

Minutes: Yahara River Grocery Cooperative Board Meeting

**Training Room, Stoughton Fire Department, 401 East Main St., Stoughton, Wisconsin
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 9, 2008**

Board Members and Committee Chairs Present:

Myra Hajny (President); Norma Sampson (Vice President); Deb Piper (Secretary);
Marlene Widra (Member-at-Large); Homer Howard (Senior Liaison); Laura Anderson (Membership)

Other Committee Members Present:

Kristine Vaughn (Membership)

Also Present:

Wynston Estis (Interim General Manager)

Myra Hajny called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Deb Piper requested that due to time constraints, that the minutes for the November 25 meeting be presented at the December 23 board meeting.

INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT – WYNSTON ESTIS

In Warren Kmiec's absence, Wynston briefly reviewed the treasurer's reports. She noted that due to the database crash on November 25, the sales figures for that day are not correct. Wynston noted that the store is making some headway on the monthly losses. She did question the inventory figures and is not sure how that figure is now being derived, since the store stopped recording spoilage losses through the system.

Wynston presented her report to the board (see Attachment 1). She reported that sales have increased, but not as much as was expected after the prices were lowered and the store was re-organized. She is going to work on some reports to pull data determining how much the volume has increased vs. the amount prices were lowered.

There was discussion about the possibility of a web menu for seniors. Staple items would be selected and a menu would be created for seniors to select what they need for delivery. That menu would be posted in the store, and sent out in the weekly email updates.

Please see Attachment 1 for the remainder of Wynston's report.

DICKENS OF A RUN/WALK – NORMA SAMPSON

Norma reported that the Dickens Run/Walk was a great success. Nearly 70 runners and walkers entered the race, with only two people who did not show up that morning. That's impressive considering how cold it was! The money is still being counted and we're waiting on more pledge money and entry money to come in. Norma and Deb thanked all of those who volunteered to make this event happen.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT ON BY-LAWS – MYRA HAJNY

Myra reported that the research committee's time commitments elsewhere have prevented them from creating this report. Myra submitted two proposals and suggested that the Board take over this project, determine which proposal is the best version and edit the by-laws accordingly. On **MOTION** (Sampson/Anderson) and unanimous vote, the Board agreed to adopt the version of the by-laws that calls for a board of nine members. Revisions will be made and brought to the December 23 board meeting for final approval. The proposed by-law changes will then be distributed to the membership for review and will be voted on at the January 27 annual meeting.

BENEFIT RESEARCH AD-HOC COMMITTEE – LAURA ANDERSON

Laura distributed several research documents and articles regarding membership discounts and patronage rebates. Discussion ensued regarding the costs of the current member discount and its contribution to the store's weekly losses. On **MOTION** (Anderson/Sampson) and unanimous vote, the Board agreed to adopt the committee's recommendation to discontinue the 5% member discount, effective December 28, 2008 (the end of

the fiscal year). It was determined that Wynston and Laura would draft a note to be distributed to the membership. That draft would be written by December 12 and sent out shortly thereafter.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

MARKETING – NORMA SAMPSON

Nothing additional to report.

MEMBERSHIP – LAURA ANDERSON

Laura reported that membership currently stands at 952 members. Laura and Kristine will begin working on the nomination process for the annual meeting.

SENIOR LIAISON – HOMER HOWARD

Homer reported that the Courier Hub will have an article in this week's edition regarding the upcoming meeting for Stoughton-area seniors on December 16. Norma will create some posters to distribute in town to notify people of the meeting.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – MYRA HAJNY

Myra reported that the committee interviewed the three current candidates. All three have been told that the process to hire will take some time until we can determine the store's financial viability.

On **MOTION** (Anderson/Sampson), the board meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held December 23, 2008 at 6 p.m., at the Fire Station Training Room, 401 E. Main Street.

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Piper
Secretary
Yahara River Grocery Cooperative

Operations

Vendor reorganization:
Alberts ordered and received for better quality and selection.

Vern's for Cheese same motivation

UWP for meat is a work in progress, service and delivery fee increases are driving this decision
Trautman possibly for holiday items >Roast > ...

Willy Street for X-mas turkeys

We will be able to buy open stock for Christmas turkeys through Willy Street. This is great because we can sell as much as we can with out having to guard against loss from pre-ordering too many birds or conversely frustration form members if we order too few. I have request signage from WSGC to match theirs.

ECRS Catapult Software upgrade

I will be working with ECRS tonight to install and upgrade of our register system and cms. We will need to plan in renewing our ECRS support plan.

Marketing

Focus group out reach to Seniors scheduled for December 16th. My hope is to learn more about what the seniors of the community need that they aren't getting as well as to learn more about their dietary concerns. Thanks to Buzz and Homer for getting that plan pulled together.

Thank venders in eblast

Thank membership for shopping and creating sales

The Victorian Day samples seemed quite popular. Lynn Olsen and Jennifer Lister were the primary supports for this plan. They did great, the lefsa and ginger cake were fabulous.

Documentation of Systems

Systems need to be documented and supported particularly at the register. YRGC has lots going on usually with fund raising, selling tickets, taking donations and so on. It is not helpful for the board to offer direction to staff when they are in the middle of a transaction. I know many of you do know various parts of the operation better than staff. In acknowledgement of that fact I am going to be asking those of you that work in the store to document the procedures you know. This will help support systems, limit messy cleanup work, and also remove the need for you to direct staff on operations.

I'll be sending a list of the systems you all know that I would appreciate your help in drafting these documents. Liam and I continue to document procedures for daily operations. We are moving into receiving and credit systems next. We have completed the opening, closing and supervisor documents.

Staff Changes

Bruce and Mackenzie are no longer working at the store. We have hired one person, Lindsey to fill their hours and responsibilities. Take a look at the produce case and you'll get an idea why she got the job, she's also a very pleasant person with natural food and farmer's market experience. And she's over 18.

Sales

Are not what I wish they were. The store seems busier but the sales are not reflecting increased use of the Co-op. I will work on a report that estimates past unit sales and current units sold to some more insight into the impact that product selection and pricing is having.

Expenses

Warren and I are now meeting on Saturdays to plan what expenses will be paid when taking the upcoming purchases that will replenish the store. We had a week where we got a little ahead of our selves with accounts payable. We now have more of a cushion in the bank.

We are about to turn the corner with Blue Marble Dairy on past debt. This is so exciting, we will at that point be paying only for the product we are buying. A similar situation is close at hand for the UNFI equipment debt. Today I received a message from someone at UNFI that YRGC has been receiving a rebate, and it has been applied to our Equipment debt as arranged by Mike. This message said that November's rebate monies totaled \$433.27 which applied to that account brings us to a current balance of 183. 26. All goes to say that when we are able to have our expenses exclusively tied to current operations it will be a very positive thing for operations and inventory replenishment stability.

Loan Status

YRGC proposal will be reviewed in January. Can we make it?