

**Finland Cooperative Board Meeting November 18, 2021. Hybrid In-person and Zoom meeting.**

**Present: Andy Gomez, Sue Rian, Honor Schauland, Patti Paulson, Teresa Anderson, Katee Ristuccia, Manager Karl Klinker**

**Absent: Bev Nowacki**

Meeting called to order at 6:01 pm by Board President Andy Gomez. Welcome new board member Katee Ristuccia

October 14th, 2021 meeting minutes - Minor correction. Motion to approve with correction by Sue, seconded by Teresa, all in favor, motion passes.

Treasurer's report - Bev sent an update on the board account with her resignation. \$180.66. Question about the scholarship fund. Sue motions to accept treasurer's report. Patti seconds. All in favor. Motion passes.

Bev has resigned from the board but will help transfer to a new treasurer.

Andy asks for someone willing to be the new treasurer. Questions about what the duties entail. Position requires dealing with the Credit Union for the board account, paying out scholarships, and being a check signed for the store in case of an emergency. Patti volunteers. Sue makes a motion to accept Patti as Treasurer, Sue seconds, all in favor, motion passes. Patti will check in with Bev about transfer of duties.

Shareholder comments - none at this time.

Shares to approve - There are shares at the store for Honor and Andy to sign on Monday.

Manager's report - End of deer season, things have slowed down considerably. Waiting for snow. Usually quiet until holidays. Financial report shows us down about \$42,000 but also reflects bills being paid up. Inventory is high - shelves are stocked to be ready for when things are busier. Did get ahold of Carrie B at the Credit Union about the line of credit. Nearly Thanksgiving. Board members do get a free turkey if you want one - stop in and pick it up at any time. Will be doing a weekly turkey raffle through the holiday season. Member Tuesday again - 5% off of purchase minus tobacco or gasoline. Wondering about having the Co-op Christmas party? Karl describes for new board members - potluck, co-op usually provides smoked turkey door prizes, santa claus. Patti suggests since numbers are up for COVID probably not a good idea, would like to recognize employees for their work on the front lines. We do usually have a separate party just for the employees where the board and staff go out together for dinner. Katee recognizes that folks are often lonely during the holidays. Andy is in favor of doing it for the community. Teresa wonders about middle ground. Patti suggests something that would encourage people to be at the store - customer appreciation event - gift for purchases? Karl suggests Santa at the store and small gift bags for the kids. Talk about who could play Santa. Karl will talk to potential Santas. Maybe hot cider and cookies? Maybe outdoors. Patti suggests board members help set up and run the event. She can help take photos. Tuesday December 21st - all day long, but Santa has exclusive hours? 2 hours? Holiday Cheer at the Co-op.

Advertising in the paper, on Facebook, posted on the door at the store.

Karl will plan the employee party in January and let the board know.

Signers we would like on the line of credit for the store: Manager Karl Klinker, Assistant Manager Jonathan Beauchane, Board President Andres Gomez, and Board Treasurer Patti Paulson.

Old Business: Andy did talk to Katy Jarvis about the property across the road. She is willing to sell some land - no clear price or section yet. The old railroad grade runs through there - ATVs sometimes use it. We think we want 10 acres - want to be able to have options for possibilities like laundromat or post office space. Karl knows someone with a drone who could fly over to get some idea of the terrain. Do we need a realtor? Patti has a friend in GM who is a real estate lawyer. Next step? We need to figure out which ten acre parcel we want. And make an offer. Once we have land we will have a lot more access to assistance and potential funding.

Are we ready to take on debt and project of this magnitude? Are we interested in going in more of an organic and natural foods direction? We have done questionnaires to gauge community needs. Co-op is not the whole foods - it's a general store and tries to cover the basics for people. Tried a lot of things over the years - the items we have are what sells before going out of date. Prices are higher because of the lower volume. Hardware department could really expand. We don't have space now. Because of POS we have data on what sells and what we need. Patti likes the idea of getting some expert help. She is uncomfortable with the idea of us taking on debt without more expert advice. We have enough money in the money market to buy land outright. We will also be getting \$17,000 in grant reimbursement funds from the GFAP program. Discuss hardware and general store aspects of the business. Questions from new board members about issues with old building. New building should incorporate characteristics of the Co-op. Lots of options for the old building then. Again, what are the next steps? Discuss trip to Cook to see their new store. We need to purchase land. What do we need to figure out the parcel we want? We need a surveyor or forester to walk around with the board.

Patti makes a motion that we form a land committee with at least 3 members of the board to research and take the next step forward in acquiring land. Teresa seconds. All in favor, motion passes. Andy, Sue, Honor, Katee are all interested. Andy will contact Dan Spina. Honor will contact Paul Moran if Dan is not interested. Andy will get more info from Katy Jarvis about how much she wants for 10 acres.

New business: Board training. Patti will contact Cooperative Development Services - Honor will send her contact info and hopefully we can do a training over Zoom.

Next regular board meeting will be December 9th at 6 pm at the Clair Nelson Center. Will play it by ear whether it will be Zoom or in person.

Patti moves to adjourn. Katee seconds, all in favor, motion passes. Meeting adjourns at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Honor Schauland, Board Secretary