

**Northampton Community Cooperative Market, Inc.
Board of Directors Annual Meeting Minutes
Friday December 2nd 2017, 7:00-8:00 PM
Boylston Rooms at the Keystone Building,
122 Pleasant Street, Easthampton, MA**

Board Members Present: President Dorian Gregory, Vice-President Andrea Stanley, Clerk Alex Risley Schroeder, Treasurer Jade Barker, Lynn DiTullio, Steve Bruner, Christine Dutton, Eric Friedland-Kays, Jacquie Fraiser, and General Manager Rochelle Prunty.

Others Present: 200 co-op owners and guests.

Presiding: Dorian Gregory, President.

Notetaker: Beth Skinner

6:00-7:00 PM Meet & Greet, Dinner catered by Myers Catering

Meeting convened at 7:00 PM

I. 7:00 PM Call to Order, Introductions, Agenda Review

Rochelle welcomed co-op owners to the 19th Annual Meeting and thanked them for their participation. Rochelle introduced the current Board members and candidates for seats on the Board of Directors.

Andrea introduced Dorian and thanked her for her service to the Co-op, including her terms as president. Dorian was presented with a felted landscape of the valley with Ursula Marjoram, our co-op bear mascot holding asparagus created by local fiber artist Trish Cataldo.

II. 7:10 PM Review and Approval of Minutes

The minutes of December 2, 2016 Annual Meeting were distributed and reviewed. Albert motioned to accept the minutes, and Andy Anderson seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

III. 7:15 PM President's Report from Dorian Gregory

Dorian delivered the President's report discussing where the co-op is today and where it is going. River Valley Co-op is continuing to grow in owners and customers, and the Board is actively planning for the development of a second store to accommodate the increased patronage and ownership. The impetus is to ease congestion on the flagship store and to stay current with trends and the increased competition in the grocery industry. Dorian outlined the stages of the expansion process, focusing on the current planning phases and

acknowledging that the Co-op is not yet ready to announce a location. The Board is pleased to report that in June the union and management resolved the question of pay for time on the shuttle. The proceeds of the annual dinner will go to Friends of Hampshire County Homeless Individuals Inc.

IV. 7:25 PM General Manager's Report from Rochelle

2017 was a year of internal focus on systems including infrastructure, staff structure, communication processes. The Co-op created 167 local jobs and, 94% of all jobs at the Co-op are full time with benefits. Most retail stores, including food stores, have predominantly part-time jobs without benefits. Wages for 100% of River Valley Co-op staff are above the Western Massachusetts livable wage and 74% are above the Northampton livable wage. The Co-op has wonderful staff and operations run 24 hours a day, with overnight crews receiving deliveries and stocking shelves so that the store is ready for customers in the morning.

River Valley Co-op has 1,700 customers daily, an increase of 98 per day over last year. Co-op grew sales by \$2,272,603, and had a net income of \$322,000. . One of the key aspects of the Co-op's mission is to support local farmers and in 2017 local purchases totaled \$6,088,955 from 179 local farms and 224 local vendors.

The Co-op made contributions of \$135,868 to local nonprofits and community organizations including in-kind food donations and cash. The Co-op has reduced waste going into landfill by composting, recycling and giving farmers produce trimmings for chicken feed and compost . Our "Food for All" program provides a 10% discount for low income participants which grew to over \$57,000 last year, an increase of \$10,000.

In the past year, the Co-op gained 753 new owners. 75% of our shoppers are co-op owners. In the co-op owner survey on expansion, 60% wanted the new store to serve our current community better and wanted a new store 40% to serve a new community.

V. 7:45 PM Guest Speakers: Jade Barker, Treasurer of River Valley Co-op and her co-researcher Patricia Cumbie, presented on their research: *Everyone Welcome? Personal Narratives About Race and Food Co-ops*

Jade and Patricia described that now is a critical time to engage the cooperative community in important conversations about race and oppression. *Everyone Welcome?* presents a variety of perspectives on what can be done to make food co-ops more racially inclusive. The keynote provided an overview of the research, and served as an invitation for River Valley Co-op owners to consider their own narrative about race and food co-ops. Booklets of this initial research into personal narratives were provided to all the meeting participants in attendance. This project was funded by 20 food co-ops, including our own.

VI. 8:00 Co-op Owner Q&A

Rochelle and Dorian solicited questions from the membership, and responded to them.

Questions asked and comments shared included the following inquiries:

- Q - what percentage of staff are full time? A - 94% of staff are full-time
- Q - how can owners continue the discussion of racism in our co-op? A - study groups on racism and the food system would be a good beginning
- Q - how does the suggestion box work? A- suggestions are answered by the store manager, or another staff person, and answers are posted on the bulletin board in the cafe.
- Q - is it possible to have sidewalks at current store to adjacent retail stores to the south? A - municipal plans are for a roundabout, and sidewalks, in development 2020
- Q - what is the timeline for second store? A - We should should know much more in 12 months about a second store timeline
- Q - how does the Co-op support bicyclists? A - there is a bicycle repair station at the store sponsored in part by the Pedal People Co-op
- Q - has the new food co-op in Holyoke asked for assistance? A - the co-op in Holyoke as not reached out for assistance

VII. 8:10 Door Prizes, Final Call for Ballots to Elect Board Members

VIII. 8:15 PM Business Meeting Adjourned

Dorian made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Randy Klein seconded.

IX. 8:15 -9 PM Dessert and Music by Peter Blanchette

Commented [1]: do we mention Peter Blanchette?