

## Riverwest Cooperative Board of Directors meeting (12/16/2024)

*\*Please contact [board@riverwestcoop.org](mailto:board@riverwestcoop.org) for more information*

*\*\*Please inform BOD if you plan to join via Zoom*

**Board Members in Attendance:** Amy, Flan, Marty, Ned, Wendy, Willy

**Others in Attendance:** Emil, Jen, Juniper, Shae, Shannon, Wes

**Note Taker:** Ned

**Facilitator:** Ned

**Timekeeper:** Ned

**Zoom Link:** [here](#)

1. **President:** Introductions, firestarter, check-in, and communication style (6:00 - 6:10 PM).
2. **Ned:** Check-in on Leadership Retreat [action items](#) (6:10 - 6:15 PM).
  - a. Post-Retreat survey results are available [here](#).
3. **Coordinators:** Presentation of November reports (6:15 - 6:40 PM).
  - a. **Café Coordinator:** Update on timing of, and resources necessary for, reopening.
    - i. Decreased sales relative to prior months (maybe as expected because café sales tend to be lower when the weather is colder), with increased sales of coffee and tea, and bakery items perhaps due to Daily Bird's temporary closure.
    - ii. New Café Coordinator, Jen, has started in December with three shifts.
    - iii. Depending on Jen's onboarding, the goal is to reopen the café in mid-January with expanded hours.
    - iv. Café Coordinators will go to Worker's Collective, then BOD, with information about the café reopening for the sake of marketing.
    - v. Café needs quotes for a new freezer because the current one has stopped working.
      1. Perhaps Café should purchase the new produce coolers at the same time, given that installation of either will require closing the RWC for the day and Café might be able to secure discounts with a bundled purchase.
    - vi. Wendy has been in touch with Nola Cross, our pro-bono lawyer, about faulty equipment that we purchased from this one vendor who ripped us off. The vendor received our certificated letter on 12/14/2024, asking for intention to resolve the issue in writing within three days of receipt (without legal binding). If not, Nola will take it to the next level and let us know if she needs to charge us for her time.
  - b. **Grocery Coordinators:** Update on efforts with respect to pricing, ordering, etc.
    - i. Sales decreased relative to prior months, although baskets size increased.
    - ii. Success with MangoMan salsa in-store, which the Coordinators have invited to return in January even though they could have promoted the event more.
    - iii. In terms of pricing, most products have increased recently by approximately \$0.20 without customer complaints or major sales drops.
      1. Coordinators based the price increases on margin considerations, as well as comparison with Outpost.

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2. Price increases are proceeding by department (e.g., dairy items, drink cooler items, produce, chips, etc.)
3. Coordinators are addressing margin increases based on Columinate's recommendations.
- iv. Coordinators and Communications Committee will collaborate on promoting events and prices, especially those where we are more affordable than our competitors, and especially if Coordinators can participate more in the Communications Committee.
- v. Three coolers are out of service because of a leak related to compression, so the Coordinators are trying to identify alternative coolers in dialogue with a technician and a vendor.

### ***c. Volunteer Coordinator report***

- i. Need volunteers in café on regular basis, including inventory on 12/30 and 12/31, etc, with café inventory on 01/02.

## **4. *Committee chairs:* Presentation of November reports (6:40 - 6:50 PM).**

### ***a. Communications Committee***

- i. Posts and stories, as well as reaches and visits, increased in November on multiple social media platforms.
- ii. Wendy is working on several letters to members, including a BOD letter, information about holiday activities and products, and information about new menu (partially, until the café fully reopens).
- iii. Received quote from OnMilwaukee, which is excited to be our advertising platform again.
- iv. Increasing presence within, and exploring partnerships with, other local businesses.

### ***b. Membership Committee:***

- i. Learning technology with respect to queries and in-person new member additions

## **5. *Finance Committee:* Discussion of November accountant reports (6:50 - 7:15 PM).**

- a. Accounting data for November is not final yet, but Committee will clean and will meet in New Year before circulating final numbers.
- b. According to the uncleaned accounting data, RWC lost another \$10,000 approximately in November 2024.
- c. Committee is working with Coordinators on crafting a 2025 budget.

## **6. *Finance Committee:* Follow-up on next steps from October BOD meeting discussion of proforma [stratplan](#) (7:15 - 7:30 PM).**

- a. Ned to summarize proforma decisions and update decision log based on Amy's 11/2024 meeting notes.

## **7. *HR Specialist / Committee:* Discussion of employee performance review proposal, potentially followed by a BOD decision (7:30 - 7:40 PM).**

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- a. HR Specialist summarized the proposal. Admin Coordinator reiterated that eliminating one Coordinator position is necessary, whether or not BOD approves the proposal.
  - b. Challenge with the HR Specialist proposal is that it hinges on eliminating a Coordinator position, which the BOD is not ready to decide on today.
    - i. Regarding elimination of a Coordinator position, BOD discussed either: a) making one of the Coordinator positions part-time; or b) eliminating Administrative Coordinator position and incorporating those responsibilities into Grocery Coordinator position, which already has many administrative responsibilities), recognizing the challenges with dividing functions between multiple staff members.
      1. Giving administrative duties to a Grocery Coordinator will require a raise, given the increase in responsibility, yet asking the Grocery Coordinators to absorb administrative responsibilities might make for a steep learning curve and be impractical.
  - c. The model used to be fewer staff members and more volunteers, reiterating that someone needs to be cut.
  - d. In regard to the deadline for needing to cut a coordinator, ... coordinators need enough warning as possible about possible cuts.
  - e. RWC could base cutting a position on the performance reviews but maybe should decide what to do before analyzing the reviews.
  - f. Moving a coordinator to half time is insufficient for labor reduction purposes and might require cutting store staff to achieve cost-saving goals.
  - g. Even if we cut a coordinator position, we could need to close if we do not improve our sales dramatically.
  - h. Regarding next steps, if the Finance Committee can share details on labor and budget by January 9, BOD can have a specific labor and budget meeting.
  - i. Finance Committee already has spreadsheets to share in relation to proposal.
8. Final decision is that the BOD approves of the plan aside from the component of eliminating Coordinator positions. BOD instructs the HR Specialist to begin the performance review process.
  9. HR Specialist also working to bring proposals regarding staff attendance and store security policies to the BOD.

- a. Next BOD meetings: Monday, January 27, 6:00 PM; February 17.
- b. BOD-only Zoom meeting on budget and labor, January 13, 6-8 PM, Zoom;
- c. Finance Committee meeting.

10. **President:** Check-in on transition planning, potentially followed by a BOD decision on the next president (7:40 - 8:00 PM).
  - a. BOD decided that Flan will be new President. Flan intends to be on site at least one hour five days per week.

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- b. Ned and Flan to meet on transition planning.
- c. Ned to connect Debbie and Flan, too.