

Minutes

Fiddleheads Natural Food Co-op Annual Meeting

All Souls Church, 60 Huntington St., New London, Connecticut

9 – 10:15 am, May 31, 2008

27 Ballots given to “representatives of household” at check-in.

9 am: call to order by Dick Spindler-Virgin, President of the Board of Directors.

Quorum: The co-op has 803 member-households. Section 3.3 of the bylaws specifies a quorum of three percent of the Members (Representatives of Household), but not less than 25 people. At 803 member-households, 3% would be 24 people. 38 people were in attendance: 27 Representatives of Household plus other household members, also a few members appeared after the voting was completed. Directors present: Ellen Anthony, Secretary; Bob Bunting; Ed DeMuzzio, Vice-president; Allen Longendyke; Richard Spindler-Virgin, President; Jim Stidfole. (Directors included in the total)

Election explanation by Andy Derr, voting done, ballots collected. Andy and Bob Bunting left to count the votes.

Secretary’s report: membership growth-chart posted on front door. In May of 2007, the Co-op had 590 member-households. As of May 27, 2008 we have 803 member-households.

[Secretary’s addendum: we have had volunteer help from over 150 families, members, non-members, friends, organizations, consultants and businesses. Plus all the ones I have not heard about.]

Financial report: given by Vice-President Ed DeMuzzio. Math question asked by Bob Stuller; Ed will fix the discrepancy.

Election Report:

For a three year term as Director, Sheila Herbert and David Jensen elected.

For a one year term as Director, Allen Longendyke and Jim Stidfole elected.

Signed by Andy Derr and Robert Bunting.

President’s Report with Power-Point:

Benchmarks of 2007 - 2008

Summer 2007

Creation of a new Board

Assessment of financial situation

Resolution of General Manager situation

Determination of Site work needed and financial needs of organization

Fall 2007

Began publication of regular newsletters

Put all Board meeting minutes on website

Began process of bylaw review

Started “Open The Doors” campaign

Began to provide presentations to various community groups

Early Winter 2007 - 2008

Met with numerous co-op consultants

Recognized need to move toward opening despite no funds

Began to plan for Winter Farmers Market

Got loan from city and constructed bathrooms

Winter 2008

Got heat operational

Created temporary lighting

Opened Farmers Market: every Saturday

Got new members to join

Winter/Spring 2008

Negotiated \$90,000 rent forgiveness

Negotiated lower rent temporarily

Added about 200 new memberships

Opened Mini-store

Increased hours of market and store: every Wednesday, 2:30 – 5:30

Held several fundraising/community events: Pancake breakfasts, tag sale

What's Next?

Goal to open store by October 2008

Lighting installation

Sell product of Market vendors in the Mini-store: already selling Meadowstone Farm cheese

Co-ordinate with F.R.E.S.H. New London for produce at summer Farmers Market

Install equipment

A natural foods store in Ridgefield has moved to a new store, leaving most of their equipment behind, and have offered to GIVE all of their shelving, a walk-in freezer, a four-door fridge, a n eight-door freezer, a coffee-grinder, coffee bins, and many bulk bins to Fiddleheads FOR FREE! They must be moved in the next two weeks. [As of this typing-up for the newsletter, most of that materiel has been moved, thanks to Ned Reute, Jim Stidfole, Kathy Spindler-Virgin, Ken Hansen, Andy Derr, Paul Shaffer, Bob Bunting, Dick Spindler-Virgin and Ellen Anthony (your typist)]

Finish floor with durable, washable, clean finish.

Raise the money now.

Have the store open four days a week

How Will This Happen?

Member loans now

Volunteers to help move equipment

Volunteers to help in the store

Volunteers to help with installation and operation

What You Can Do:

800 members each contributing \$600 will give us the \$450,000 we need (other funds will com from outside loans)

Trucks and labor to move equipment

Willingness to help with projects

Willingness to help with working in the store

Just Think What The Next Annual Report Can Be With Your Help Now!

Upcoming Events

Fathers Day Pancake Breakfast

Book, video, etc. sale

Dinner on the Farm

Wine Tasting

Questions and answers about equipment in Ridgefield: how to transport, usefulness, value, condition, etc.

Ned Ruete: General Manager question. Spin responds that the job description has been developed; the plan is to have a GM in place a month before opening the store.

Anne Scheibner: Question about member-equity portion? Spin says \$25 is the correct amount of the equity. The \$150 is the membership fee. This is usual for co-ops.

Irene Rissi: Fiddleheads has required little in time from members; many co-ops require a signature on the line committing to a certain number of hours per month. Fiddleheads can use this flexibility to encourage member input.

Anne Scheibner: How will we incorporate the local senior housing, low-income people, and public housing populations into our overall plans? Spin: efforts in this direction have been made with little-to-no response.

Upcoming events: pancake breakfasts, store will be open 4 days a week: Wednesday through Saturday.

Volunteer appeal: Ed DeMuzzio encourages members to help out whenever possible. Much staffing is needed now, and more will be required when the co-op is open longer hours and days.

10:15 adjourn.

submitted by Ellen Anthony

approved at --- meeting (Annual meeting of 2009)