

YAHARA RIVER COOPERATIVE GROCERY

A community meeting to inform the public about the status of the efforts of the Yahara River Cooperative Grocery Exploratory Group was held at the Stoughton Area Senior Center on Thursday evening, November 16, 2006. Approximately forty people attended.

Warren Kmiec, Business Plan Committee Chair, welcomed everyone, gave an overview of what would be covered during the meeting, and introduced the interim Board and Committee

Members present:

Laura Anderson	Co-Chair
Steve Barnes	Research Committee Chair
Eric Borchardt	Public Relations/Marketing Committee Chair
Myra Hajny	Secretary
Jon Hajny	Research Committee Member
Homer Howard	Senior Co-representative
Dick Rem	Senior Co-representative
Norma Sampson	Communications/Website Committee Member
Kris Vaughn	Membership Committee Chair
Caroline Werner	Co-Chair
Marlene Widra	Building Site/Location Committee Member

Also present:

Pam Barnes	Research Committee Member
Rudy Martinka	Business Plan Committee Member

The working mission statement for the co-op was announced: *Our mission is to operate a financially sound cooperative grocery store serving residents in southeastern Dane County and located in Stoughton, Wisconsin.* An attendee noted that “southeastern Dane County” may be too restrictive.

Caroline Werner and Laura Anderson explained what a cooperative is; Eric Borchardt relayed results of the October consumer interest survey; Warren Kmiec reported on the progress that has been made by the YRCG exploratory group to date and described the Business Plan that is in the process of being developed.

Attendees were enthusiastic about the idea of a co-op grocery in Stoughton and donated \$371 when a hat was passed to cover the costs of incorporation. Caroline Werner, Laura Anderson, Warren Kmiec and Eric Borchardt agreed to sign the Articles of Incorporation, and they will ask Phil Caravello, the Community Representative, to be the fifth person to sign.

Laura Anderson made a plea for volunteers to fill positions on the Board and Committees (especially Finance). Brad Austin agreed to serve on the Business Plan Committee now and move to the Product Buyers Committee later.

Comments and concerns raised by community members present:

- Membership fee should not be more than \$100 annually
- Sell common and preferred stock
- Look at local producers
- Research how an anchor store draws other business and what kinds of businesses
- “Strike while the iron is hot” (people still remember Main Street Market)
- Hold quarterly public meetings

The meeting ended with small group discussions at round tables.

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