

GreenTree Cooperative Grocery
214 N Franklin St
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Phone: 989-772-3221
Website: greentree.coop



GreenTree Board Meeting Minutes 11/16/2016

Location: Max and Emily's

Present: Justin Barnaby, Janet Malusi, Gary Kramer, Bob Murray, Anneliese Fox, Ray Davies, Daniel Patterson, Daniela Richter, Damian Fisher

Bob motioned to call the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Adding to agenda the board report/survey.

- I. Approve Agenda – Danny moved to approve and Justin supported.
- II. Approve October Minutes – Danny moved to approve the October minutes and Daniela supported.
- III. Member Input Minutes
 - a. Gary asked about the library not having space for board meetings. The library contact only saw one date with a conflict for next year. Max and Emily's manager, Elmo, said that the staff at GreenTree is always very friendly and helpful and he is appreciative. Sarah reported that a lot of community spaces are not available after five. CMU might have spaces and Daniela will check with her office to see what the protocol may be.
- IV. Board Report/Survey
 - a. 7 responses and all 7 responders marked true. Sarah did think the interpretation was a little off. Sarah's interpretation explained that the survey said the GM's performance and the store health is one in the same. Bob mentioned that we talk to Ben about this on Monday. Bob will send the survey link to Ben tomorrow. Ray moved to approve survey and Justin offered support.
- V. GM Report/minutes
 - a. October sales we up 1.6% and the owner drive added 53 members. Liz has us penciled in for Friday, May 5 for the annual owner meeting. The discovery museum preference was to have the time slot of 6-9p.m. Bob voted to stick with that date and everyone was in the agreement. The board retreat is December 4th and we will be using Damian's office downtown. GreenTree will be providing the refreshments and lunch which will be taken out of the board budget. The board retreat will go from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. The address is 215 W. Broadway. Bob will send a reminder and Ben will send a packet with the agenda. Please let Sarah know if you have any dietary needs. Gary talked about possible topics for board retreat with Ben Sandel. In 2017, we will be required to do a financial review, the accountant cannot be the accountant we use but has to be a different accountant. Sarah is guessing it will cost between \$2,000-\$3,000. Great job Nissa in catching an attempted "sting" from the Liquor Control Commission in trying to buy alcohol. The holidays are a busy time with sales, store happenings,

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- please check Facebook to participate and promote. Saturday is tasting day for deli thanksgiving foods, 15% off produce all weekend, wine tasting this Saturday. Our number of owners have gone over 2,000 - great October push for member drive. Sarah reported the first thirty members signed up in three days and got a free goodie bag. Gary made motion to approve the GM report and Janet seconded the motion.
- VI. Monitoring Report
- a. Sarah reported that we are struggling with sales growth and profitability and cash flow. Sarah does think the cuts we made to labor in September, not adding hours or filling positions are helping. Sarah reports that our cash position has improved. Our average daily balance is now double what it was in September. Stacy is leaving and we are absorbing the position among the leadership team. Megan is doing a great job and is ready to take on more responsibilities and will be taking the bulk of Stacy's responsibilities. There are also going to be small changes in terms of ordering. Sarah feels good about the transition and the plan. Megan currently works 40 hours per week. Bob was wondering how the new hourly FLSA compensation will affect employees. Laura will be moving back to hourly. Sarah thinks this will be manageable. Danny moved to approve the monitoring report and Damian supported.
- VII. Appointment of Daniela
- a. Bob led a vote to approve Daniela for the board and the board all agreed.
- VIII. Owner Appreciation Day
- a. Danny and Janet were at the November owner appreciation day. They both agreed that it went well. Danny and Janet reported some positive feedback and people were thankful for the board. One owner reported that they would like more parking. Danny and Janet were able to observe the staff in a different light. December 3rd is the next owner appreciation day and an invite will be sent. Bob and Daniela both volunteered to be at the December 3rd owner appreciation day. People love the samples and food served. We discussed having a few board members get their license to serve alcohol. Sarah reported that owner appreciation days have had good sales and owners are reporting that they like the first Saturdays of the month.
- IX. Cooperative Grocer Article
- a. All board members receive the cooperative grocer magazine. It is a very good resources and brings up some interesting topics. We talked about the article *First Impressions and Long-lasting Relationships: the rewards of great customer service*. Bob led the discussion and his opinion was that it reiterated how important it is to have great customer service – which we do! And, also, the importance of serving as a resource for this business. Bob asked if there is much peer-to-peer positive reinforcement. Sarah said that we use "you rock" slips.

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Sarah reports that in general the staff is very supportive of each other. Sarah starts every staff meeting with one appreciation for everyone, if you get more than five you get to select something from the prize box. Prizes can be free samples, bags, t-shirts, or a gift card to get lunch. Customer complaints are usually around a product for not being stocked or not carrying a product anymore. Ray asked what is the board's role in it? Bob said this is the essence of what the experience needs to be for all shoppers. Possibly adding a sign if you cannot find something come find us? There is a suggestion box at the store. Encouraging and reinforcing the good work. It is helpful for us to be able to know who to direct members to, to help support the customer service. An opportunity to promote the option for ordering over social media. Gary read an article with concerns about the small size of the store and it can be tougher for sales growth.

- X. Retreat
- XI. Officer Elections
 - a. We have two open positions for secretary and vice chair, all were in favor for Anneliese to be secretary. Ray volunteered to be vice chair and all agreed. Cause for celebration we have a full board and all officer positions are in place.
- XII. October call with CDS
 - a. Damian was on the call with CDS, the question Damian proposed was the difference between a capital campaign and during the design phase a development project committee can be helpful. National cooperative grocer was a big part of the discussion and they can have a better understanding of cost, potential revenue, or help with finding a third party to help. The hard data they cannot necessarily provide but can give the methodology. An updated market study/pro forma may be needed. The pro forma builds upon the market study and attempts to interpret the data. Damian asked about being a part of the strip mall and to check with the developer to see if they are on-board with the co-op principles. Damian encouraged that the other stores aligned with the co-op niche. NCG does the pro forma and not the market study.
- XIII. Holiday Recipe
 - a. Please get your holiday recipe to Laura by November 21st.

We entered executive session at 7:10 p.m. Justin moved and Damian supported executive session.

Bob motioned to go out of executive session at 7:34 and Janet supported.

Last item – yearly reflections. What have we learned this year? What have our challenges and our successes been as a board? How can we be the most effective in the next calendar year? Ray mentioned that we have a full-board, strategy for the calls, higher synergy. Bob

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enjoys the diversity on the board and the amount and differing experiences of all board members. Gary thinks we are making progress with expansion. Momentum is going in the right direction. Damian feels more confident and that we are more in the driver's seat. Bob encouraged all to continue to ask questions. Praise for Sarah and her consistency and strength in leadership. Sarah appreciated the process and the professionalism of the board and being able to quickly fill spots. Bob would like to see us pitching board membership earlier.

Sarah is planning a celebration for Stacy's departure.

Damian moved to adjourn and Gary seconded at 7:44 p.m.