**Rutland Area Food Co-op Board Meeting**

**Thursday July 28, 2016**

**Present:**

Board: Chris Littler, Seth Carvill, Rhonda Bates, Irene Gold, Diana Hayes, David Tibbs, Hannah Abrams, Matt Polli, Matt Karczmarzyck

**Absent Board**: Lauren Daubenspeck, Phoebe Flemming, Regina Alexander

**Staff**: Zach Stevens and Julie Zaloudek

**Members**: Kris Harmelink

**Guest**: Mike Kalil

Meeting was called to order at 6:38pm by David Tibbs

Hannah Abrams introduced her friend Mike Kalil who is originally from Syria and has lived in the US for 30+ years and is a Rutland resident. He was invited to present about the food and other needs the 100 refugees coming to Rutland in October will need. His wife Laila, who is also from Syria, spent a lot of time creating and translating the below list for us

**Laila & Mike Kalil’s Syrian Food List**

**Grains**

1. Burgoul (cracked wheat - all sizes)
2. White rice
3. Red lentil
4. Brown lentil
5. Semolina
6. Pita bread
7. Vermicelli noodles
8. Fava beans

**Meat**

1. Halal meat (chicken, beef, and lamb)

**Spices**

1. Coriander
2. Dried mint
3. Paprika
4. Cumin

**Specialty Pantry Items**

1. Zaatar
2. Dried Mulokhia
3. Grape leaves
4. Sumac
5. Tahini
6. Halava
7. Black tea
8. Arabic Coffee (fine-ground coffee)
9. Rose water
10. Corn starch
11. Pomegranate molasses

Meat must be Halal for observant Muslims. Simply put it needs to be slaughtered in a certain way and the blood drained in a certain way. Similar in concept to Kosher. Queensbury has Halal meat and everything from Australia according to Mike is Halal.

Zatar is a spice blend that is served with pita bread, olive oil, cheese, olives and tea commonly during the breakfast meal. Sumac is an item that can be bought at the Coop. Tahini, chickpeas and falafel are all very important staples Mike says. Mike has looked for dried sweet mint in the coop and hasn’t found it yet. Irene Gold asked about couscous and Mike says that is used in Morocco and N. Africa not Syria. Lentils are very common.

Irene Gold asked: “What is the biggest challenge we can help with as a collaborative market”. Mike responded that they will be appreciate us and other people helping them. He told us a story about the first American who helped him when he arrived at 18 years old in 1981. He reminded us they are human beings. They are people who are running away from DEATH. They have lost EVERYTHNG. They have been thru the wringer. Mike hopes to meet with the refugees daily once they arrive to help them with what to do or not to do (like public smoking). Helping is what America is about states Mike. Dave Tibbs stated that we can’t judge and entire people by the actions of a few. Mike informed us that they are an

educated, open minded people who lived liberated lives. Mike knows of no other Syrians in Rutland County.

**Review of last month’s minutes:**

* Several corrections need to be made to names. Hannah Abrams & Zach Stevens notated the changes and Hannah will update and distribute them when done.
* Barbara is resigning as Board Recorder after the August Board meeting. There was discussion about the need for a board recorder with discussion planned for executive session immediately following the meeting.

**Chris Littler presented for the Finance Committee:**

* Depreciation is going on now monthly at $733
* Bills are being paid on time
* Bank services charges are now $0, Yay!
* We are trending up and creeping towards a profit
* We NEED to close this year with a profit.
* This new monthly depreciation will spread things out with a depreciation schedule. Full depreciation and inventory.
* COGS were way up in April.
* With NCG we must do a quarterly inventory
* Co-op closed with a loss of $480 in June. This is up from a loss of $13,099 in 2015
* Sales were up 3.5%
* It is important to note that Zack is calculating depreciation into the P & L reports monthly instead of in one lump sum at the end of the year. This added another $733 in expense that did not exist last year.
* No bank charges yet this year! The Co-op had $200 dollars in service charges for bounced checks in Q1 last year.
* Payroll was up in June, but that was due to an extra week of payroll. Next month should have one less than 2015.
* May numbers also saw a small dip (about $1,200.) This was due to a water bill and 2 new vendor bills. Looking to the future
* July sales are down about $1,000 compared to the same time last year.
* Putting together spreadsheet with tax overpayment info, and will then reach out to tax advocacy group.
* Produce cooler was resealed and the compressor was fixed (added expense for July.)
* Heritage cleared a check out of the wrong account again
* Have reduced the hours for the outside IT rep. This should help save some money.
* The cooler manager and produce manager are both no longer with the Co-op. This will lead to increased payroll while paying for training of new staff members.
* The stove was fixed with a part that was donated to the Co-op, so there was no cost!
* Did inventory again to gear up for the quarterly inventories that NCG will require.
* The toilet is having issues and should be replaced with a commercial toilet.

Dave moves to accept Chris’ report. Matt Polli seconds.

**Hannah Abrams reported for the 1 Page Strategic Planning Committee Report:**

* We accomplished 4 more key items in our Monday meeting and now only have our Elevator Pitch to complete. We expect to do this at our next meeting committee meeting and then present the plan in its entirety to The Board at the August meeting.

Matt Karczmarzyck moves to accept the report and Chris Littler seconds

**Rhonda Bates reports of this month’s policy report.**

* Rhonda mentored Phoebe this month. We are in compliance. Chris Littler states he had this one a few years back and that the word President is confusing and recommended back then it be changed to Facilitator. Dave Tibbs asks Hannah if it changeable. Hannah responded that it’s outside of her expertise. Dave states that it’s an AJ Ruben question and that he will contact him next week for a determination.
* Discussion was raised that the Board is not allocated money every year. Especially now. Chris Littler states he will keep a spreadsheet of money. Hannah Abrams asked about the dollar amount and told that previous amounts were fictitious. Dave Tibbs moves to accept and Matt Karczmarzyck seconds

**Zach Stevens presents the General Manager’s report:**

* Dave Tibbs asked how are sales are in seed starts and Zach Stevens states that “all of our money is in grocery, cooler, freezer and HABA (health and beauty aids).”
* Staff is excited.
* Tuesday’s staff meeting was all about going over the number of the P&L line by line.

**June Update**

Sales for June were up 3.5 % or $6,205.38.

We found a that bill that was overpaid and June, and we actually had a profit of $156.48 instead of a loss. This is great when compared to June last year with a loss of -13,107.27.

June ended our first QTR. Q1 did end with a loss of -3,332.45 This makes me sad however compared to Q1 last year being -16,156.98 it is an increase of nearly 13,000K - 79.4 %.

**July News**

We heard back from NCG, we do not qualify for membership at this time. There are a lot of things that need to be done on the online co-op portal including a HIFI report. NCG leaders were supposed to come visit and meet with us today to assist in getting everything together for the next opportunity in January, but they had to cancel and will reschedule. Zach has also reached out to Glenn Lower in Middlebury for support and will be traveling to Middlebury to get assistance.

We held our first quarterly inventory on July 8th it was a great success. This is a requirement for joining NCG. Also, adjusting quarterly instead of one large adjustment at the end of the year is better practice. The cost to us was a little over $500.

We had to let the produce manager go - it simply was not working out and she was within her probationary period. We are again hiring for a produce manager and have the job posted on Indeed, Craigslist, Facebook and on the Co-op website.

Jenna is moving and will be leaving the team after nearly 5 years of great service. We are sad to see her go but we have recruited and hired a replacement. Her name is Molly and we are very happy to have her on-board. Some of you may know her from her time working at Pure Originals on center street.

Due to the extreme heat, we have had numerous compressor breakdowns this month.

We lost power for two hours yesterday due to an old fuse in the main building breaker. This being from 11-1 on our busiest day of the week cost us around $1500.00 in sales.

Vermont Gelato, Get Cracking Kitchen, Fermented Kombucha, and Host Defense demos all went great this month with a lot of patronage.

Reduced IT hours – it was costing us $10,320.00 a year to maintain the POS system.

Sales are not great for July - down around $5,000. Extreme heat and SolarFest played a part in this.

We are hoping the sidewalk sale this weekend boosts sales for a strong end to the month.

**Looking ahead to August and beyond.**

Dave, Zach and possibly Hannah will be meeting with Mark Foley in the next two weeks to discuss the warehouse.

We will need to replace the downstairs toilet with a commercial grade unit, continues to break.

We will continue the painting and warehouse cleaning projects.

We are looking forward to updated policy and procedure manual

If any of you haven’t yet, please download the Rutland Go app and help promote it.

The member-only sales are going much better than the member coupons. A lot of members have been excited to see this immediate benefit to their membership. We will continue these specials next month.

Next week Julie and Zach will begin interviewing produce manager applicants

Very excited that many local vegetables are now becoming available.

**New Business:**

* Policy & Procedures Committee team is Regina, Laura and Irene
* They have several templates and are comparing to Middlebury’s policy. This is labor intensive to make sure it is all legally compliant.

**Review of Meeting and Agenda Setting**

* New Policy & Procedure Committee will be added as a regular agenda item.
* Hannah shared all the favorable responses her book club must the new look and feel of the Coop
* Zach shared that there will be more demos coming up.
* Next PG Policy is C2-Committee Principles – Matt K will do it
* Zach Stevens will present B1-Fiancial Conditions
* The Board determines that it is necessary to have a dedicated Board recorder

Dave Tibbs moves to close the meting/Meeting adjourned at 7:44pm

Next Board meeting is Thursday, August 25th at 6:30pm