

## ELFCO Board Meeting Minutes: October 15, 2018

- **In attendance:** Five board members were present: Stephen Gasteyer, David Reyes-Gastelum, Marshall Clabeaux, Michele Bridges and Steve Andre. Also in attendance: Peggy Cunniffe (staff member), Kirk Green (visitor), and Anbo Shefa (MSU Student Housing Co-op).
- **Minutes of 8/7/18 Board meeting:** Minutes from last meeting were unanimously approved with one minor change: change “Next Board meeting” item to read: “Due to scheduling conflicts, the September board meeting was postponed”. Minutes are posted on the Google drive and website (under the “Governance” tab).
- **Staff Update:**
  - **Weekly Expenses report**
    - D & O insurance premium paid (annual)
    - Domain name renewal paid (annual)
  - **Credit union balance** - \$107,075
  - Office space:
    - Landlord Jerry Fine wondering if we plan to renew again after December
    - Don’t yet have fully signed copy of Rental/Lease Agreement Renewal (July-December)
  - **Good Food Summit on Oct. 22.**
    - Stephen is going to attend the Good Food Summit; the co-op is paying \$35.00 for Anbo to attend. Peggy will attend part of the event and is registered for the breakout session entitled: “Big Ideas Grow from Small Partnerships” (about the Flint Food System). If someone else wants to cover this, Peggy is willing to go to the “Lightening” session.
  - **MIFFS “Meet the Buyers” reception is on Tuesday, Dec. 4th** (the first day of the “Great Lakes Expo-Fruit, Vegetable & Farm Market” Dec. 4-6). Marshall will look into attending the event and likely will.
    - Registration info does not seem to be out yet. Contact Jen Talik @ <https://glexpo.com> for more info
  - **A description of ELFCO’s year-round farmers market project has been posted on ELFCO’s website.** This description was emailed by Peggy to Board for approval on Sept. 27.
  - **Facebook page:**
    - Peggy wondered if we should start thinking about when and how to keep in touch with owners via Facebook. The Board decided, however, that we will not have an active Facebook account until we have a solid plan for ELFCO.
    - We (probably) have two accounts: (1) ELFCO and (2) Transformation Advocates.
- **“Local Foods, Local Places” technical assistance award (application due 10/22)**
  - Description and application link was just received and was sent to Board members on 10/4/18. The deadline for applying is October 22, 2018.
  - This is a federal EPA/USDA/CDC non-monetary “award” for technical (advisory) services from “food tech-grant experts” that would help facilitate a gathering of community stakeholders in a given

project to help set goals and plan the project. The experts would apparently also give advice about obtaining relevant government grants to open a food

- ELFCO board is not going to apply because our project isn't qualified. Awardees must locate their business in an underserved area while simultaneously resolving an outstanding environmental issue posed by the location.
- **“Making it in Michigan Conference & Marketplace Trade Show,” sponsored by MSU, will be held Thursday, November 8 from 11:00 to 4:00 at the Lansing Center.**
- **Networking project:**
  - Project challenges: Peggy explained very briefly, relative to several documents she sent to the Board relative to networking, that it's important to find partners who can solve our specific issues. Everyone on the networking team should be on the same page. The team needs to have clear project goals, with an agenda of objectives we want to achieve.
  - In discussing how we would be able to “identify the precise problem that our project is the solution to,” the Board clarified that “ELFCO's project is the solution to giving local producers a year round product market/building location as well as giving community members the opportunity to purchase fresh, locally produced foods and other items on a daily basis.” Other farmers markets are weekly and seasonal; however, it is also now true that Cinzori (from Owosso) is selling their produce to grocery stores in this area including Kroger's and Meijer's. Smaller farms in the area also want to do this.
- **Kirk Green was present to present his proposal to ELFCO:** He would like ELFCO to consider hyper local buying clubs, with agents in the community to coordinate the buying clubs. He thought it best to start out with a few buying clubs, and to gradually integrate into the food insecure areas locally. The idea would also involve distribution within the neighborhoods and drop off locations. He suggests also trying to facilitate events such as potlucks. Perhaps the “Double Up Food Bucks” could also be used to buy goods from the buying clubs. The Land Bank has trucks available that might be used to help distribute the products. One idea would be to buy from local farmers when they have an excess of supply (vegetables, fruits, and other items). The appeal to “agents” is that they would benefit from the sales of products to the communities, via a certain percentage of sales. It also would be nice to have volunteers to help. Having schools and churches as distribution sites. Finding community partners is feasible in Kirk's opinion.
  - Stephen indicated ELFCO would still want to have a store front at some point, and that Kirk's proposal is a possible means to eventually open the store front.
  - Alternative models are also used by other co-ops, such as Oklahoma Food Coop and 5th Season's in WI, which have only on-line retailing for local goods.
- **Next board meeting is tentatively set for Monday, November 12<sup>th</sup>.**