

## **Minutes from May 26, 2021 Leverett Village Co-op Board of Directors Meeting**

In attendance: Danielle Barshak, Jean Bergstrom, Sam Black, Lise Coppinger, MaryJo Johnson, Martin Pittman, Jono Neiger, Kari Ridge, GM John Calhoun

Meeting called to order at 7 p.m. Board unanimously approved Minutes from April 28, 2021 Board Meeting.

### **President's Report (Sam Black):**

We have three resolutions that we must vote upon:

1. To apply to the Licensing Authority of the Town of Leverett and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission on May 26<sup>th</sup> 2021 for a new Restaurant License
2. To authorize Samuel J. Black to sign the application submitted and to execute on the Entity's behalf, any necessary papers and do all things required to have the application granted.”
3. To appoint John Calhoun as its manager of record, and hereby grant him or her with full authority and control of the premises described in the license and authority and control of the conduct of all business therein as the licensee itself could in any way have and exercise if it were a natural person residing in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.”

The board voted unanimously to approve all three Resolutions. Sam told Kari the Clerk's signature will be needed on the ABCC form following the meeting and she said she would go to the Co-op to sign it.

### **GM Report (John Calhoun):**

John said there have been several infrastructure projects at the store, including fixing the pizza ovens and repairing the floor where the old produce cooler was situated. He said he has turned his attention to the deli and to interviewing and hiring new deli employees. John said Liam is the cat's pajamas and he is very sad to see him go, but that Liam is leaving for a new opportunity. The inventory continues to grow and there's great growth potential in body care and the Co-op will soon be offering a wider meat selection through UNFI. He added that he's excited about the popularity of the gift section, and items such as pottery, wooden bowls, bags and candles are accounting for a growing amount of sales.

John said he would like to hire Seven Roots, a consulting group that works with co-ops, to provide direction and help him form viable plans for the deli, and added that they would also provide recipes, a site visit, templates and guidance. John said he was thinking of a budget of \$2,000 for this consulting

work. Jono said he appreciated John sending recent financial information to the board and said that all the changes sound exciting, but added that he is concerned about spending a lot of money when we're a Co-op that's still not on solid financial footing. Jono said that, as the former treasurer, he sees a need for penny-pinching and being careful to not spend money we don't have on numerous small projects that all begin to add up. There was a discussion about whether expenses, such as the consulting fee, fall under the GM purview or if they need approval by the board and, with the exception of Jono, everyone was in agreement that this is an operations cost and the GM has the authority to move forward on hiring consulting expertise from Seven Roots to guide the LVC deli. Jono said we live in an area that is rich with knowledgeable people who provide these types of services on a volunteer basis and he would like for our co-op to reach out to them.

John said he is looking into the possibility of resuming tobacco sales and said he was stunned to see that the Co-op's tobacco sales used to be about \$35,000 each year. John said he is realizing that we're the only store in town and he knows tobacco is a sensitive topic, but that it makes financial sense to him to resume tobacco sales. Danielle said she feels strongly against tobacco sales and, rather than this be a *fait accompli*, she wants the opportunity for a conversation about this at some point. John said resuming tobacco sales would require the renewal of licensing and driving to Chicopee to pick up tobacco inventory. Sam said it is a good idea to set time aside to discuss this at a later date.

#### **Treasurer's Report (Martin Pittman):**

Martin said he is getting guidance from Jono and from Cory Greenberg to help him in his role as Treasurer. He said that it will be helpful when our co-op has Ends Policies in place so that things like GM expenditures and capital expenditures are clear. He said it has been great to have Cory's and Jono's advice and he will continue to serve as Treasurer for now, while reaching out to others in the community who have this expertise.

Jono asked if the Board could check in regularly about finances and Martin said we will have quarterly reports and an opportunity for questions. John said he has been tinkering with financial projections through the past five months and thinks the next fiscal year will be slightly more profitable than the last year. He added that he thinks the Co-op has a bright future, and that wages in May were high because new employees were being trained and wages should come down in June. Kari asked if the Board might see a financial spreadsheet and Martin said we will plan for that at the June Board meeting.

#### **Infrastructure Report (Lise Coppinger):**

Lise said the new HVAC (heating and cooling system) project was completed and she's looking forward to hearing how it's working out and if it is saving the Co-op money, as was the plan. She's currently researching air-to-air exchange systems and has two quotes. She will meet with the infrastructure committee to discuss options surrounding that.

Lise said she has also gathered information on patio plans and spoken with the State's alcohol board representative and is ready to present her findings to the patio subcommittee, which consists of Lise, Sam, Kari and Lori Lynn. There is a Plan A, Plan B and Plan C that range from something grand to something that will be simple and relatively inexpensive. Sam said he also had learned that the State requires that the patio must be contiguous to the café itself and that on June 22, the Leverett Select Board will have a hearing about the Co-op's request for a wine & beer license. Sam said the Co-op will need to file a request for an alteration of the license to include the patio, once patio plans are decided.

**New Business:**

1. Jean said things are coming together for the Rattlesnake Gutter Second Saturdays Market, the first of which will be June 12. She said there is music planned and there are a good number and variety of vendors who plan to participate and the Market planning committee (Jean, Lori Lynn, Kari, Sarah Robertson and John) plan to meet tomorrow to finalize plans and then send out the application forms to vendors.
2. Kari said she and Lori Lynn are working on the Gratitude Book and still accepting contributions to that.
3. MaryJo offered to serve as an HR Liaison on Co-op personnel matters that might arise.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Kari Ridge

Clerk, Leverett Village Co-op Board of Directors