

Wild Oats Cooperative Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes -- Zoom video-conference
Thursday, March 23, 2023: 7:00- 9:00 PM

Board Members Present: Bob Allard, Jose Constantine, Tom Cragg, Marc Freedman, Michelle Juneau, Peter Siegenthaler, Jeff Strait, and Lee Venolia. Sarah Jacobson was absent but provided comments for use during the discussion.

Managers: Netse Lytle

Meeting convened at 7:00 PM

Member-Owner Comments

- Member-owner Maryam Kamangar attended the meeting as an observer

Board and Meeting Logistics

- The Meeting Agenda and Board calendar were reviewed.
- Bob Allard moved and Jeff Strait seconded a motion to accept the February 2023 Board minutes, as modified in the meeting. Motion passed with six in favor and two abstaining.

Discussion of Management Report L1 – Treatment of Customers

- The L1 report summarizes the store’s compliance with policies related to treatment of customers. Its main data source is a summary of a recent customer survey conducted in early 2023. Surveys were completed by 160 customers versus 300+ for the previous survey.
- Lee Venolia pointed out that she assumes the smaller number of individuals who responded to the survey this year are strong store supporters and therefore the “net promoter score” from the two surveys (this year versus last) may not be comparable.
- The Board discussed the definition of “membership” and decided that “member” equals “family” in some cases and individuals in other.
- The fewer survey responders may be due to less social media exposure or “survey fatigue.”
- Michelle Juneau asked how customers provide comments to the store. Netse Lytle listed the ways that customers can provide feedback. In the past year, the store received 296 mostly positive comments. Netse noted that the survey score for responsiveness to customer feedback had dropped and he was working with the staff to research and address this. Netse also explained the process followed by the store to respond to customer feedback. Some changes may be needed.
- Marc Freedman suggested that a wider survey of the community would be valuable to see why people chose to shop at Wild Oats or chose not to shop there. The Chamber of Commerce may be of help with such a survey.
- Lee Venolia move and Peter Siegenthaler seconded a motion to accept the L1 report. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Committee Reports

- Member Linkage Committee – a short discussion was held to discuss the role of the committee

DRAFT

- ARDEI Committee – Peter Siegenthaler and Tom Cragg reported on the March 1, 2023 “food and culture” event held at the store. Unfortunately, attendance was low.
- Finance Committee – Jeff Strait noted that the store has invested some of its cash in U.S. treasury bills. Its remaining cash is covered by FDIC and additional insurance provided by the store’s bank (Mountain One).

Preliminary Three Year Business Plan Discussion

- Netse Lytle walked the Board through a discussion of his preliminary Three Year Business Plan.
- Netse discussed his thinking on: competition, product pricing and margins, sales projections, net income projections, social media plans, introduction of on-line shopping, capital expenses (including the “point of sale” system), personnel, re-introduction of the hot bar, pay increases (as required by the union contract), store renovations
- Netse reviewed details for online shopping through “door dash” and “Mercado.”
- Marc Freedman asked Netse about the store’s ability to conduct product profitability analyses to determine the profitability of the store’s space
- Netse Lytle noted his goal is to “break ground” on a store renovation program in 2 to 3 years. Renovation probably will not increase sales space much. The plan is to change back room operations (e.g., bringing the kitchen upstairs) to improve operational efficiency
- A recent discussion with NCG indicated that it was looking to introduce a common point of sale system to make its interface with co-ops more efficient

Board Retreat Logistics

- The Board discussed logistics and the agenda topics for the April 22 Board retreat

General Manager Comments

- Netse Lytle discussed a variety of plans to increase sales at the store

The Board moved into Executive Session at approximately 8:15 pm to discuss General Manager performance. The Executive Session ended at approximately 8:30 p.m.

MEETING CLOSING

- The next Board meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2023
- The meeting ended at approximately 8:35 pm

Minutes Prepared by: Tom Cragg