

**Middlebury Natural Foods Cooperative
Board of Directors Meeting
April 15, 2009
Approved 5/27/09**

Board members present: Leslie Blow, Kristin Bolton, Ilaria Brancoli Busdraghi, Kate Gridley, Barry King, Jay Leshinsky, Ashar Nelson (presiding), Johanna Nichols, Kira Winslow

Board members absent: Ross Conrad, Michelle McCauley

Regular attendees: Susan DeWind (staff liaison), Robert Keren (recorder of minutes), Glenn Lower (general manager)

Others present: Mike Davis, Francisca Drexel, Bay Hammond, James Maroney, Paul Martin, Gregory O'Brien, Walter O'Donoghue, Suzanne Young

Board monitor: Kristin

Meeting held at: Ilsley Library

Call to order: Ashar called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Approval of the minutes of the meeting on March 25, 2009

The minutes were approved as amended. The vote was 8-0 on a motion made by Kristin and seconded by Jay. Johanna, who was not at the March 25 meeting, abstained.

General manager's report

Glenn explained that he will budget for a 3% sales growth during the next fiscal year. Glenn discussed with the board the business plan for 2009-2010, including how the Co-op is meeting its ends, an emergency succession plan for managers, and the Co-op's "price image." Glenn also discussed a proposal that would extend a 10% discount to shoppers on WIC or EBT (food stamps). More extensive labeling in the store of the place of origin of foods was also discussed.

Glenn explained the board's role at the Annual Meeting on May 30. Ways to engage attendees at the gathering on the concept of "local foods" were discussed. Karin Mott is coordinating the event. At the May meeting of the board, the board will finalize its staffing of the "board table" at the Annual Meeting.

Linkage Committee

Johanna reported that the committee will be revising its charter and developing a new survey of members.

Board Development Committee

Jay announced that there are seven candidates for four seats on the MNFC Board of Directors. The ballot will also contain a proposed change to the By-Laws that would empower the board to cast the deciding vote in the event that a tie occurs in the election of a new board member. Jay asked each board member to remind 10 people to vote in the election. He also spoke about CBLD's webinars. The next CBLD-conducted board member training session will be held in January 2010.

At this point Leslie, the board treasurer, announced her intention to step down from the board due to time constraints. Since her decision came after the nomination period for new or incumbent board members, the board will designate a replacement for Leslie who will serve until the next regular election.

Executive Committee

Ashar announced that the committee will send out drafts of new governance process policies and executive limitations for the next meeting. He also asked returning members of the board to "be thinking about" what committees they would like to serve on in 2009-2010.

Board Education

This portion of the meeting began with a discussion about the board's objective in conducting wide-ranging "board education" discussions. Ashar said the board is in "collection mode" at the present time, collecting information on the local food system. Later, Ashar said, the board will examine carbon reduction.

Comments included:

- the MNFC could interlace its marketing with the Middlebury Farmer's Market and the Winter Market,
- Addison County Field Days presents a large, untapped market of people who could become part of the local foods movement,
- the Co-op should lead the way to showing residents how to shop and cook using local foods, especially those that can be bought in bulk,
- Local is not always the answer for all foods; for example, a refrigerated trainload of apples might use less carbon per bushel of apples to get here vs. a local farmer with a refrigeration unit,
- Savings could be realized if the area's two competing apple growers shared distribution systems,
- There are people in the region who just won't shop at the Co-op; we should figure out how to bring them into the store,
- Co-op shoppers and Field Days attendees are, generally, representative of different cultures, and yet bridging that gap will be essential to strengthen the local food system, and
- Educating children how to cook using raw ingredients will be key to developing a stronger local food system.

Tasks/set agenda for May 27 meeting

1. Representative from Rutland Area Food and Farm Link

2. Executive committee policies
3. Board Development – report on election
4. Linkage Committee
5. Annual Meeting

Adjournment

On a motion by Barry seconded by Ilaria, the board voted 7-0 to adjourn. Two members, Leslie and Kate, left prior to adjournment.