

Onion River Co-op/City Market

Board of Directors Meeting

Remote Zoom Conference*

April 18, 2022

Board Attendance:

Kristina Sweet (she/her), Board Member, President

Joanna Grossman (she/her), Board Member, Vice President

Jody Landon (she/her), Board Member, Treasurer

Meaghan Diffenderfer (she/her), Board Member, Secretary

Eric Boehm (he/him), Board Member

Rubin Jennings (he/him), Board Member

Myle Truong (she/her), Board Member

Absent:

John Davidowitz (he/him), Board Member

Allison Fiore (she/her), Board Member

Also in attendance:

Michael Healy (he/him), Member, Board Meeting Facilitator

John Tashiro (he/him), General Manager

Patrick Tracy (he/him), Membership Manager

Madelyn Cataford, Director of Finance & IT

Mae Quilty (she/her), Assistant Director of Community Engagement

Kyle Lavery (he/him), Assistant Director of Operations - Downtown

Claire Ross (she/her), Assistant Director of Operations - Purchasing

Serrill Flash, Member

A quorum was established, and the meeting started at 6:02 PM.

Preliminaries

Review Agenda

Agenda was reviewed, the agenda was approved as written.

Review Minutes

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes from March 28th, 2022 meeting, and the meeting minutes were accepted as written with six supporting votes, no abstentions, and no dissenting votes.

Review Action Items

The Board reviewed the Action Item list. Four items were removed and one item was pushed to the May Board meeting.

Open Member Time

Serrill offered appreciation to the Board and all City Market employees for all the work they do.

Board Perpetuation Committee Update

Meaghan provided an update on the Perpetuation Committee. She discussed how Jody reached out to Committee members with charter language and the history of the creation of the Perpetuation Committee.

Community Service Award Committee Update

Myle met with Mae, John D.. and Kristina to review logistics of the award. They discussed ideas and possible changes that they would like to see in the award as well as mapping out the next course of action. The plan being to meet in person to solidify the plan for the award in May and present their findings at the May Board meeting.

Rubin joined the meeting during the start of the GM update at 6:12pm.

GM Reporting

Monthly GM Update

John T. mentioned the challenges of sales against budget for fiscal year '22, with on-going challenges with staffing and some product availability being two factors among others. John T. highlighted work on training and retention efforts of current staff including the extension of the appreciation bonus agreed upon with the Union. Kyle provided further details on these topics for the Downtown store, stating that signs in both these areas leaned towards the positive relative to previous months. Kyle mentioned issues with pricing and availability and how the Purchasing Team was working to provide a wider range of products to shoppers to increase positive customer experiences.

Jody asked about the state of the roads on Briggs Street and a dip on the Flynn Ave entrance at the South End store. John T. acknowledged the challenges of the roads, mentioning that Briggs Street improvements were tied to the Champlain Causeway project managed by the City. John T. provided an update on the City's Champlain Causeway project and its estimated completion date of 2024. John T. further stated that in the meantime, the City is trying to flatten Briggs Street and that both he and Brent were in communication with Burlington Public Works regarding the state of the roads in question. John T. and the City were looking to meet in June for an update on the Champlain Causeway project start time.

Myle inquired about the increase in theft and petty crime in the Downtown store and if an increase or decline could be seen. Kyle mentioned there were periodic times of an increase in these actions but overall, the challenges were not too different from what staff were used to.

Rubin asked if there were any departments and/or items being directly targeted in the thefts and, if so, how it was being addressed. Kyle stated that a wide variety of items are taken, although they tend to gravitate towards alcohol and higher end items. Kyle also mentioned that other items outside of those two areas being targeted was not unheard of.

Meaghan asked if the permit at the Downtown store was for the peri cooler project. Kyle confirmed that it is indeed for the work on the peri cooler.

Eric asked about YTD revenue being behind the FY '22 budget and how it impacts the bottom line. Madelyn mentioned the current financial forecast projected the Co-op's revenue would run a deficit of \$1.6 million against FY '22 budget. Madelyn added that with excess funds from unfilled positions that losses would instead end closer to \$600-\$700 thousand dollars for the fiscal year.

Jody noted that the percentage of average daily sales in the South End decreased from last year. Madelyn mentioned that the revenue in the South End had flattened partially due to a lowering in traffic and that the initial increase in sales from last year may have been a factor of Downtown customers moving to the South End during the pandemic. Madelyn mentioned that she would have more details on these revenue projections in the financial forecast presented at the Board meeting in May.

Kristina announced her appreciation for the new website. John T. seconded the work done by Community Engagement and the IT Teams citing improved usability and accessibility.

John T. noted the increased environmental work at the Co-op. Regarding COVID, John T. mentioned improved air quality in the store with the updated ventilation system from Mirv 8 to Mirv 13. This translates into air being brought in from the outside to clean the air in the store once every 30 minutes on the floor and once every 15 minutes in the mezzanine area.

John T. mentioned Earth Day is on April 22nd and that the Co-op would be giving out of 18,000 City Market Earth Week bags.

Board Training and Education Updates, Report Out from Events

Kristina mentioned she would be attending the Columinate "Understanding the Updated CBLD Template policies" webinar in the coming week. Kristina opened the floor to the Board to share any past or future training events.

John T. mentioned he will be attending a meeting with "Designated Representatives", or General Managers, through NCG in person in San Diego. Topics to be discussed would range from sales, general staffing levels, COVID, future planning and JEDI work. John T. mentioned he would also be meeting with regional GM's directly two hours prior to each day's events. John T. noted he is looking forward to getting opportunities to connect with some new regional GM's.

May ORC Board-Management Spring Retreat Agenda

Kristina asked if anyone had questions about the Spring Retreat Agenda or the event itself. Michael stated he would send the Board materials to prepare the Board for the retreat.

Meaghan asked how the Board could incorporate JEDI work into future Board retreats.

Joanna questioned why the retreat and Board meetings were held on ZOOM and not in person. Kristina mentioned that with uncertainty around COVID, and that planning started months in advance, that the decision was made to hold the Spring Retreat virtually. Joanna proposed moving into a hybrid environment for future meetings.

Eric agreed with Joanna and proposed that the summer may be the time to explore a hybrid option, citing lower case numbers while addressing personal comfort levels. Jody offered her support in exploring a hybrid option.

Rubin thanked Joanna for bringing up the idea of exploring a hybrid option.

Board Self-Monitoring

D8: Cost of Governance

Jody presented the D8: Cost of Governance to the Board, shared personal observations, asked clarifying questions.

Jody mentioned how the Perpetuation Committee may present new learning opportunities for the Board.

Jody asked about the upcoming Board budget. John T. mentioned that in May, he shares a draft Board budget based on historical data for various Board events.

Jody found the Board in compliance with the policy.

~ Half-time Stretch ~

Board Strategic Priority Areas

Michael broke out the Board into three teams to review the Board Strategic Priority Areas list.

Michael asked for each group to share their findings.

Kristina shared she was impressed by the progress on the Board Perpetuation Committee as an accomplishment. Kristina mentioned wanting to incorporate more JEDI training into Board work. Eric shared a desire to improve focus on ways to move to a hybrid format to promote increased Board and Member engagement.

Joanna shared the Boards continued support of the Co-op during COVID as an accomplishment. Joanna's group wanted to improve Board engagement in clarifying the Board's role in order to better facilitate onboarding efforts for new Board Members. Joanna echoed Eric's comment about incorporating more JEDI work.

Myle reiterated Joanna's comment about Board support during COVID and added the diversity efforts within the Board as an accomplishment. Myle mentioned a desire to prioritize and maintain a proactive approach in supporting staff as well as prioritizing the Community Award work moving forward.

Kristina would work together with Rubin to gather a list of all the priorities mentioned. The goal being to include the list of priorities into the Board Workplan starting in the next fiscal year in July.

Kristina asked for clarification from other Board members regarding defining “improving board engagement”. Joanna added that this would include increased efforts of current Board members helping new Board members feel confident and knowledgeable in what their roles are and what the Board does. Kristina mentioned capturing Joanna’s comments in the Boards Workplan and focusing on onboarding. Madelyn shared how Rubin found the Columinate trainings and CBLD were helpful to him in understanding what the role of the Board was.

Open Board Time

Joanna mentioned her role on Chris Winters campaign. Joanna also mentioned that although there was a Matzah shortage, due to the war in Ukraine, how she appreciated the Co-op having Matzah.

Kristina mentioned she was hiring at the Vermont Agency of Agriculture and asked for Board members to send interested applicants her way.

Future Planning

Open Member Time Follow-up

Kristina thanked Serrill for joining.

Review Calendar

The Board reviewed the Board Calendar. It was accepted as written.

June Spring Splendor Social

John T. shared the date of the Spring Splendor was June 15th at Oakledge Park at the “Higher Pavilion”. Start time is 5:30pm. John T. will organize food and Board members will pick up the food. Meals and fun will be provided.

Wrap Up

Action Items

Kristina presented 1 additional Action Item captured during the meeting. 1 Action Item was carried over from the May Meeting (cited below).

Meeting Evaluation

The Board shared their fondness of the breakout rooms in ZOOM and how they improved engagement between Board members.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 PM.

Action Items

April 2022

Rubin & Kristina gather notes on Board Strategic Priority areas for fiscal year '23 in July.

Rubin & Kristina will add “revisiting an RFP for the Co-op’s auditing firm for FY23 audit” to the workplan.