

Rutland Area Food Coop Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Dec. 19, 2024

Location: RAFC board meeting room



Board of Directors present:

Theresa Haywood- 1st Facilitator

Jeanne Kaufman- 2nd facilitator

Kevin Gustafson-clerk (remotely)

Irene Gold

Kathleen Wanner

Gisela Keller (remotely)

Justine Ligon

Max Walker

Jennifer Sanford

Sue Priest (remotely)

Interim GM: Jameson Johnson

Board of Directors absent:

Steven Morneau- Treasurer

Facilitator Called meeting to order at 6:11pm

- Jen was elected as timekeeper

Announcements:

- Jeffrey Reel since the last BOD submitted his resignation with his final day being Dec. 13th.
- Jameson Johnson is our Interim GM.

Clerk's report:

- Theresa made 1st motion to approve Nov. minutes with Jeanne making the 2nd motion. All approved.

Treasurer's report:

Finance committee

- Nov. was a strong mo.
- Jeanne introduced a color coded method to improve understanding of the RAFC's health on a number of metrics. She will continue to update in the near future but hopes the permanent GM will take this over. All are appreciative of these efforts and agree it is helpful.
- The finance committee charter update was deferred but will be picked back up next mo.
- Jeanne made a motion to continue our current accounting firm McCormack, Guyette, and Assoc. Jen made 1st motion to approve, Kathleen made 2nd motion, and all approved.

Committees:

Education & Outreach:

- Working on a rack card explaining the benefits of membership. Will finish editing and send it to Nadeline (marketing). We hope to have pictures included of the store and some staff members.

Strategic Planning:

- Gisela and Theresa met with Lyle Jepson, ED of the Chamber and Economic Development of the Rutland Region (CEDRR) who suggested that the co-op get in touch with Ben Doyle from VT Preservation Trust since he is interested in supporting businesses in historic VT downtowns. Lyle also mentioned upcoming changes in the downtown which may benefit the co-op and he suggested only considering moving if we have a real value in doing so since our location is currently well known to our customer base. He mentioned that modernizing with wider aisles and entrance would be pleasing to customers. Lastly, he mentioned that healthy take out food would likely be of benefit to the downtown and suggested consideration of subletting the operation to someone else as one option.

Membership outreach:

- Working on generating a sense of community and also getting out in community by preparing a monthly meal at Dismas house under a program titled: Nourishing Neighbors. Board feels the potential is there for engagement both of the co-op community and for residents.

Policy governance:

Board Process:

D4: Jeanne presented her review of the policy: GM Monitoring. It was agreed the BOD has been in compliance with the policy, although could have requested more data to support evaluation of GM reports to be in compliance.

Executive Limitations:

B5 – Treatment of Consumers was reviewed by the BOD given that no report was generated on the policy this mo. It was surmised that the RAFC was grossly in compliance with the policy. Jameson mentioned he has replied to several customer emails requesting particular products.

IGM Updates:

Jameson updated the board on his 1st week as interim GM.

- He feels things are going well with appropriate staffing; he is working closely with the dept. Managers and with our bookkeeper Marsha. He feels that a store of our size doesn't merit an assistant manager role. He has implemented some changes such as scheduling to support sales.
- An email went out to membership today notifying of the GM change; no direct responses were received related to that message.
- He has talked with staff about positive changes in the store and is getting an estimate for a bar in the front window to optimize customer seating. They also plan to move the grab-n-go coolers together to free up the space in front of the community (bulletin) board.
- He can offer to serve as the IGM for a minimum of 8 weeks, but potentially up to 4 mo. as his family awaits the sale of their house.
- It may not be as important to have Jameson on the bank acct. as IGM (Tres & Gerri are authorized), but will be important to have Jeffrey removed. **Will request Gerri assist with process at HFCU.** He is not yet an authorized user on Quickbooks; TBD whether that is necessary as he requests needed reports/info from Marsha.
- It was suggested that before Jameson leaves his IGM position, it would be beneficial if he generates 5-10 recommendations of suggested improvements for the RAFC.
- Directors want to know how to best support staff. Discussed that often it is recommended to hire outside (Columinate) HR who have expertise in generating anonymous feedback. Exit interviews are also a possibility. We can look to Staff Treatment policy and make recommendations at any time. Reviewed policy for grievances to go 1st to GM, then to BOD if unresolved. **Will update contact info for staff.**

Old Business:

- Year end appreciation gift to staff was generated through donations from the BOD, with \$136 contributed from the RAFC's "board budget".

New Business: n/a

Review of upcoming committees and meetings:

- Membership outreach (2nd Tues., 6pm, RAFC): Jan. 14th
- Strategic Plan/ Lease (2nd Wed., 12:15pm, virtual): Jan. 8th
- Columinate consultant meeting (2nd Thurs, 10am, virtual): Jan. 9th
- Finance (3rd Wed., 6pm, virtual): Jan. 15th
- Education (3rd Thurs, 2pm, RAFC): Dec. 16th

Next BOD meeting (4th Thurs., 6pm, RAFC): Jan. 23rd

PG assignment:

Will review B5 & B7 @ f/u but not assign to IGM

Board: C- Jen

Future agenda items:

- Ends work to pick up in Jan.

Adjourned at 7:34pm

Exec. Session, planned:

- GM search developments