Introductions: Attendees introduced themselves.

Owner Input: Amy Lorang, worker owner, stated she was at the meeting to request that worker owners receive information about their owner savings account each year, whether there's a dividend or not. She suggested that it could be a document provided on Paycom. She also requested that language be added to the Board policies to require this information to be shared annually. Ruffin Slater replied that this year's communication will happen in October.

Caroline Anders, worker owner, spoke in support of having the savings account information shared yearly with worker owners. She also noted that it's a good yearly reminder of how important it is to be a worker owner, and it would keep worker owners engaged.

Willow Dees, worker owner, also expressed her support for Amy's request. She reported from the Sustainability Committee that over 30,000 pounds of food had been donated to Food Shuttle. She then urged the Board to create an Operations Manager position that would report directly to the General Manager. She noted that the current management structure is insufficient for the next decade and encouraged the Board to be daringly honest about what has worked with the current management structure.

Agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

Decision: Decisions from February 20, 2023 Board Executive Session were approved with an edit to attendees.

Decision: Minutes from August 9, 2023 Board Business Meeting were approved.

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2. General Manager Reports

a. September General Manager Report

Ruffin Slater presented his September General Manager Report. Directors made the following suggestions and comments:

- Develop an ownership strategy beyond the current new owner incentives that gets more information to the public about what ownership means for Weaver Street Market.
- Provide new owners with \$10 gifts cards and explain the benefits of paying with a gift card rather than debit or credit cards.
- Communicate about ownership with people shopping in the stores, especially in the Raleigh and Southern Village stores.
- For future reports, provide more detailed sets of numbers for the metrics and break down the numbers by store.

b. A - Ends Monitoring Report

The GM presented his annual Ends Report. Directors provided the following suggestions:

- Provide more details for each of the five sections, including these specific areas of the report:
 - **Supporting Small Producers:** Provide information about the specific ways that Weaver Street supports small producers, including sales data for local, co-op, and game changer (BIPOC) producers by the three categories. Also, identify a geographic range for *local* and provide metrics for different distances.
 - **Transforming Communities:** Provide the source for the local economic impact statement that Weaver Street buys more locally than chain stores. Provide more about the programs that receive benefits from the round up, the impact of the round up on the families and children who receive the food, and the amount and foods bought with the funds. Also, be clear about what we mean by *food security*.
 - **Creating Fulfilling Jobs:** Provide more information about how we are creating a welcoming workplace, including what the benchmarks are, how we are meeting them, and the source of the data. Include both race and gender in the data, and include data such as employee turnover and employee retention as well as information from exit interviews. Include *physical safety* in the assessment. In particular, address the current concern about the lack of safety planning with the recent incidents with shooters in Chapel Hill.
- Provide additional interpretation as well as context for interpreting the data:
 - Include an honest reflection on where Weaver Street needs to do more work, where our plans are, or objectives and aims for the next year.

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- Rather than making the results more positive than they might be, acknowledge the challenges and identify the learning and growth opportunities.
 - Provide the data at a level of specificity and format that allows the Board to interpret what the data mean. For example, providing numbers of disposable items still being used in the stores is not easy to interpret; whereas, the percentage of disposable items still being used provides greater meaning.
 - Provide more interpretation of the statement that owners account for half of the customer visits and two-thirds of sales.
 - Use even more visuals to display relationships within the data.
- Provide results based on set goals at the store level and sales level. Include more information about how the Raleigh store is recovering sales.

Ruffin Slater expressed his appreciation for the feedback. He described his goal as creating the same story for the Board, workers, and consumers. His goal is to increase owner literacy about what we're trying to achieve and the progress we're making, while providing those interested with ways to dive deeper into the details.

Mark Goehring reminded the Board that the Ends Report is part of the GM accountability loop and requires Board action. EmJ made a motion for the Board to not accept the report with a request for additional information. Allannah seconded the motion.

Ruffin expressed that he had an idea of what was being requested and that a list would be helpful.

Decision: The Board did not accept Policy A – Ends Monitoring Report with a request for additional information at the November Board Business Meeting.

c. Resubmitted B1- Financial Conditions and Activities Monitoring Report

Ruffin Slater resubmitted his B1 – Financial Conditions and Activities Monitoring Report. He reported compliance with all provisions of the policy except for Provision 2: Net Profit, Provision 3: Allow Liquidity to Be Insufficient, and Provision 6: Service Coverage Ratios.

Allannah moved that the Board accept the report/EmJ seconded the motion.

Decision: The Board accepted Policy B1 – Financial Conditions and Activities Monitoring Report with acknowledgement of contraventions. The report provides evidence that the General Manager has operated within the constraints of this Executive Limitation except for the contraventions indicated in the monitoring report. The Board finds that the rationale for contraventions and the commitment for future compliance to be acceptable.

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3. Board Process

a. Annual Report

Slater asked for feedback on the draft annual report. He noted that the report will be published at the end of September with the Co-op Fair on Sunday, October 15, and that worker meetings would be held the second week of October. Directors made suggestions, including to add more information about why the actions are important, to visually show how Weaver Street is different, and to put the full topics in the page headings.

Task: The Board Directors will provide additional feedback on the annual report by Monday, September 18.

4. Closings

Decisions and Tasks

Meeting Evaluation

Upcoming Board Dates

5. Executive Session