

## **Los Alamos Co-op Board Meeting**

**Wednesday, 26 February 2020**

**Thank you to Mesa Public Library for accommodations on short notice**

### **Agenda item 1. Welcome and Introductions** Call to order 6:08

Board members in attendance: Joshua Faulconer (President), David Hampton (Vice-president), Robi Mulford (Secretary), Jeff Jansen, Marshall Jansen, Steve Snapp, Laila Badran  
Also present: Ed Santiago, Jim Fischer, Michelle Stallings, Jack Majure Barkely, and Jesse Samdahl

### **Agenda item 2. Agenda Review**

Agenda approved 6:0

### **Agenda item 3. Review of December and January Meeting Minutes**

The December meeting minutes approved 6:0

The January record of meeting approved 6:0

### **Agenda item 4. Member/Owner Comments**

Jesse Samdahl is interested in serving on the board, and accepts a vacant seat until May.  
Jesse Samdahl's membership on the board accepted 6:0

Why were there no omelets on Sunday? No complaints were heard, but it's an unusual absence. Omelets are missing because Dom didn't show, and labor is quite tight. Miles M-B stepped in to cook on one Sunday after his retirement, and his service is lauded.

The deli has expanding business and a limited staff, and experiences high staffing pressure. The omelets are a symptom.

### **Agenda item 5. General Manager Reporting, X4, Budgeting and Financial Planning**

Jim presented X-4 in January. Because there is no copy of X-4 on the table, approval is deferred until March. X-4 and the January record of meeting including the discussion of X-4 will be transmitted to board members.

Projected growth of 8% discussed. Grocery growth has levelled off  
For comparison, Natural Grocers mature stores are growing at about 1%, although they hold their real estate quite differently from the Coop. Lucky is going under after (over-)expanding into Texas.

### **Agenda item 6. X5, Asset Protection**

X5 is reviewed and accepted 7:0

### **Agenda item 7. Annual Operational Goals for 2020**

X7 was discussed at the January meeting. No documentation is present at the February meeting, and so approval is deferred until March.

### **Agenda item 8. Staff Auxiliary Board Member Reporting**

Jack Majure-Barkeley steps forward as the new Staff Auxiliary Board Member, in the absence of interest from other staff.

A concrete structure for performance review and raises is discussed. Managers evaluate employees within departments, employing a numerical rating system. Raise structure should be evaluated in terms of the financial condition of the Coop. Establishing, or at least communicating, the relationship between raises and the Coop's savings, debts, and profits might both clarify and incentivize the raise structure. What the Coop needs now is efficiency, with employees working hard and working to fill in those areas where work is not getting done. Is there a way to incentivize efficiency? To motivate profitable choices?

Equity of pay between departments is also a concern. There is a wage gap between managers and employees. Job descriptions need to be clear in the employee manual. The HR Concierge service may help us with this detail.

### **Agenda item 9. Monthly Financials Update**

Financials for January will be available by February 28, as a result of internet outages.

The state of financial documentation has improved enormously since December, with very few gaps remaining in documentation.

NCG is providing a review of our financials at the cost of 5K\$, and they are providing a consultant as a resource for Michelle. She talks to him once or twice a month. Annual review or audit would be appropriate.

Michelle's comments regarding current uncertainties

- Accrued PTO is not yet reconciled. NCG consultant will assist.
- State of New Mexico owes the Coop 13K in overpaid gross receipts tax. They are withholding the money pending additional proof that they owe the money.

Accounting services obtainable through UNFI would be an excellent investment. Payroll, currently a time-consuming manual process, can be outsourced. This serves to reduce our liability for errors. The cost is \$1.93 per paycheck.

Competing programs have been examined:

- Paylocity provides an incomplete suite of services, still requiring some manual entry
- Quickbooks provided a 1-month free trial, and the product was determined to be inadequate to our needs.

UNFI acquired the company Supervalue, and can provide payroll services, time and attendance, and coordination with HR Concierge. The low price results from high volume. An accounting service is also available at \$170/week. This service is comprehensive. NCG is working with UNFI to make these services available to Coops.

### **Agenda item 10. Discuss Questions for Customer Survey (X1)**

Questions from the 2019 customer survey are reviewed and accepted for the 2020 customer survey. Maintaining the same set of questions will allow direct comparison of responses and facilitate trending.

Customer survey questions approved 8:0. (Dave has arrived, after notifying all arrivals of the change of venue)

Obtaining customer feedback frequently but on a smaller scale would be useful, to monitor the success of the direction that the store is going, and to monitor any new efforts.

### **Agenda item 11. Review Updated Employee Manual**

We defer review of the Employee Manual to March, when we have the draft amended by the HR consultancy HR Concierge. The HR Concierge representative should be put on a schedule of standing meetings to be sure the Manual is done within the month. The original Manual has been reviewed by the HR Concierge consultant, and now the employee-driven amendments (yellow highlights) will be reviewed for inclusion.

### **Agenda item 12. Member-Owner Loans**

The spreadsheet of Member-Owner loan holders is now on Jim's desk. He estimates that reconstruction of the original list is 80% complete.

We discuss instituting a brief quarterly update for holders of loans, intended to convey clear, predictable, and forthright information regarding the status of repayment. This may be productive, or may serve as an irritant to investors. Quarterly communication may be too frequent. Further discussion is warranted and determination of a structure is needed.

Apparently, the investors are not shopping at the store to any appreciable degree, and a letter inviting them to resume shopping at the store is discussed.

### **Agenda item 13. Colluminate's Events and Webinars**

A schedule of Colluminate events and webinars is distributed. Our contact with Colluminate includes some of these. The board should select a single date on which to hear the "Financial" webinar, and a date for the "Being a Great Employer" webinar. The decision will be taken by email.

There is a Coop Café on March 28 in Albuquerque. Board members and Coop Employees should attend if possible.

### **Agenda item 14. Competitive Immunity: Videos and Website Upgrades**

Kate is preparing for the Coop's 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary on March 7. She reports that the website will be done soon. Steve suggests that this website is overdue and that Kate should not hesitate to communicate impatience to the website preparers.

Filming has begun to focus on farm visits. The next video will be at the Boudreau's farm. Coop members are welcome to film their own farm visits, which will provide charming footage for the store video series.

### **Agenda item 15. Closings**

The next board meeting is on March 25.

Monthly GM/Board meetings: Laila Badran is scheduled for March 13.  
Steve Snapp is scheduled for April 10.  
Joshua Faulconer is scheduled for May 8.

Adjourn 7:45 PM    Approved 8:0

### **Executive session runs until 8:40.**

#### Action items

- Michelle transmit January financials as they become available
- Robi send financials from January meeting to all
- Robi send X7 and the January minutes of discussion to all
- Michelle needs listing of loans and interest in order to prepare to issue gift cards in lieu of payment.
- Board members need to agree on schedule to hear a webinar for each topic
  - o Financial
  - o Managing the GM appropriatelyand vote for their preferred date by e-mail
- March 28 is the Coop Café in ABQ and board members and Coop employees should go.
- March 7 is the Coop's 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and board members are welcome to help in the store on that date