

Meeting Minutes for Weaver Street Market's Board of Directors

November 10, 2021 Meeting

Board Business Meeting, November 10, 2021, Online Meeting, 6:00 to 9:00 pm

Directors present: Ruffin Slater (general manager), Nazmin Alani (consumer owner), Alice Ammerman (consumer owner), Caroline Anders (worker owner), Allannah Hines (worker owner), Linda Stier (consumer owner), and Anna Cates Williams (consumer owner).

Others attending: Mark Goehring (consultant), Brenda Camp (notes), Deborah Gibbs (consumer owner), Portia Hackett (worker owner), EmJ Jakubowics (worker owner), Amy Lorang (worker owner), Mary Lee Mackichan (consumer owner), and Louis Weinstein (consumer owner).

1. Preliminaries

Owner Input: A consumer owner petitioned for the opening of the indoor cafés so that owners could continue to meet at the stores and be able to eat and drink inside during the winter months. Ruffin Slater, General Manager, responded that the major indicator influencing that decision is the number of Covid cases, and that even though the number of cases have been decreasing and leveling off, there are signs that the number may go back up. The GM added that as result, it's important to keep the mask mandate in place, which makes indoor dining too risky and complicated.

Another consumer owner noted that as an ecological buyer they were concerned by the co-op's use of plastic packaging. The GM agreed that the co-op needed to do more, and he pointed out that the evening's conversation would include setting goals, including that all our products need to be returnable, compostable, or recyclable. The owner volunteered to help with related research.

Agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

Minutes: Minutes from the August 11, 2021 Board Business Meeting and Decisions from the October 13 Board Learning Session were approved.

Decision: Minutes from the August 11, 2021 Board Business Meeting and Decisions from the October 13 Board Learning Session were approved.

2. Board Process—Monitoring Accountability

a. 2021 Elections

Amy Lorang, Elections Committee Chair, provided year-end reports for the 2021 Elections. Documents provided to the Board included:

- *2021 Elections Committee Monitoring Report:* The monitoring report certifies accuracy of the information provided to the Board, repeats the policy provisions the Elections Committee is responsible for, and provides the data to substantiate the committee's pronouncement of compliance. The report notes anywhere actual activity deviated from the Elections Procedure Manual and accounts for the discrepancies.
- *Annotated 2021 Elections Procedure Manual:* The Board approved the *2021 Elections Procedure Manual* in April. This annotated version is supplemental data to the Monitoring Report. Any deviations to manual are noted with relevant passages highlighted.

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- *2021 Elections Report:* The report provides the Board with incidental information about the activities of the Elections Committee during the year; the election results and trends; the considerations reported last year and what the committee did with them; new considerations for next year's elections; any requests the committee has of the Board; and anything else the committee wants the Board to know.

Amy Lorang answered questions about the *2021 Elections Committee Monitoring Report* and *2021 Elections Committee Report*. Two copyedits were noted.

Decision: The Board accepted the *2021 Elections Committee Monitoring Report*. The report provides evidence that the Elections Committee has operated consistent with its delegated responsibilities defined in Policy C-8. The Board finds the rationale for any deviations noted in the Elections Procedures Manual to be acceptable.

Decision: The Board appointment five members to the Elections Committee for 2021: worker owners: Caroline Anders, Amy Lorang, and Robert Yanez; consumer owners: Kaunyu Chen and Becky Laskody. Linda Stier will continue as Board liaison.

b. Ends Monitoring Report

Ruffin Slater, General Manager, presented his Ends Monitoring Report and answered questions from the Board members.

- *The Ends Monitoring Report* is the Board's opportunity to assess whether the GM's interpretation of the Ends is reasonable as evidenced by the rationale for the interpretation, and whether the data demonstrates progress toward the accomplishment of the Ends as defined by the reasonable interpretation.

The GM observed that he had made an effort to make the Ends Report clearer, more definitive, more real, and more ambitious and to also have a scorecard that could be readily viewed over time by every participant in the co-op. He pointed out that the interpretation was divided in the following seven categories, each with 3 to 4 indicators:

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Consumers are inspired

- Have the best shopping experience.
- Enjoy the highest quality of any co-op in the country.
- Patronize, support, and engage in their co-op.
- Give WSM the highest customer net promoter score of any retailer in the country.

Workers are fulfilled

- Have the best pay and benefits of any NC food store.
- Experience a diverse workplace with opportunity for advancement.
- Are highly engaged in their co-op.
- Give WSM the highest employee net promoter score of any retailer in the country.

Producers are thriving

- Are financially successful.
- Have state of the art support from a coordinated network.
- Engage in joint planning and operations with WSM.
- Rank WSM as their best retail outlet.

Products are unique

- Come from local, game changer, and co-op producers.
- Support health and wellness.
- Sell at a rate that's increasing faster than at any NC retailer.

Community is enriched

- Has convenient access to healthy food regardless of income, race, or age.
- Enjoys a fun and inclusive gathering place.
- Downtowns surrounding WSM stores are vibrant commercial centers.

Ecosystem is enduring

- Food is produced by regenerative methods that reverse global warming.
- Packaging is compostable, returnable, or recyclable locally.
- WSM facilities and vehicles use net zero energy.

WSM is an inspiring co-op model

- Broad recognition of WSM's positive impact.
- Financially successful as any co-op.
- Prepared to scale up statewide by 2026.

In the ensuing discussion, the following clarifications and suggestions were made:

- For the consumer category, Slater clarified that the indicators use our survey results compared to how well we rank with comparable data reported by other co-ops. The goal is for us to exceed the top 20% of our peer group. The number on the scorecard is how far off we are from the top 20%. For example, 3 indicates that our data is 3% above the top 20%; -10 means we are 10% below the top 20%.
- Directors suggested making the context clear for the consumer indicators, in particular for “the best shopping experience” and to consider the relevance to customer count— *best relative to other co-ops vs best in the area?* Slater noted that he wanted finite data this year, and that we have data from other co-ops that show we where we have room for improvement.

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- Slater clarified that BIPOC equity was not actually going down from 102 to 100, that the target of measurement was wrong and needed to be consistent with the other indicators, which are based on a scale of 100.
- Other suggestions made included: break down vendors by category—local, game changers, and co-op—with a benchmark for each one; have a common language for how *healthful* is defined for the co-op; and consider how data might get named differently (instead of women vs men, perhaps non-male).
- Consider adding a measurement for growing consumer engagement, such as increasing the percentage of their shopping budget spent at Weaver Street.

Decisions: The Board accepted the Ends Monitoring Report. The report provides evidence that the General Manager has made reasonable progress towards the Ends.

c. B5 – Treatment of Consumers Monitoring Report

The GM answered questions about *B5 – Treatment of Consumers Monitoring Report*. He provided a clarification that the Food House HCAAP program with an onsite inspector does not include the bakery product line.

Decisions: The Board accepted B5 – Treatment of Consumer Monitoring Report. The report provides evidence that the General Manager has operated within the constraints of this Executive Limitation.

d. Quarterly Board Budget Report

Board Treasurer, Nazmin Alani, reviewed the FY2021Q2 Budget Report, which shows that the Board is considerably under budget due to meetings and events being held virtually. Linda Stier clarified that the books purchased for Board development are part of the Board Library and are to be returned when a Director leaves the Board.

3. Incidental Information – November General Manager’s Report

The General Manager answered questions about his November General Manager’s Report.

4. Closings

Decisions and Tasks

Meeting Evaluation

Next Meeting Agenda

5. Executive Session

Meeting with the Auditor

GM Evaluation and GM Compensation