



Morrisville Food Co-op Board Meeting

June 24, 2020 5:00 p.m.

Google Meet Link: <https://meet.google.com/gwy-mroc-omu>

### AGENDA

1. **Action for Vote:** [Approval of May Minutes](#)
2. **Action for Discussion:** Questions/Clarifications on Reports
  - Executive Committee
  - COVID Ad Hoc Committee
  - Member Loan Committee
  - Finance Committee/GM
3. **Action for Discussion:**
  - a. COVID-19 Protocol
  - b. Staff/Board Store Interactions
  - c. Evaluation of Board Relationship w GM
  - d. Annual Meeting
  - e. Black Lives Matter Follow Up
4. **Action for Vote:**
  - a. [Treatment of Staff](#) Policy
  - b. [Communication with Board Policy](#)
5. **Other Business:**
  - a. [A nice piece of PR](#) plus WLVB Interview
  - b. CFNE Hosted [Financial Basics for Co-ops - June 23 & 30, 5 - 7PM](#)
  - c. [Consumer Cooperative Management Association Virtual Conference Webinar Recordings](#)
6. **Executive Session:**
  - a. **Governance & Oversight**

## Minutes for Approval

### Morrisville Food Co-op DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2020 5:00 p.m.

ZOOM Meeting - (click link below to join meeting\*)

### MINUTES

**Present:** Elly Ventura, Nancy Banks, Jack Pickett, Tricia Follert, Kelley Lyons, Elaine Harvey, Larry Gibs, Nina Church (arrived 5:15), Lisa Zinn (arrived 6:55)

**Absent:**

**Guests:** Susan Titterton

**Staff:** Taylor Evans, Kasey Greene

Elly opened the board meeting at 5:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. Introduction to Zoom:** (Not needed)

**2. Introduction of any guests (non-board members) attending** (See list above)

**3. Time for sharing from guests** (Not needed)

**4. Approval of March 25, 2020 board minutes** motion by Tricia, 2nd by Kelley, all in favor.

**5. Appoint Nancy Banks as Treasurer through October 2020**

Motion to accept Jack's resignation as Treasurer by Elly, 2nd by Elaine, all in favor.

Motion to appoint Nancy Banks as Treasurer through October 2020 by Tricia, 2nd by Larry, all in favor.

**6. Financial Report**

a. Nancy sent out financials.

b. March was the largest revenue month ever.

c. MoCo got a \$55,000 PPP loan; however, it does go in front of the CFNE loan. CFNE wants to convert this into a grant, so their loan is first. PPP loan cannot be used for anything but salaries and a small amount for utilities and rent, if it is to later convert to a grant. Have 8 weeks to use the funds; up to 2 years to pay, if it remains a loan. Ensuring that any additional personnel are hired as staff. Have paid all the small vendors; still need to pay Black River and Kehe. Cannot pay vendors from PPP loan. Additional discussion about the PPP loan followed.

Discussion about using some of the loan for rent. Discussion about using some of the loan for an independent contractor who is available to do digital marketing.

d. In discussions with CFNE about deferring loan payments to them. Nancy will get advice from CFNE about how we might invest in staff right now.

e. Sales for week of April 13 \$12,100 net sales, only online.

Sales for week of April 20 (3 days so far) - net sales \$8253; Monday strongest day. In store and online orders. Affected by shortage of inventory and weather.

f. James (consultant) advises, may be able to recover some money from insurance for losses the week of April 6, when the store was closed for health reasons.

**7. COVID-19 Response and Implications**

a. **Store report** - Taylor's update:

i. Customer comments and traffic have been very positive

- ii. *Three new staff members and one who has decided to stay. All part-time, all high school students. Need another morning staff person, to have online orders open for more than 2 hours. Need additional staff. Current staff is very positive and works well together.*
- iii. *Working with James (consultant) on Catapult*
- iv. *For the future, suggest we begin to consider continuing online orders past the current COVID-19 situation; customers seem to like it. Figure out logistics and staffing.*
- v. *Need to get a handle on inventory; suggest before end of the quarter; build in ongoing systems for inventory; plan to look at 15 core basket items and competitive pricing*
- vi. *Plan to extend store hours to 6 p.m. next week, opening at 10 a.m. with online ordering for 2 hours prior to opening.*
- vii. *Discussion about staffing roles, present and coming, followed.*
- viii. *“My goal is to bring the community back to the co-op.”*

**b. Ad hoc Committee report**

- i. *(Nothing to add beyond what was reported under Financials.)*

**c. Response Planning**

**i. Needs & concerns:**

1. *Discussion about how current safety protocols for masks and gloves are being implemented and ensuring they are followed consistently, by staff and customers*
2. *Questions raised: If we were to have an exposure incident, what is our plan? According to Kehe, we have to be prepared to hire a company to come in and sanitize. Taylor to research a company.*
3. *Do we want to reserve in-store hours for the higher risk population? Survey in BEET what people want - high-risk store hours, online ordering curbside, input on hours; assume these protocols will be relevant past May 15.*

- ii. **Open on Saturday:** *Once we have staffing and build up core staff, the goal is opening on Saturdays, hopefully May 2.*

**8. Executive Session:** *Motion made at 6:06 to move into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter; motion made by Nancy, 2nd by Jack, all in favor. Came out of the Executive Session at 7:08.*

*Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.*

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## Committee Reports

**Executive Committee Report:**

Executive Committee Meeting  
May 7, 2020

In attendance: Lisa Zinn, Taylor Evans, Jack Pickett, Nancy Banks, Elly Ventura

How is Taylor doing Check-in?

Optimistic. Volunteers are no longer needed. Goal is to be self-sufficient with the Board and it's happening.

- Wants to do a Catapult Training in the near future to learn it more comprehensively in a remote and focused environment.

- Excited about the staff we have.
  - Will be open Sat and Sun this weekend.
  - Hired another person this weekend
  - Working with Kyle for setting standards for produce.
    - Being more efficient in ordering
      - Getting things in at a certain time and altering people through the website when that is coming
- Curbside orders are dropping off and more people are coming in the store but some people still like curbside.
  - Housekeeping was done during the slow time during the day
- Need to adjust our thought process to get ahead of the “new normal”
  - We can continue to fine tune and be prepared
- License renewal for deli area is up in a month
- Wants the co-op to be a community gathering place: This is her “why”
  - Planning a Membership drive for June with a 20% off
  - For every member a staff member signs up, they get \$5
- Membership promotions will be the reason that members come and shop, not bc there is a “hope” of dividend returns.
- Would like to do a community bbq with Black River Produce on a weekend in June

### Staffing

For the next 3-4 weeks hours can be increased by \$3K-4K total.

i.e. Marketing, Cleaning, Painting.

May need one more body. Taylor does not want to bring on a bunch of people and then not be able to give them enough hours so would rather have a strong, committed staff.

Reorganized beer section yesterday to create a singles section to discourage breaking apart 4 and 6-packs.

Is already comparing prices and adjusting margins to compete with local commercial stores. Making up “New Price” tags for items.

We should be promoting items that we have and the other big stores do not. i.e. Flour

- Marketing: Building new website, updates on FB and current website to a lesser degree. Want to match the look of the new website to FB and insta platforms
- Produce Manager: 25-hour a week position. Will likely be a need in the short-term
- Front End Cashiers: Currently have seven. Staff four people in the store including Taylor at most times. A bit more when deliveries are coming in.
- Buyer: Kacey is doing a pretty good job. Price comparison needs to be done among local stores. Review inventory and catapult reports to know what sells.
- Bookkeeper: Goal is to have Nancy out of there in 2-3 weeks. There needs to be a person to match the invoices with the checks that need to be paid. Kasey may be able to do this task from home with additional hours.

### PPP requirements

Salaries being paid in December The loan is allowing us to spend some extra money in this period that we would not normally be able to spend. It appears that our actual wages are coming in lower than what we applied for. At the end of the 8 weeks (mid-June) we will know what our average weekly sales are. It seems that sales are good Monday and Tuesday and slide mid-week to know what our weekly payroll will look like to know what 25% of sales is.

### Columinate

James should be tasked very specifically what we are looking for and determine what aJames can do to help up. We have got to increase sales over these next 6 weeks. Review proposal and updated scope of work and request James to visit the store.

Cashflow project

James is not going to do this for us but is insisting that the form he provided needs to be used. We already have a cashflow system and this will be a third form. There is a backlog of invoices being entered into the Catapult system. Taylor will work on developing a PO system to alleviate this a bit.

FY21 budget: Not discussed

Unemployment situation: Not discussed

Action Items:

- ~~Ask Board members for ideas to improve business~~
- ~~Invite James to the next Board meeting~~
- Taylor should introduce herself to other co-op managers
- Taylor will talk with James today to discuss visiting the store and get a timeline for MJ's work
- ~~Nancy will let Taylor know the PPP 8 week date~~

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**COVID-19 Ad Hoc Committee:**

Verbal report will be given during the meeting.

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**Member Loan Committee:**

Report will be given during the meeting if necessary.

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**Search Committee:**

MoCo GM Search Committee  
Monday, May 11, 2020 4:45pm via Zoom  
Tuesday, May 19, 3030 4:45pm via Zoom

Present: Elly Ventra, Nina Church, Larry Gibs, Carol Lauber, *Elaine Harvey on May 19*

May 11 Agenda:

- Review Timeline
- Current Status of Search
- Review Qualifications Survey
- What is Missing?

Search is expedited to align with current Interim GM contract.

Advertising saturation was satisfactory to the group and will continue this week. Carol, Nina and Elly will share the post with personal contacts to expand the net a bit more.

Top Qualification Priorities from survey:

(87.5%) Business Planning:

(100%) Visioning: Creates and communicates a compelling vision w goals.

(87.5%) Managing people

(75%) Accountability

(87.5%) Service mindset:

Models Excellent Performance

Self-Motivated

Respectful

**\*Development of Self** should maybe be given higher priority than what the survey results indicate

Key Qualities: Planning & **\*Developing Systems** (ie. trainings and SOP), Visioning, Building a leadership team and leading a staff.

Concern was raised re: staff training, consistency, who does it. When is it done and how often.....

Resumes will be forwarded as they come in.

May 19: Resumes were reviewed and candidate pool was narrowed down for screening to advance to the second round.

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**Financials:**

[See report](#)

**GM Report:**

**MOCO GM Report April 2020**

**First Month Overview**

My position as Interim General Manager for the Coop stated as of April 3<sup>rd</sup> with my first day in store being Tuesday April 7<sup>th</sup>. It was agreed the store would be closed for all business between Saturday April 4<sup>th</sup> and Sunday April 12<sup>th</sup> to allow for both a restocking of merchandise and transition period between myself and the current general manager.

At the time I started the current staff / management had taken no action to allow for continuing operations and had prepared for what appeared to be a store closing. My first few days came with virtually all staff resigning or confirming they would not work in store. I was tasked with staffing and

product ordering to plan for reopening for online orders starting Monday April 13<sup>th</sup>. It was mentioned that two previous employees, Kasey and Kyle Greene may be interested in returning if the concerns they voiced as their reason for leaving were addressed. After a conversation with them they felt comfortable enough to return and within one week of working with Riley Bouchard who had resigned, she came to me and ask if she could stay on. I gladly agreed. The success of being able to open for business was in large part due to these three individuals staying with us. I also worked to hire additional staff to meet our operational needs

Moving forward we successfully opened for online orders that Monday and by week two had reopened with limited hours for in store shopping while following all recommended protocols for employee and customer protection from COVID.

Week three allowed for an increased in our window of time to take online orders, increased in-store shopping hours and our first Saturday open to the public since the start of the Stay Safe / Stay Home orders.

Week four we again expanded in-store hours and opened for Sunday shoppers. Currently we are open seven days a week and our hours of operation are 09:00 – 18:00 Monday – Friday, 08:00 – 17:00 Saturday's and 10:00 – 17:00 Sunday's while allowing online ordering anytime Monday – Friday.

### **Top Three Areas of Focus:**

- Cashflow / Increased revenue – this is a gong going effort in collaboration with James and now Chuck our new bookkeeper
- Maintaining the highest standard for fresh produce while decreasing our waste – decreasing overall shrinkage store wide
- Review of current product selection and pricing strategy to allow for a better market position within our community in an effort to increase traffic and revenue along

I would like to add a fourth area of focus. Making MOCO known within our community as a leader in customer service and community involvement

### **Summary of Work with James**

Currently James and I have a standing phone meeting on Tuesday's of each week. Our primary focus is on working to have a clear picture of our cash flow and areas for improvement. I believe the addition of our new bookkeeper and working with both James and Nancy to have everyone looking at our current situation from the same perspective will move us forward. We also review pricing / margin strategies and overall store needs.

## **Top Three Challenges**

- Product availability / sourcing. To address this, we have expanded our vendor base to offset supply chain disruptions.
- Increasing store traffic / sales. Most of my effort in this area has been directed at the launch of our new website, working to have a cohesive marketing / brand image between all social media and avenues we communicate to our members. Mj and I are actively working on this together
- Working through uncertain times in general

In general, my support needs are being met regarding the above. We have a great staff and the board has been very supportive overall. I only ask for your patients and continued support moving forward. This is a marathon not a sprint.

## **Staffing Updates:**

We currently have an outstanding staff that I believe is engaged in the mission of the coop, works very well together and is working to provide excellent customer service.

To empower and engage our employees each team member has been given an area of responsibility to oversee. Each area of responsibility was based on team member interest, knowledge and store needs.

Our current staff includes the following

- Taylor Evans – Interim General Manager
- Kasey Greene – Acting Buyer
- Kyle Greene – Acting Produce Buyer
- Mj Bouchard – Marketing / Social Media
- Chuck Waskuch – Bookkeeper / IT
- Riley Bouchard – Store Associate
- Elizabeth Autorino – Store Associate
- Grace Evans – Store Associate
- Sarah Evans – Store Associate
- Grason Darrow – Store Associate
- Brianna Reeves – Store Associate
- Loren Leahy – Store Associate



This week we did lose Malissa a newly hired employee due to health and personal issues unrelated to MOCO. An effort to fill her position is taking place currently. Additional staffing needs include one associate position to allow more flexibility in scheduling given the increase in operating hours.

Looking to the future we will need to add additional team members as sales increase. Staffing growth may include a dedicated online order fulfillment position and permanent buyer positions. As some of our core staff will be moving on to attend college late summer, I will have an ongoing recruitment effort in place.

### **COVID Protocols:**

ALL EMPLOYEES have undergone the required VT DOL / DOH training requirements as of the first day this was required. Certificates of completion for each employee are displayed in store. We have been and currently enforce all recommended CDC and VT DOL requirements and best practices related to employee and customer safety to include but not limited to the following

- Employee awareness of signs and symptoms of COVID
- Employee use of face coverings
- Hand washing
- Ongoing sanitation of all touch surfaces
- Social distancing
- Limit on the number of shoppers in store at the same time
- One-way traffic flow within store
- Employee only servicing of bulk products
- Availability of hand sanitizer at store entrance and checkout
- Plastic gloves for selection of fresh produce

### **Media / Advertising**

With the hiring of our new marketing and social media person we are working to create a new and much more tailored marketing approach to increase business and feel of community involvement.

This last week we launched a new and much improved website. Our new site offers a clean updated look, is more user friendly and far more optimized to enhance mobile viewing. Our new site also adds more pages to pass along much needed information to our customers. Information now available includes delivery days for baked goods along with product descriptions and hyperlinks to vendor websites, produce delivery schedules and will soon offer more product information based on departments, info on store events, informational content to improve our overall member / customer experience and this is just the beginning.

## **Media / Advertising Continued**

Additionally, Mj and I are working on both our Facebook and Instagram accounts to bring a new messaging and branding image to both based on the user demographics of each platform.

Following to a brief note from Mj

I have some stats for you as requested for the past 7 days. I'll be putting together Monthly (or weekly if you prefer) reports/spreadsheets on all social media with a bit more detail moving forward.

Also, I set up Google Analytics (GA) for the website. It will take at least a couple days if not a week or so to get data worth reporting, but once it starts I'll have reports on that too. I set up Jetpack and All in One SEO on the website so that will start reporting too. I am in the process of creating a social media calendar that I will share with you later this week. I will also start optimizing the site for better placement in Google searches, etc.

I will also set up Hootsuite(the social media management platform) this week. Once we find out who has access to the FB business page, I will connect the page. I believe I can connect the Instagram account myself

For now here's what I grabbed from social...

### **Facebook:**

Likes: 1,919

Followers: 2,059

May 12th - 19th

Page Likes: 2

Post Reach: 552

Post Engagement: 81

New Page Followers: 2

### **Instagram:**

Followers: 1,141

Posts: 804

Last 7 days:

Reach: 321

Impressions: 577

Interactions: 23

Profile Visits: 22

Website Clicks: 1

**New Membership:**

For the month of April, we added 7 new members.

We are planning a new membership drive along with a reengagement effort directed at current membership for the month of June. Plans include an in-store membership drive with staff incentives for each new member. A web and social media campaign directed at attracting new members and bring back member not active. More to come on this as plans evolve.

**Snapshot of April Sales by Week**

April 1<sup>st</sup> – April 4<sup>th</sup> \$11,453.25

April 5<sup>th</sup> – April 11<sup>th</sup> \$495.88 - Note: This is the week we were closed

April 12<sup>th</sup> – April 18<sup>th</sup> \$12,116.37

April 19<sup>th</sup> – April 25<sup>th</sup> \$14,095.85

April 26<sup>th</sup> – April 30<sup>th</sup> \$11,549.27

Please reference the financial documents for more detailed information.

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