

RIVERWEST COOPERATIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 01.24.22 6:00pm – IN PERSON

Board Members in Attendance: Debbie, Taylor, Carolyn, Wendy, Karen

Others in Attendance: Nick, Shannon, Allux, Jen, Wes

Note Taker: Carolyn

Facilitator: Debbie

Time Keeper: Nick

Minutes

- *Settle In + Check Ins + Pronouns + Firestarter (10 minutes)*
- *Review Facilitation Style + Hand Signals (5 minutes)*
- *Check In On Communication (10 minutes)*
  - *Update on Communications Policy*
  - *When should the board be notified before Facebook posts or other public statements are made?*
  - *Notes:*
    - When are the deadlines? Putting them on the spreadsheet and put on the google calendar and giving them notifications for the coordinators
    - Debbie is working on the communication policy updates by the next board meeting. When should the post be put before the board before it's posted and let the board know. When should it be approved and when is it just a notification to the board what is being communicated. Jen asks for a list of topics could be communicated to the staff on what to post.
    - Talk about communication process and role of comm committee and new admin position in creating
    - Start the admin@ email to start implanting reminders sooner with the coordinators & deadlines to start the calendar. Most likely this will fall under the new admin position
- *On-Going Equity & Inclusivity Work (15 minutes)*
  - *Check in on timeline for Ubuntu work*
    - *Need new Board approval for fiscal sponsorship and for Wendy & Debbie to move forward seeking funds?*
    - *Notes:*
      - ❖ Carolyn approved via email to Debbie. Waiting on Taylor to approve.
  - *Racial Equity Implementation Guide (REIG) for Food Hubs*
    - *Discuss 3 questions from the section: **Products & Services***
      - ❖ *Does your hub offer food products and services that reflect the cultural tastes of local communities?*
      - ❖ *Notes:*
        - We do- Debbie points out however space is limited and the sqft to be able to carry limits what we can carry
        - Nick is phasing out products like GF products not selling and replace them with Masa and see how those sell to bring in a variety of products
        - Karen- small space but also need to reach out to the communities to let them know what we have and need to market that we carry their products and not be seen as a "white" store
        - Wendy- have to consider socioeconomic with products and price points vs local corner stores such as Clarke Foods may be a

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factor to consider

- ❖ *Is your hub doing enough to ensure sourcing of products from suppliers of color?*
  - ❖ Notes:
    - ❖ Taylor- Is there a way to pick up the merchandise vs. delivered which may be a larger issue for some of the vendors we could carry.
    - ❖ Debbie- work better with farmers market down the street and the winters market is local- could get the product to the store when they are nearby may be a solution to getting more products
    - ❖ Jen- points out the co-op has several vendors from the markets bringing in products weekly currently already. Nick points out specific vendors the co-op is already working with such as El-Ray, Soul Brew Kombucha for example. The grocery store coordinators hand deliver already and have been finding a way to get them to the co-op.
    - ❖ Wendy- introducing Katie with the Fondy's farmers market to Nick & Jen
    - ❖ Debbie- keep in mind that the cafe specials and what they are offering in diverse menu items
  
  - ❖ *What can your hub do to elevate the stories behind products that reflect people of color ownership and voices?*
  - ❖ Notes:
    - ❖ Wes- Local Fridays- have promotional information listed for the store and on social media
    - ❖ Jen- has a sign made for them and have been adding to them to the store local Fridays
    - ❖ Nick- points out to make sure we represent them in their own voices and not our voice and how they want to represent themselves
    - ❖ Wendy- suggests bringing back vendors to the store to do samples and meet the vendors and giving them invites to table at the store
- *All Reports (30 minutes)*
    - *Store (8 minutes)*
    - Notes:
      - Karen is concerned about burn-out and for questions if it helps to pose them beforehand
      - Wes- suggests a short summary at the end may help with questions and says the schedule is working better into January now that folks are not out
      - Nick built the schedule around 32 hour work weeks to allow for more flexibility to take the pressure off the staff and Jen agrees that it's working better for her as well to allow for mental and physical health. They say January is much better with scheduling.
      - Tylor- asks about attendance policy and it is being implanted among the staff- nick said they have one now and it's good.
      - Debbie- Update on fire inspection. They have a month out and they can arrive any day. The last remaining code is the extension cord which is being bidded out and will be done after a bid is done.
  
    - *Café (8 minutes)*
    - Notes:
      - Shannon asks if there is anything to add to the report or different format that should happen let her know for what would like to see
      - Burnout is another issue with the cafe. Maybe another hire might help as many are very part time and not able to cover shifts if someone calls in.

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- Karen- asks if the new menu might create more burnout and be short staffed putting in the new menu. Shannon replies that she has thought about hiring but looking ahead if they need to be hired to be prepared.
- Goal is the end of the month to have the new menu
- Staff could be faster and more use of their time which may fill in the new menu
- Wes asks if a bakery shift might need to be added to Sunday nights like the past
- Allux- Preview looks exciting and will be out soon in the next few weeks and push it out with many old favorites by the end of February
  
- *Volunteer Coordinator (5 minutes)*  
Notes:
  - Wendy- no report given to the board. Wendy will be typing up and sending out
  - Volunteers- still need more
  - Going 40 hours starting this week and the email was just a notification. Including store and cafe shifts.
  - Focus is getting folks trained and in the store for volunteering
  - Wendy asks if the every other week testing requirement is still going to be required for COVID among the staff?
  - Clarification was made on Wendy's hours in the store and being part of the store staff staff for some of those hours each week
  - Nick points out that there are new volunteers that are in the cafe and store that have been a noticeable impact
  - Karen asks if Wendy needs people to reach out to for committee and board members including treasurer- which Wendy said to send suggestions to her which is badly needed
  
- *Finance Committee (5 minutes)*  
Notes:
  - Lost almost \$23,000 in December in sales. Has not been any drastic change for the year. The profit looks like that due to the PPP funds. The co-op does not have those funds this year so a serious consideration needs to happen in \$450 dollars of sales per day in order to make the co-op break even this year.
  - Debbie asks for a balance sheet of 2021 comparison and an income sheet for 2021 to be sent out.
  - Karen- asks if there will be a meeting for finances- Debbie replied will be with the retreat
  - Savings account didn't have to be used much last year
  
- *Communications (2 minutes)*  
Notes:
  - Still in flex with coordinators and figuring out social media and newsletters
  - Figuring out systems and getting items off Wendy's plate
  - Could use a graphic designer and someone with marketing plans. Debbie may know someone and will connect Wendy/Karen with them.
  
- *Membership (2 minutes)*  
Notes:
  - 2 weeks allowed for processing and running into 3rd week but main issue is Katie is struggling to get in and no other volunteers so more people are needed on the committee
  - Karen is going to look at the concern forms and ask for communication to be given to customers that they are working on it. Wendy may have someone Colin who can volunteer
  
- *Break (10 minutes) (end at 7:20?)*
  
- *Schedule March Board Meeting (5 minutes)*
  - *March 21, 2022 6p to 8p at the Falcon*
  
- *Follow Up For Restructuring (10 minutes)*

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- *HR Specialist Position Is Posted!*
  - *Update on where that's at*
  - Notes:
  - 1 application to date. Shannon will repost on the local college boards. Wendy will share with the public allies board. LinkedIn posting with Shannon.
  - Debbie asks what support is needed. Questions still need to be prepared.
  
- *Administrative Coordinator Position Is Posted!*
  - *Update on where that's at*
  - Notes:
  - Carolyn asks not to be the point person at this time and if someone else can be the point person in creating the positions.
  - Carolyn volunteers can help post to places
  - Looking for volunteer/assistance outside the board to help with the hiring process
  - No applications to date
  
- *Workers Collective Roles & Definitions*
  - Notes
  - Wendy summed up that the older staff isn't as connected and cafe staff is not as present at the meetings currently. Wes agrees would like to see more connections and be part of the larger workers collective. Who are the decision makers and what are the roles of the coordinators and their decisions and how those are brought to the workers collective weekly meetings.
  - Moving forward having it be a requirement for the new structure moving forward as part of the hiring process and hiring people who want to be part of the process
  - Debbie would like more ideas from the coordinators and what to do by the next meeting
  
- *Wage Structure*
  - Notes:
  - Hazard pay needs to reviewed
  - Health Insurance take a look at it- Debbie has some resources and no discussion moving forward
  - Debbie brings up that the the wage discussion should happen with the coordinators and looking at the numbers and going back to the board to restructure the wage structure
  
- Follow Up on Action Items (15 minutes)
  - Important things to plan soon!
    - **Letter from board to membership (January)**
      - ❖ Current state of affairs
      - ❖ How to support the Co-Op
      - ❖ Call for Board Candidates
    - Notes:
      - ❖ Debbie is actively working on this
    - **Schedule and Plan a Board Retreat**
      - ❖ **Notes: Still needs to be scheduled**
    - **Set Up Columinate Meeting Including Board Members**

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- ❖ What do we think would be the best use of our 3 or so hours???
- **Board role in staff and coordinator on-boarding - Debbie is working on these items**
  - ❖ Debbie is supposed to draft talking points including:
    - State of the Co-Op
    - Role of Board /Coordinators/Staff
    - How to communicate with the board
  - ❖ All new staff meets with a board member within first 2-3 weeks
  - ❖ What is the process for assigning a board member to the new staff member
  - ❖ Training new coordinators right now – make sure there is support
- Structure for volunteer liaisons
- Community Contacts List (Wendy, Debbie)
- Retreat Garden Plot Items

Next meeting: February 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00pm

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