

Yahara River Grocery Cooperative First Annual Membership Meeting
Stoughton Area Senior Center
248 West Main Street, Stoughton, Wisconsin
6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m., Tuesday, October 28, 2008

Myra Hajny, YRGC President, welcomed approximately one hundred men, women, and children in attendance at the General Membership Meeting of the Yahara River Grocery Cooperative. Reporters from *The Capital Times* and WISC-TV were also at the meeting.

Myra thanked the YRGC staff for pulling together to keep the store open during this difficult time and announced that Mike Markin was no longer General Manager. Myra thanked Mike for his hard work in getting the store opened. But that it was now time to move the store forward in a new direction. Myra announced that Willy Street Co-op is working with YRGC on a variety of issues, and announced that Willy Street will supply an interim manager to YRGC. Wynston Estis will serve as Interim Manager and help implement the new business and marketing plan.

Warren Kmiec, YRGC Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee, gave a financial review of the store with Balance Sheets and Profit & Loss statements since January 1, 2008. Warren listed the expenses associated with start-up and the monthly operational expenses. He fielded questions from the members.

Stephen Lawrence, Chair of the ad hoc Business Development Committee, presented an overview of the business and marketing plan that the Board has been working on since June. It incorporates research from survey results, consultations with cooperative and business experts and member input. Stephen also took questions from the audience.

Myra introduced Rich Hall, an active YRGC volunteer, who provided a volunteer perspective of what the co-op means for him and why he chooses to volunteer.

Lynn Olsen, Willy Street Co-op Cooperative Services Manager, talked to the group about cooperatives and the importance to a community. Lynn described cooperatives as a response to many social ills across the world. She stated that there are over 750,000 cooperatives, with 760 million owners in over 100 countries. Lynn also talked about some of the principles cooperatives follow, particularly principle #6, cooperation among cooperatives. She stated that this is one of the reasons why Willy Street Co-op is offering assistance to YRGC.

At this point, members had an opportunity to speak about what the Yahara River Grocery Cooperative means to them and to their families. After a brief recess, the members then split up into 11 separate groups to brainstorm ideas for the Co-op. Kay Davis, an active YRGC volunteer, facilitated the session focusing on three questions:

1. How would you enhance the proposed action plan?
2. How will we raise capital by January 1?
3. What ideas do you have for changing members' shopping habits?

Discussions were lively and some great suggestions will be added to the action plan

Myra Hajny called for volunteers, noting the volunteer time saves labor costs. Volunteer sign-up sheets and a suggestion box were available for members to sign up and offer additional suggestions. Myra thanked everyone for coming and for his or her input. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Piper
Secretary
Yahara River Grocery Cooperative