

Yahara River Grocery Cooperative Board Meeting
EMS Building-Training Room
516 South Fourth Street, Stoughton, Wisconsin
6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 27, 2007

MINUTES

Board Members Present:

Steve Barnes	President
Norma Sampson	Vice President
Myra Hajny	Secretary
Warren Kmiec	Treasurer

Scott Mepham	Product Buyer Committee
Deb Piper	Marketing Communications Committee
Debra Carter	Finance Committee
Jon Hajny	Research Committee
Homer Howard	Senior Liaison
Laura Anderson	Membership Committee
Marlene Widra	Site Location Committee

Other Committee Members Present:

Pam Barnes	Research Committee
Mary Condon	Research Committee
Kay Davis	Market Communications Committee
Dick Rem	Senior Liaison
Kristine Vaughn	Membership Committee
Caroline Werner	Finance Committee
Terri Wolf	Membership Committee

Also Present:

Mary Huotari	Interested in Co-op
Michelle Kaye	Interested in Co-op
Susan Meyers	Interested in Co-op

Steve Barnes called the meeting to order. The agenda for the meeting was reviewed.

On **MOTION** (Kmiec/Howard) and unanimous vote the minutes of the March 13, 2007, meeting were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Warren Kmiec reported that the balance in the Evergreen State Bank account is currently \$1,971; \$600 more than reported at the last meeting due to membership fees collected.

OLD BUSINESS

Website Update. Deb Piper noted that the Marketing Communications Committee continues its work on the website and anticipates that it will be available soon.

Dane County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Agreement. Warren Kmiec reported that he submitted the CDBG Agreement that the YRGC President and Secretary signed after the last meeting. Nothing has been received back from the County of this date.

Jon Hajny noted that he talked to two people at the County recently and has been assured that the CDBG is official. Jon further noted that the County has no plans to issue another press release

and that it is okay to publicize that money has been awarded to the co-op. The co-op may want to invite a Dane County dignitary or two to the grand opening of the grocery store.

Membership Kickoff Event. Marlene Widra noted that Phil Caravello has given a verbal okay to use the building for the kickoff event on April 29, but he does not want any walls removed without a lease in place.

Deb Piper, on behalf of the Marketing Research Committee, reported that the event has been named “Make It Yours–The Yahara River Grocery Cooperative Kickoff.” Deb asked that each committee accept responsibilities for activities as outlined in the proposal Eric Borchardt circulated the week before. Jon Hajny requested that each committee chair be contacted to clarify role/tasks at the kickoff.

Marlene Widra pointed out that it might be prudent to select a time that does not conflict with the home school event at the Stoughton Opera House from 2:00 to 4:00 that afternoon. One option suggested was to extend the time to 4:30 p.m. Deb reported that many business owners are supportive of the idea of allowing discounts to YRGC Members and that the Committee is working on activities and possible fundraisers; e.g., “I Made It Mine” sticker and canvas bags with logo. Kay Davis noted that the UW Center for Cooperatives would not send a representative to the kickoff, as the co-op needs to be its own advocate; however, staff will be glad to provide copies of a co-op booklet and give feedback on a presentation they suggest be given at the kickoff.

As the buzz word is buzz, the Committee is planning four weeks of publicity in *The Hub*, posters for businesses to post, posters to place in the window at 229 East Main Street, information on the website, interviews on Stoughton Cable and WORT, and listings in community events calendars in such places as the *Isthmus*, Triple M Radio, *Wisconsin State Journal*. Word of mouth by all committee members will also be vital. Postcards will be sent to the 350 people in the co-op database followed by email reminders. Warren Kmiec noted that the Membership Committee talked about the idea of including a membership form and bylaws with the email in case potential members are out of town or so they can enjoy the event rather than fill out membership forms on April 29. Laura Anderson noted that the Membership Committee would like to save the first 50 numbers for people involved in start-up efforts.

Discussion ensued about the possibility of working with Phil Caravello when the lease is signed, possibly giving him some earnest money so some work could be done in the building prior to the kickoff event (i.e., remove center wall, paint, etc.)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership Committee. Laura Anderson distributed a chart of gross income to be used for determining eligibility for a courtesy membership due to financial hardship (the amounts were gleaned from federal and state standards) and a proposed privacy policy.

On **MOTION** (Anderson/J. Hajny) and unanimous vote the Board approved the eligibility standards for courtesy membership as noted below:

YRGC Courtesy Membership Eligibility Gross Income

<u>Family Size</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Week</u>
1	\$17,705	\$1,476	\$341
2	23,736	1,978	457
3	29,767	2,481	573
4	35,798	2,984	689
5	41,829	3,486	805

6	47,860	3,989	921
7	53,891	4,491	1,037
8	59,922	4,994	1,153
For each additional household member add:	+ 6,031	+ 503	+ 116

On **MOTION** (Anderson/Sampson) and unanimous vote the Board approved the privacy policy as noted below:

YRGC Privacy Policy

Yahara River Grocery Cooperative does not sell, trade or give away information received from members without specific individual consent. This applies to personal information, e-mail addresses, phone numbers and any other information that may be provided by members. Providing good customer service to members and shoppers is important to YRGC, and the co-op does not sell or transfer member data to others, except to complete appropriate business transactions (e.g., credit card numbers to banks).

Laura Anderson circulated membership cards designed by Norma Sampson to show what will be available at the kickoff. Kristine Vaughn handed out a draft of a thank you letter that would be sent to new members and a “household” card that would be sent to individuals who list the names of other household members on the member application. Laura and Kristine offered membership forms to people at the meeting.

Site Location Committee. Marlene Widra suggested that volunteer sign-up sheets be available at the kickoff. Scott Mephram suggested placing a notice at Stoughton Lumber to attract skilled volunteers. Scott also warned that the co-op needs insurance before anyone does any work on the premises. Kay Davis is talking to someone about the possibility of an electricians union taking on the co-op as a community project. Marlene will get estimates for various work that must be done, including refinishing the floor.

Marketing Communications. Deb Piper reported that in addition to the kickoff event the Marketing Communications Committee is thinking about events for the rest of the summer to keep the momentum going; i.e., Syttende Mai, Stoughton Fair, Taste of Stoughton, the bike ride Phil Caravello is organizing for August. The Committee will be looking to the Board to make presentations to civic organizations. Deb Piper also noted that any suggestions for potential fundraisers—small or large—are welcome.

Finance Committee. Warren Kmiec noted that the Finance Committee is trying to set up a meeting to work up a budget for 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 3, in the library. In Warren’s mind, a lease would be signed in May, renovation would start soon after, and the co-op would open in September. Warren distributed his first shot at a budget, noting that he thinks \$100,000 would be needed by June 1. Jon Hajny commented that various committees are working on various things that will affect the budget and stated that Committee Chairs should let the Finance Committee know when expenses, such as insurance or equipment, have been identified. Steve Barnes stressed that decisions need to be made to determine what money is needed when—initially, then each month--not just lump sums.

Norma will prepare the Certificates of Investment, and they will be available for sale as soon as they are ready.

Senior Liaison. Homer Howard attended a coffee hour at Vennevoll Skaalendal on the Tuesday after the article came out in *The Hub* about a downtown site being eyed for the co-op. Homer announced the kickoff event, and the news was met by applause and the question “Where do I

park?” Mark Benson, the Director of Skaalen, supports the effort and offered to post signs on Skaalen property.

Product Buyers. Scott Mephram said the Product Buyers Committee can't do anything without knowing what the *owners* want in the store. Deb Piper mentioned that one of the activities at the kickoff event would be blank sheets of paper for attendees to “stock the shelves.” Scott will look into the cost of buttons for the co-op since he works in a handicapped shop that has done buttons for Syttende Mai in the past.

Research Committee. Pam Barnes reported that the Research Committee is looking for an agency that can provide insurance coverage for the grocery store and the Board. Caroline Werner suggested contacting Anne Reynolds at the UW Extension Cooperative Extension about possible insurance providers. Pam noted that a juice bar/deli is considered a restaurant and would need a rider policy. Other considerations are non-owner auto coverage, indemnification of directors and officers, plate glass window coverage, and theft coverage. As the discussion raised issues of whether a coffee bar is different than a deli, what would be required to sell wrapped sandwiches from Main Street Kitchen, what licenses would be required for different products/services, it was confirmed that the co-op must start small with baby steps and grow into more services. It was noted that someone needs to research what permits will be required.

NEW BUSINESS

Lease for 229 East Main Street. According to Jon Hajny the lease negotiation process is fraught with conflicts of interest—Phil Caravello and co-op, Jon and Phil—and he (Jon) is bowing out. Mary Condon has a draft of a commercial lease that can be completed when the details have been agreed upon. It was determined that Warren Kmiec and Steve Barnes will talk to Phil and report on that meeting to the ad hoc joint committee (Research Committee, Marlene Widra, Warren Kmiec) in order to finalize the lease by mid-April.

Parking Survey. Deb Piper distributed the parking study results and a colored chart showing the number of parking spaces that were available each hour over a week. Deb pointed out that, although the perception is that there is no parking in the area, the reality is that spaces are often available on the 200 block of East Main, and some could always be found within two blocks of the future co-op site. Marlene Widra reminded the group that the Pick 'n Save lot is 1-1/2 blocks long. Deb reported that information from the parking study would be included in a press release. Key points include:

- ◆ There are 134 spaces are available (not counting 7 handicapped spaces) within 2 blocks of the store.
- ◆ During the weekdays there are 73 available spaces at any given time within 2 blocks of the store.
- ◆ During the weekends there are 75 available spaces at any given time within 2 blocks of the store

Staff Position. Warren distributed his draft of a job description for a Project Manager noting that the co-op needs to hire someone soon to perform tasks associated with start-up. The issue of the Project Manager will be placed on the agenda for the next Board meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Marlene Widra noted that the co-op's request for a loading zone and a handicapped parking space in front of 229 East Main Street is on the Public Safety Committee meeting agenda for the evening of March 28, and asked that anyone who can attend to please do so.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors is set for 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 10, 2007, in the Training Room of the EMS Building at 516 South Fourth Street.

Respectfully submitted,
Myra Anderson Hajny, Secretary