

Morrisville Food Co-op Board Meeting - Approved Minutes
February 22, 2021 5:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Google Meets

Minutes

In attendance: Mark Andrews, Elaine Harvey, Jack Pickett, Cari Varner, Beth Springston, Rachel Funk, Kelley Lyons, Larry Gibs

Absent: Taylor Evans

Guests: Susan Titterton

Minutes-Taker: Cari Varner

1. Feb. 11 Minutes Approved - Elaine motioned, Kelley seconded, all in favor
2. Elly resigns from the board, Mark motioned , Elaine seconded all in favor. The MOCO board would like to acknowledge the dedication and skill that Elly brought to the board, and will very much miss her.
3. **Committee Reports:** Questions/Clarifications on Reports
 - a. Executive Committee [Agenda](#) - Ben Sandel from Columinate will be presenting on marketing and fund raising strategy proposal
 - b. GM [Manager Report January](#) -

Taylor reported that sales have continued to grow (faster than projections), with a renewed focus on health and beauty aids.

Cash flow is improving and sees the ability to focus less on member loans and debt. She is very optimistic about the future of MOCO and the ability of her staff.

Taylor is concerned that there is a disconnect between the MOCO board and the staff at MOCO. She encouraged board members to patronize the store more frequently to better understand how the store is managed and served by its employees. Before Ben Sandel joined the meeting, Taylor expressed her opinion that she doesn't necessarily see the need for an outside consultant to manage a future capital campaign, believing that in-house staff can handle the marketing. She proposes that she can personally approach members about transitioning loans to donations. She stresses the importance of messaging to come from the boots on the ground perspective and that all messaging should come from a centralized place, and then pushed out to all stakeholders.

Elly expressed the importance of relying on outside expertise for marketing and fundraising, to build off the efforts of MJ and the staff at MOCO. This would allow Taylor to focus on her successful management of the store operations.

The MOCO board recognizes the excellent job Taylor, MJ and the rest of the staff at MOCO on their successful management and work for the store. Everyone is so appreciative of the job they have done, and see nothing but promise moving forward. Also, everyone agrees that communication among and between board members and committee members needs to be improved especially in light of the financial situation.

- c. Finance Committee [Financials](#) & Pro Forma

The Treasurer's Report includes a list and details of the assumptions and adjustments made to the financial data.

The question now is: Do sale increases have a maximum cap? Growth has been very strong, but will it stop at a certain point of maximum saturation? Personnel costs are stable for the next 1.5 years.

Taylor has plans for prepared foods and deli, post-COVID. She points out that financial numbers are skewed low because of store closing and limited opening in 2020 due to COVID.

4. Action for Vote - Financials

- a. Accept Q2 financials - No vote was taken on the Q2 financials.
- b. Accept Q3 budget - No vote was taken.
- c. Accept Pro Forma - Pro forma projections are based on assumptions, and will be continued to be worked on for the next board meeting.

5. Action for Vote - Member Loans

- a. Proposal for funding to pay back YR 4 loans
CFNE funds could possibly be used to pay back YR 4 loans, but Lane will confirm. It would require detailed documentation. CFNE would need to approve any changes to the plan.

It is proposed to wait until the last possible date (July 1, 2021) to pay back YR 4 loans so that there is time to figure out the best approach and confirm with CFNE. It is proposed that a savings plan be created to fund future loan payoffs. The board generally concurs that these are good ideas.

6. Action for Discussion & Vote - Method for Raising Capital

- a. Ben Sandel from Columinate presents an outline for a capital raising and marketing campaign. The goal of raising \$250,000 - \$500,00 is very reasonable and can be raised through reaching out to membership for conversation of loans to donations, new loans and selling other regional co-ops preferred shares. His services would include a Capital Campaign Workbook, staff/volunteer training, ways to increase MOCO's online presence, mailings and emails and assistance reaching out to regional co-ops. Starting very quickly is possible. Ben has experience working with co-ops in the region and across the country in achieving successful fundraising campaigns.

Lane adds that CFNE would fully support investment in this kind of campaign, and it would be a good use of funds.

To Do

All - read Ben's proposal and FCI's Campaign workbook by next meeting

All - Be ready to vote on paying back YR 4 loans in July

Beth & Lane - Work on financials and proforma

Adjourn 6:40 - Mark motions, Elly adjourns.