

Meeting Minutes for Weaver Street Market's Board of Directors

May 10, 2023 Meeting

Board Business Meeting, May 10, 2023, Online Meeting, 6:00 to 9:00 pm

Directors present: Ruffin Slater (general manager), 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), Brenda Camp (notes), Caroline Anders (worker owner), Willow Dees (worker owner), Steve King (worker owner), Amy Lorang (worker owner), James Watts (worker owner), and Windy Willer (worker owner).

1. Preliminaries

Introductions: Attendees introduced themselves.

Owner Input: Caroline Anders shared that she was attending to second everything in Amy Lorang's Elections Committee Report and that she was excited for the Board to hear what the Elections Committee has been working on. Amy Lorang expressed excitement about the Elections portion of the meeting and thanked the Board for allowing the committee to present their report. Willow Dees, from the Sustainability Worker Team, presented updates on the progress of the food initiatives and the returnable Bring It Back jars. Willow identified future initiatives for consideration and promised to share a full report with the Board Chair.

Agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

Minutes: Minutes from March 8, 2023 Board Business Meeting were approved.

Decision: Minutes from March 8, 2023 Board Business Meeting were approved.

2. General Manager Reports

a. May General Manager's Report

Ruffin Slater, General Manager, reviewed his May General Manager's Report. Ruffin shared a visual related to an engagement activity at the Board table at the Tasting Fair. He reported that attendees were shown a poster listing five ways the co-op is working to change the food system and that they were given two dots to place by the items most important to them in changing the food system.

EmJ Jakubowics noted that they were surprised by how willing people seamlessly grabbed the dots and participated and that it was nice to see consumers really engaged.

Amy Wares shared that she really enjoyed the way the raffle was structured with prizes given every 15 minutes, which kept the activity fun and moving with lots of prizes, all with chocolate bars. Amy also observed that people seemed to take the activity seriously, with some saying it

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was difficult to choose and others appreciative of being asked. Amy pointed out that many were future owners.

Highlights from the report include:

- Average weekly sales were above last year's for the last three months, following six months in which sales were below last year's.
- Our goal is \$1 million in weekly sales. Sales averaged \$985,148 in April and reached the \$1 million weekly goal in one week with sales of \$1,007,417.
- Several initiatives boosted sales in April, including the semi-annual wine sale, seasonal products like hot cross buns, and an email couponing campaign.

The report also included an Opportunities Report, which highlighted opportunities for increasing sales.

b. B1- Financial Conditions and Activities Monitoring Report

Ruffin Slater, General Manager, presented his B1 – Financial Conditions and Activities Monitoring Report. He reported compliance with all provisions of the policy except for Provision 1: Sales Growth, Provision 2: Net Profit, and Provision 6: Service Coverage Ratios.

Questions and Comments:

Anna Williams noted that Net Profit is trending the way Ruffin predicted in the last report. Ruffin observed that sales growth improved the last two months of the quarter covered in the report, Q3 FY2023. He predicted that sales will be in compliance for the current quarter Q4 FY2023, but that with a rolling four-quarter measure, it will lag before catching up. He noted the need for sales growth to be consistent from month to month.

Allanah Hines asked for a clarification of benefits being over budget \$47,492. Ruffin responded that health benefits are hard to budget since the co-op is self-insured and health claims do not follow a predictable pattern. He pointed out that the Health Insurance Reserve fund listed on the Balance Sheet is \$330,000, and when it reaches a certain level, the co-op can use those funds for covering health claims. He noted that the fund is three-fourths of the way to the level that it can be used.

Allanah Hines moved to accept the report; Anna Williams seconded the motion.

Decisions: 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. Elections Committee

a. Elections Committee Report to the Board

Amy Lorang, Elections Committee member and worker owner, answered questions about the Special Elections Committee Report submitted to the Board. The report posits that the worker-owner elections fail to provide “choice for the owners” and that this attributes to lack of participation in voting.

Questions and Comments:

Susan Singer observed that engaging more staff seemed to be an important component of the report. She noted that on a recent visit to the Raleigh store, she was surprised Raleigh staff were not involved.

Amy reviewed all the efforts the Elections Committee makes to engage worker owners in the election process, including advertising the elections in staff rooms and in team huddles, sending voting emails and reminders, providing candidate videos and webpages, and asking for support in the departments to allow workers to watch the videos.

She observed that the committee is bringing to the Board the bigger issue of having only one worker-owner candidate. She noted that bringing the issue up before the elections offers an opportunity for the Board to respond ahead of the elections. She also noted that the report proposes the formation of a committee tasked for worker-owner engagement.

Mark Goehring described the report as identifying a long-term strategic issue that would make a great retreat topic.

Allanah Hines noted that the topic feels like an operation responsibility and that she'll add the topic to an executive session, where it can be sorted out and some action put to it.

Ruffin Slater noted the contrast between owner engagement in voting and that at the Tasting Fair where people were excited and willing to give input. He posited that elections may be the hardest activity to get participation and suggested the need for multiple indicators for engagement not just the numbers who runs and who votes.

b. Draft 2023 Board Elections Timeline

Allanah Hines reviewed the proposed 2023 Board Elections Timeline.

Allanah Hines moved to accept the report; Anna Williams seconded the motion.

Decision: The Board approved the 2023 Board Elections Timeline.

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c. Board Call for Candidates

Allanah Hines reviewed the draft 2023 Call for Candidates. She noted that she would like to see the document published in Spanish and Burmese. Brenda Camp confirmed that the document is to be translated for worker owners in Spanish and Burmese and in Spanish for consumer owners.

EmJ Jakubowics moved to accept the report; Anna Williams seconded the motion.

Decision: The Board approved the 2023 Call for Candidates.

4. Closings

Decisions and Tasks

Meeting Evaluation

Review Board Calendar

5. Executive Session