

LVC Board 9/23/2020 Minutes

Present: Present: Jean Bergstrom, Sam Black, Danielle Barshak, Ann Ferguson, Jono Neiger, Martin Pittman, Karen Traub. Guests Mary Jo Johnson and Kari Ridge

Previous Board Minutes for 9/9/20 approved unanimously.

Martin moved that if there are any late changes in minutes, we can change them then, since some members have not seen the draft that was sent out.

A. Reports

1. President's Report (5 min)(Sam)

Sam and Cindy painted the kitchen. The previous grant was accepted, and it was said we can use the extra 2K to fix some wiring. Sam talked to Jono about upcoming events for celebrating with donors, Board etc. He wrote to selectboard person Peter D'Errico re how to do that. There is a whole pile of coffee grounds in back of store, and no one wants them for compost, so we will have to put them in waste. Sam has been asked whether people can sit in restaurant for coffee etc.

Comments: Jono thinks the dining discussion is important. We need to bring it up with Paul and staff. Martin said it should be totally Paul's call. Karen said the main concern about people being in the store is the heating system which is old and doesn't have a recirculating filter.

Jono suggests the Board recommend to Paul to check re the safety issues and circulation of air question. Danielle mentioned that she has concerns if we start indoor dining since staff and many volunteers are over 60. Karen asked whether we can ask members as to their views on this, but Ann said it would be too difficult to poll members. Jono asked whether Lise can check into ventilation system update. Danielle mentioned that there are enough people worried about safety that we don't want to discourage others from shopping if some are eating in the restaurant area. Jono said we could close off part of parking lot and maybe have events there if we get an OK from the Leverett Select Board.

2. Finance Committee (10 min) (Jono)

The biggest news is the new bookkeeper hire, Amanda Black. She seems very good, and has already worked for few days with Paul. Cory is coordinating with her giving advice, hoping she can clear up our financial backload.

Because of the overload of work and incomplete financial records, Jono can't follow through on his past promise to have Budget proposal from Board. Now he re-promises to have more revenue figures, so the Board can know how much can negotiate wages for new GM.

Our old Accounts Payable is now less than 4K since we have steadily been paying back vendors. Jean asks whether the business is paying back loans. Ann reported that we have

started to pay back Sam Lovejoy through shares rather than cash. He now owns 248 shares worth \$2480 investment in the business. This is a very generous way for him to agree to pay us back since it creates more equity in the business.

3. Personnel Committee (10 min) (Danielle, Martin)

Martin said they are waiting for the FC report on finances to decide on tentative GM wages. We now have 5 applicants. We still have the GM job ad up, and the search is open until Oct. 16. Karen mentioned that there is another possible applicant. Jono asked whether the Applicant Review committee has responded to the applicants and Martin said Yes except for applicants who sent in their stuff less than 5 days ago. Martin said the applicants are in fact yet not on the Google drive. Jono wants to remind the PC that the Employee Handbook is still a loose end even though our present employees are old time. Danielle dully noted.

Jean wants to know how things went with Susan Walker, who was previously let go. Danielle mentioned that if the Board takes up Personnel issues we need to have an executive session closed to the public. Jono mentioned that we could have an executive session at the beginning or end of a scheduled meeting.

4. Fundraising Committee (Telethon etc) (30 min)(Karen)

Karen has an A, B and C plan. There are multiple cameras available and high tech people to use the equipment. She is upbeat even though there was a bad dress rehearsal where the Coop internet went down, causing the credit card machine to go out and the bookkeeper to have to stop working. Everyone was calm, and we fixed everything. Karen and Ann are working together on the schedule.

Jean mentioned that we can't do a live auction, so all the bidding has to be online. Steve Adams the auctioneer is psyched, and Jean is worried. Somehow the Bidding Owl will be keeping track but Lise and Ellen Shaw Smith will keep track with hard copy and pencil. There are a number of videos to be used and Karen thinks they are great. They are short and sweet.

At 7 pm the auction preliminary results can be had. Jono asks whether since there will be music and Fri night pizza will be some people watching the event at the Coop. Karen said told she told the police there would be no more than 20 people at any one time. Jono is going to block parking lot. Jono will be out of town Friday morning but will set it up Friday morning. Tech people will be there at 8:30 am. Jean asks when Karen wanted the tents to come to the Coop and said she could get them there by 10 am. Jean can get a 12-12 tent which is being donated to the store. There will be Incentive gifts: for example, Sam will donate mugs from son, and Jean has hand-painted scenes on small wooden leaf-shaped items donated from her sister-in-law. These could be given to those who donate \$50 or more, also Melinda's bags with the Coop Logo on them.

Ann asks about how to donate at the Bidding Owl site for the event. The answer is that the Paypal button is on the Welcome page to the Auction on Bidding Owl. Martin suggested that something be put on the opening page about donations.

Ann suggests we make hard copies of Lori Lynn's Member Drive flyer to hand out at the store. She will get them from Collective Copies. Ann also mentions Board members buying gift memberships for family and friends. Jono has a lap top computer he can bring in to screen the event.

In regard to the previous discussion of at-store events, Martin wonders if there could be beer and wine pouring options. Jono wants to know if people could informally drink at the picnic tables. Danielle says that would not be wise unless specifically OKed by the ABCC. We need to wait to hear back from the Select Board.

Karen says we have a last minute auction item, which is a special bottle of wine from Paul's collection especially designed for you. Jean says everyone should sign up as bidders!! Jean is really valuing Mary Jo and also Jill Palmer who has been putting up the items. Talk it up with friends on FB etc. Karen mentions that the Bidding Owl is an experiment, people cleaning out attics, so please don't worry about auction items. Don't worry!

Jono points out that a key goal for the Telethon is raising the visibility of the Coop. Community building is key. Karen wants to know from Jean re volunteers. She could use a volunteer from 8-2 on Sat and also Sun from 8-2. Ann asks about kayak purchase and pick up. Martin volunteers to help pick up her kayak to bring to the Coop. Karen asks Martin to be at Coop at 4:30 Friday to do the computer work for auction. Will have a chalk board. Martin will toss in a paddle, will pick up Ann's kayak to get to store on Friday.

5. Communications/Outreach (10 min) (Jean)

Jean is sending out Mail Chimp message Thurs. Would like to send out schedule. Karen will send the graphic of the schedule.

6. Member Outreach: Report from NFCA webinar (5 min) (Ann)

Ann represented our Board at this webinar whose theme was member involvement and ways to increase it. Many coops had representatives there. Two key themes that stood out to Ann were finding what your co-op's key asset to the community is (your "superpower") and then working to develop it and market it to the members. It is also important to do research on the various segments or demographic represented in the Coop's community, e.g young parents with children, working blue collar, white collar, retired etc. These representative types are called "personae". Hanover Coop gave an example of how they interviewed a representative newly retired member to ask about how the Coop could serve her better and from her answers created an online cooking class that members could sign up for, getting the ingredients in

advance from the store, and also an in-store dinner club so people could meet others in the community.

Ann discussed the Board Volunteers Needed list that Mary Jo will present at the Telethon. Mary Jo noted that a good way of getting members more involved is to get them on committees.

B. Board Training on LVC Policies (Mary Jo facilitating, will assign committees policies to draft relevant policies for the Board stemming from their own committee work) (15 min)

Mary Jo suggests she will email each committee a list of policies and ask for suggestions for revisions. Ask committee to think about our actual practice and whether anything has been left out that needs monitoring, evaluating. She reminds us that we have so far been talking about Results policies, and now we need to get more specific about what we want the GM to monitor monthly etc. Finances are key. MJ suggests that the policies relevant to the Finance and Personnel committee are the most important to work on at this point. The PC will need to think about expectations of GM and what details want to prioritize. These recommendations can be drafted and reported back to the Board for discussion and approval.

Martin said it is really great to have this discussion about policies and ends, and agrees with Mary Jo that it involves a longer process. He wondered how this relates to the Employee Handbook and how it should get connected to this policy discussion. Do we have an operational chart for staff? Usually the GM does that. We will need to allow a certain amount of time to write this up in consultation with Paul and new GM to use in the transition period. Jono said Paul will overlap with GM for a few weeks and during this time Paul can communicate this operations information to the new GM, since he works better in person than on paper, and the new GM will have to write it down. Martin pointed out that there is a question of how much of the Board and operational culture should be defined before new GM joins and how much should be let to be created together with the new GM together. MJ says that is a great point.

Sam said it would be very helpful if the GM were expected to put an organization chart and document together in consultation with Paul the first month. But even more important is the GM's role in keeping store running. Jono said that Martin's point is really important, and the new GM needs to have the shared experience of old GM. Mary Jo offered that it might be helpful to write down all mistakes made in past so as not to repeat them!

Danielle and Martin have been conferring about the need for more members on the Personnel committee! Perhaps we need to recruit non-Board members? Jono pointed out that the past Search Committee for the GM had non-Board members in the past, and he was

such a member. Certain issues might not be proper to share with non-Board members involving previous Personnel committee actions in the past in relation to the GM and staff.

Meeting adjourned around 8:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Ferguson, Clerk