

By the Bushel Community Food Co-op



First Annual General Meeting (AGM) Agenda Minutes

Peterborough Public Library

345 Aylmer St. North

Peterborough, ON

K9H 3V7

7pm, Monday, November 23, 2009

Present: **Need to add list**

Chair: Paula Anderson

1) Icebreaker (Linda – 10 minutes)

Life boats: members rose from their chairs and introduced themselves to groups assembled based on eye colour, then favourite summer vegetable, and finally, neighbourhood

2) Welcome (Paula – 5 minutes)

We received a welcome from Paula Anderson and were reminded that we've come along way since last November when this organisation was just a concept.

Paula was glad to see everyone who came out to participate in our democratic process at our first annual general meeting.

Paula introduced herself as Chair of the board, a producer and a worker member. She pointed out that we are all participants in building the cooperative, no matter which role we play, and asked attendees to stand, in turn, if they participated in the Coop as a) one who eats baskets (consumers); b) one who grows them (producer); c) a worker member; or d) a board member.

Paula introduced the agenda and invited a motion to approve the agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda: m/s: Carol Anne Albertson, Andrew Jobes. CARRIED

3) Co-managers report (Sue & Sarah – 10 minutes)

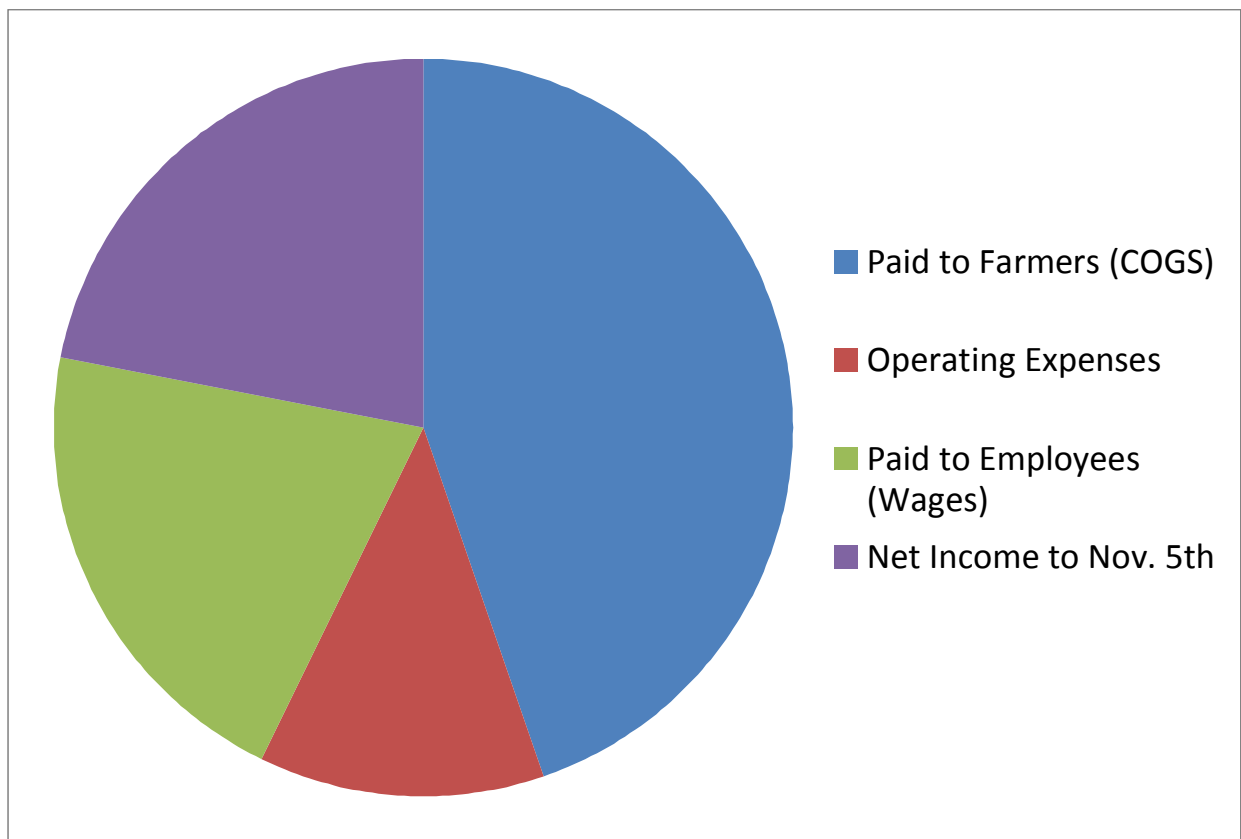
Sarah Lawson explained that, in the cooperative spirit, the workers elected to arrange themselves in a non-hierarchical manner, as two *co-managers*: herself and Sue Prentice.

Sarah continued by reminding us that the BtB Coop started with community discussions that went on for two years with students, COIN, Sue from the former BtB, and interested community members. As a group they envisioned many big ideas but it eventually they coalesced into this one idea. We formed a volunteer interim board of directors that incorporated in the spring of 2009. We currently have 15 producers, 119 consumers, and 3 workers.

The worker members would like to thank the interim Board, Andrew Jobes, Jagger Smith, Maxine, Levi, Gregory, Anna Lawson, and Sue Sauve for their volunteer help in our first year.

The workers distributed a consumer survey in order to bring the results to this meeting and inform the board about consumer preferences and feedback. A summary of the results was posted on the wall. Curtis Bryan won the draw for those who completed the survey (but was unfortunately not present at the AGM).

The workers have compiled some information and the BtB budget, for our members, in the form of a pie chart:



Questions:

-Kathryn Langley asked for clarification about what the ' Net Income' part of triangle refers to
-Net income is the profit that we have to date, but because we are not yet done our growing year, we have committed most of it to various expenses we will have before next spring.
-Another question was asked about relationship b/w growing season and fiscal year
-Paula responded that they are inconveniently unaligned so we've had to plan well to compensate for that (eg. By giving farmers an advance in the spring to buy their seeds- last year it was June; this year we are aiming for earlier)

4) Growing Season in review – a farmer perspective (Montana- 10 minutes)

Montana Jones introduced herself and her livestock farm "Wholearth Farmstudio" in Hastings and began by announcing that all the producers here are stewards of the soil who work around the clock and plan around the year. She has had the opportunity to know these producers and can attest to their commitment to this [cooperative, ecological] model. BtB made a big promise to all the members and they came through despite the lack of heat units and the excess of rain.

Montana invited consumer members to come visit the farms next season so that they can see where their food comes from and appreciate the price they pay for it. The members here tonight are as unique as the farmers because they are not content with the current food system and are demanding better, said Montana.

5) Growing Season in review – a consumer perspective (Christine Annett – 10 minutes)

Christine Annett began by saying that she works 8-10 hours a day and comes home to frantically put food together, and couldn't possibly think about growing a garden! She became a customer of the original BtB, so she was already sold on the idea of organic fruits and veggies. She got into this because of a health scare she experienced a few years ago; the research she did pointed to the need to eliminate pesticides from the food she ate.

It seemed easy at first but when Christine went out looking for this food she found it difficult to get the things she needed consistently and all from one place. BtB was exactly what she needed. Christine was hooked on the variety and the interesting to food she was getting; she started learning new recipes!

Christine continued: BtB's reincarnation into a co-op was even better than she expected—and local—so I learned about a whole bunch of new food. In her summer basket Christine noted that she had received 12 different bulbs of garlic, 5 types of peas, and all kinds of herbs she didn't even know about before. She had to get past the look of things sometimes (Jerusalem artichokes) but other things were more beautiful than ever (corn). She also had to plan cooking a lot more but with Super Thursdays she no longer has to search for organic meat: now there's a bounty!

Christine wrapped up, saying: "I know there was a lot of concern about this year's short and cool, wet season but I was never short and I know that I'm part of supporting a bigger process: I get it. We all get it. It's incredible that we also have weekly donations to the Women's shelter . . . I'm proud to

be part of the co-op and supporting local farmers. I like knowing they raised the cows and pigs and ducks themselves.

“it’s a lot better all-round.”

6) Adopt Bylaws (Paula -10 minutes)

One of the things we would like to do at this gathering of our membership is to approve or adopt our bylaws, which is our governance structure. They are the general rules that govern our democratic process. They *give us* our process.

The entire membership received these bylaws by email attachment (a show of hands for those who read them revealed 2-3 diligent people). Paula summarizes:

We have a very specific cooperative structure with worker, producer and consumer members. This model is pretty new, unusual, and can be tricky but it’s looking promising. The board has gone through these bylaws carefully on a number of occasions and also along with our Co-op developer Russ Christianson. The board approved these bylaws on April 8, 2009. We ask you to approve these bylaws, which may mean saying you trust the board to do this work.

Questions:

-What has been the board’s experience of working with all three groups?

-Paula: it can be difficult marrying these three perspectives but it also gives us more opportunities and ideas; in a legal sense, we are having to follow the book (literally: it’s from Ontario co-op)

-question from United Way volunteer, Doug Downer, about representation on the board in the elections section (section 4): could we really have 4 employee members on the board? (Doug Downer)

-only employees can run for employee positions and we don’t have 4 employees but if we did, they could run and *yes, we could have 4 employees on the board*. NB. We should review this by-law because if the full complement of 4 members were elected from each group, we would exceed the board maximum of 9 members

Motion to adopt the by-laws as presented: m/s: Pete Sorrill, Lois Biddle; CARRIED unanimously

7) Review and Approval of Year-to-date Financial Statement (Sue – 15 minutes)

Sue tells the members that she doesn’t have an accounting background; she has a biology background, but she did take a bookkeeping course and do the books for the previous incarnation of BtB.

Our last summer basket was November 5th so we made that the cut off date for our financial statement. Overall our finances look pretty good. Some of our projections were off: for example, we earned more money from Super Thursday than we expected and spent far less on office supplies.

Our net income as of November 5’ 2009 was \$9,684.53 but we projected it would only be \$5,275.56. However, the fiscal year may end December but the growing season keeps going until next May, in a way, so we are expecting a number of expenses before next May. We anticipate a final net income of \$2,518.66 by the end of our production year.

-question from Andrew Jobs about how we spent \$3000+ less on our expenses than projected

-Sue: Sue took over the books from the bookkeeper and she's cheaper, we didn't use office expense budget (tended to use stuff already at home)

-question about fidelity insurance (are we not paying any?)

-looks like we're not paying any but we pay a lump sum for all our fidelity and business insurance (\$1,276.69)

-Kathryn Langley: question about bookkeeping expenses

-Sue: we had a bookkeeper who set up the books but then it was easier to have the information on hand and top of mind, so Sue took over

-Kathryn: did you get paid for it?

-yes, it was part of my office hours and I am cheaper than a bookkeeper
Kathryn congratulated Sue on her efficiency.

-question about marketing and advertising

-Sue: we paid for the domain name of our website, a table at the Green Expo, and an ad in Peterborough Kids

-comment: that's a marvelous result for such a small financial investment

-Paula: before we even started, we brainstormed ways to get the word out and divvied up the work among ourselves to keep expenses down. It was a great way to work cooperatively off the bat

-Kathryn Langley: if we'd had a larger budget would we have been able to do more baskets?

-Sue: we had a waiting list for baskets

-Kathryn: could we be bigger [do more baskets]?

-Sue: this year we were stretched because of the weather but overtime we will grow

-Paula: because it was a start up year it was different; farmer planning had already begun before we had a consumer membership so we needed to set a goal as a place to start and we chose 75-100 and eventually settled on 85 baskets. We wanted to be able to deliver with the producers we already had in January. Part of the coop process is growing our growers: growing their capacity and providing support for each other. Now that we've been successful, more small growers are interested.

-question: why are we planning to spend more money on marketing this year if we're at capacity?

-we are planning to increase the number of baskets and we cannot assume 100% of people will be repeat customers

-question: how many people were on the waiting list, approximately?

-Sue: it was small because we cut it off after we new people would never reach the front of the waiting list

-Sue: anymore questions? (No)

a. Motion to receive financial statement, m/s: Sue Prentice, Sarah Lawson; CARRIED unanimously

b. Motion to Appoint Auditor (Paula – 5 minutes)

-this will be done at the end of the fiscal year

Motion that Stephen Barker be our auditor for \$1000, m/s: Linda Slavin, Kathy Neill, CARRIED unanimously

8) Elections (Natalie – 30 minutes)

A volunteer from United Way, Doug Downer has joined us to help supervise and assist with our first elections.

Doug conducted a review of the relevant section of our by-laws (section 4).

Producers Nominations –

Gisele Roy – M/S Sarah Lawson, Linda Slavin

Paula Anderson – M/S Sue Prentice, Pete Sorrill

Both accepted nominations

Consumer Nominations

Natalie Napier M/S Gisele Roy, Linda Slavin

Linda Slavin M/S Paula Anderson, Natalie Napier

Carol Love M/S Sue Prentice, Gisele Roy

Amy Blythe M/S Natalie Napier, Amanda Rourke

Pete Sorrill M/S Paula Anderson, Andrew Jobes

Kathy Neill M/S Kathy Neill, Linda Slavin

All accepted nominations

Consumer Election Results:

Natalie Napier

Linda Slavin

Amy Blythe

Pete Sorrill

Employee Nominations

Sue Prentice M/S Sarah Lawson, Craig Niziolek

Sarah Lawson M/S Linda Slavin, Andrew Jobes

Sue Accepted; Sarah declined (due to co-manager position reporting to board)

Motion to destroy the ballots – M/S Linda Slavin, Sue Prentice

Motion to approve the slate of directors M/S Natalie Napier, Andrew Jobes

9) Other Business

a. Subsidy & Donation Presentation (Linda & Natalie – 10 minutes)

1 % of our gross profit will go to Our Space, a value of \$400. In addition, donations from members (baskets not picked up) to the Women’s Shelter, Youth Emergency Shelter, and Brock Mission totaled \$3030 in retail value.

b. Open Floor (time permitting)

-no issues raised

10) Adjournment (9:06 pm)

Motion to adjourn by Natalie Napier