

Hudson Grocery Cooperative
Board Meeting Minutes
September 10, 2013

Present: Suzanne Hambleton, Rachel Centinario, Sarah Atkins, Bess Hambleton,
Bridget O'Meara (by telephone), and Steve Fox (arrived after item 2)
Also present: Jen Belisle and her son

Call to Order, 7:10 p.m.

1. Approval of August minutes tabled for next meeting
2. September meeting agenda approved – Bess moves, Rachel seconds, unanimously approved.
3. CBL 101 conference, Saturday, Sept 21, 8am to 4pm
 - a. Sarah is not going to be able to attend. Rachel and Bess still will attend. Suzanne will fill our third seat unless another board member is interested.
4. Chamber of Commerce membership up for renewal
 - a. Membership fee is \$350. Discussion of the contacts we have made through the Chamber and opportunities offered. Sarah suggests we make sure in the future to direct marketing efforts through the Chamber. Jen asks if meeting attendance is required—no. Downtown retail meetings are a good networking opportunity, which we'll be able to take better advantage of once our doors are open. Steve notes that Chamber has a significant number of members, is one of the top ten chambers of commerce by size in the Twin Cities metro area.
 - b. Sarah moves to approve renewal of Chamber membership, Suzanne seconds—unanimously approved.
5. Board email addresses
 - a. Steve can set up through Zoho.com, as an alternative to Google Apps or other provider. This allows for custom domain, so we would be able to use hudsongrocerycoop.org. Steve already set up one for Sarah at sarah.atkins@hudsongrocerycoop.org.
 - b. Discussion of addresses in addition to names, such as board@hgc.com and info@hgc.com, and how to handle removal of email addresses once a board member's term has expired. Steve thinks 5 addresses are included for free and aliases are no charge. Steve will confirm the cost and will set up email addresses for Suzanne, Bess, and Rachel.
6. Recruiting for board of directors election
 - a. Discussion of putting together a director application packet. River Market has materials we could use as a starting point. Bess will put this together and share it with the board for approval.

- b. Once we have board packet, that will be included on the website and Facebook page, and will be emailed out to owners as well.
 - c. Discussion of potential candidates that we might reach out to. Steve and Bridget are both planning not to run again.
7. Food Co-op Initiative Grant and Market Study
- a. We were awarded \$10,000 in a matching-funds grant. As part of this, Stuart Reid will make a visit to our board and sit down with us.
 - b. The market study is expected to cost about \$9,000, so we will get matching funds back for half that amount. We also expect to lay out additional funds for the pro forma, initial site plan, and other items as we previously laid out in our grant application.
 - c. Discussion of development of business plan based on market study data. We may want to get help of a professional consultant in the future.
 - d. CDS Consulting is the consulting firm we have been planning to use. Discussion of what would be included in market study from them and the expected cost. Suzanne will request a proposal from CDS.
 - e. Sarah notes we should put out a press release. Suzanne says that FCI issues a press release which we will forward to our local press.
8. Board Reports
- a. President—Thanks to Bridget for her excellent work on the grant proposal.
 - b. Vice President—Nothing to report.
 - c. Treasurer
 - i. Financial situation has not significantly changed since last month.
 - ii. Our tax return is done, using Carlson Highland as previously approved. Cost was \$450, and we will not owe any taxes for the year, as we were operating at a loss last year. Sarah will complete the filing.
 - iii. Sarah raises question of whether we want to approach the CPA we used last year for a partial refund, as they used the incorrect federal form and needlessly filed a state tax return, and charged us a considerable amount of money. Sarah will draft a letter.
 - d. Secretary—Nothing to report.
 - e. Other directors—Nothing to report.
9. Committee Reports
- a. Finance & Fundraising
 - i. Apart from the grant, we have not had any additional fundraising activity in the last month.

ii. We do have a few expenses from some marketing items. A lot of candy remains from pet wash fundraiser which Sarah needs to be reimbursed for; we will be able to use that candy for future events.

b. Ownership

i. One new owner: Lisa & Tim DeVries

1. Bess moves to approve, Suzanne seconds—unanimously approved.

c. Steering

i. Suzanne met with new committee member Ramona Robinson, who will start looking at the timeline we put together last winter.

d. Marketing

i. Pepper Fest parade in August was a success—more than 30 people turned up to walk with us, and we ran out of sunglasses well before the end of the parade. Unfortunately, we didn't get any new owners following that event, but did get a spike in hits to our website and got a lot of positive response at the parade.

ii. Local 3-D artist Paul Olson, husband of owner Brenda Olson, is going to put together a conceptual storefront design for us.

iii. Last meeting was September 4 and was well attended by committee members. Plans to distribute 30 posters along with business cards to downtown businesses.

iv. Spirit of St. Croix Art Fair coming up on September 28 and 29. We will have 10' by 10' space, and will need to come up with a craft activity for our booth. We will solicit our ownership for volunteers. We also will have handouts, posters, and similar take-away items.

1. Suzanne proposes setting a budget of \$200 for materials. Discussion of how much we expect to spend on this event. Sarah offers to print materials. We also may be able to get owners to donate craft materials. We do not have co-op stickers, so Suzanne will look at comparison of getting stickers printed versus printing our own on sticker paper. Suzanne expects business cards and stickers to come to about \$60. Sarah offers pegboard display board and tent.
2. Rachel moves to approve up to \$100 for materials for this event, Sarah seconds—unanimously approved.
3. Discussion of accepting credit cards at events. We could set up mobile pay through PayPal. Rachel will research devices and accounts to set this up for the co-op.

- 4. Certificate of liability insurance required. Sarah will call insurer tomorrow to ask for a quote.
 - v. Public meeting scheduled for Wednesday, October 9, at the library. The room is reserved starting at 5:30, so open house starting at 6:00, and brief presentation at 7:00. In the past we have given a 10-15 minute presentation and then fielded questions. Suzanne will get the notice put in the Star-Observer and Patch.
 - vi. Somerset Elementary School, Saturday, Oct 26, we have been invited to alternative trick-or-treating event. This is a candy-free event, so if we had any leftover sunglasses, we could use them at this event. There is no fee for participation in this event.
 - vii. Marketing Committee has request for Ownership Committee regarding blog participation. Idea would be to call up owners and seek volunteers to write for this blog. Discussion of how this would work, issues of oversight and content control. Hesitations are expressed by Bess, Rachel, and Sarah. Rachel offers to take ownership of the blog.
- e. Vendor Relations—Nothing to report.