

## Meeting Minutes – February 4, 2019

### East Lansing Food Co-op Board of Directors

- Call to order – 7:15pm
- In attendance: Board: Michelle Bridges, Marshall Clabeaux, John Reich, Stephen Gasteyer; Staff: Peggy; Owner: Kirk Green
- Agenda (with executive session for compensation-related matter) approved unanimously
- Approved 1/7/19 Minutes
- Staff Update
  - Bank balance & weekly expenses report – down to \$101K – will be under \$100K soon
    - Note that we need to move. Grand Rapids and Detroit Coops have places
  - Grants-Magic webinar: Peggy attended this 1.5 hour session on 1/31. --
  - DUNS number: Peggy contacted Dun & Bradstreet to get a DUNS number since we need one to apply for federal grants. D&B found one ELFCO already had; address change currently being made.
- HFFI (Healthy Food Financing Initiative) grant
  - Deadline for applying is Feb. 14 –
  - There was concern that we don't have all the pieces in place at this time to apply for this. They would be looking for fully established relationships with partners. While we have some relationships, they are not as fully developed as would be necessary for this grant. Still, there is an advantage in attempting to put everything together and see how close we can get.

A motion was made to “Reconfirm focus on an Argus Farm style operation in Lansing/East Lansing in a building” (approved unanimously)

Will move forward with approaching realtors; Marshall and Anbo will take up the slack in applying for HFFI grant and will circulate it; will work with Peggy on numbers; Stephen and Michelle will review it.
- Potential partnership outreach update:
  - MSU Student Organic Farm visit on Jan. 24 (Marshall, Anbo, Peggy) – Notes from meeting circulated, upshot – We would need to guarantee produce purchases from SOF to have a really effective partnership with them, according to Sarah and Kate. Right now, 60% of SOF's business is a CSA because SOF can get the money they need to operate up front. They are willing to work with an Argus style operation (they do business with Argus currently) but Student Organic Farm cannot exceed a 25% mark up. The upshot – we need to get establishment and work with SOF to create a sold partnership.
  - MSU Extension – Abby Harper: Meeting set for Thursday, Feb 7 at 9:30 a.m. at Strange Matter Café, 2010 E. Michigan Ave. – John had particular questions – what programs are available for beginning farmers; and for established farmers to expand?; Would help be available to assist in an Argus type model? Can MSU provide any demographic data that would help with “site selection” (buying habits, type of food purchases – ready to eat – pre made – heat and serve-online ordering – ingredients for “scratch cooking”? What is needed to make a “food supply destination”?
    - We talked about pet food as value added...
  - CSA Fair: Abby Harper wants ELFCO to host a CSA Fair as we did last year. Preferably “as close to national CSA day (Feb 22) as possible.”
    - We are happy to do this – but we would need a month to get the space; getting advertising, etc.? --
    - March 2, 9, or 16 – are dates that would work for us...
    - Peggy will contact the People's Church; reach out to Abby...
    - Tasks: 1) Contact the farmers; 2) secure venue; 3) outreach to potential members.
- **Store location possibilities –**

- **There is a spot open on Michigan avenue near the freeway & Frandor – we will look into it.**
  - We need to find a realtor... start inquiries – Peggy and John have spec'd out space – max rent...
  - Square footage needed: minimum of 1000-1400' could work; we can afford \$1500, plus expenses...
  - The Northwind store was 3000' -- Rent probably more practical.
  - BSA Software website (www.bsasoftware.com) – can lookup place details...
- Prep for annual meeting & elections: Spring 2019
  - **Date:** April 28 – date & location are posted on our website & ELFCO online calendar
  - **Location:** Hannah Community Center, Classroom 211
  - **Recruiting** for board positions extremely important this year
    - **Four (4) of the nine (9) board seats will be open as of 4/28/19** (2 seats are currently unfilled, plus 2 current board members have terms ending in 2019: Marshall Clabeaux & David Reyes-Gastelum)
    - **Elections 2019 will be held to fill seats for the following terms ending:**
      - **2022:** All 3 seats are open
      - **2021:** No open seats (These 3 seats now filled by Stephen, John, & Steve)
      - **2020:** 1 open seat (Other 2 seats now filled by Michele & Chris)
    - Need to make clear that board members are capable of giving 2 hours/week...
    - Kirk suggested that we could do an open-ended potluck pre the actual meeting
    - Coop Board Members should reach out to people for this purpose. **Candidates for the Board must be co-op owners: cost is \$60.**
    - We will send out notice of the CSA fair, mention the upcoming meeting. But official notice must go out between 60-15 days prior to the meeting – (see below)
- **Election & Annual Meeting Calendar:**
  - March 1-2 : Email (MailChimp) notification to owners of:
    - Annual meeting date & location
    - Board of director elections
    - Invitation to submit candidate statement (with link to candidate statement)
    - Invitation to submit agenda items
  - April 7: Candidate statements due
  - April 14: Ballots sent to owners electronically (MailChimp) & posted on website
  - April 28: Annual meeting; electronic ballots due by noon; paper ballots by 3 p.m.
- **Executive Session** regarding MSU Student Housing Cooperative's request for financial support from ELFCO to pay for VISTA volunteer services. **Official vote required: Shall ELFCO pay any amount to SHC over and above the \$1,919 which the Board agreed to pay via a vote of the Board on 2/8/18?** (Note: ELFCO has not been invoiced by SHC; we have only a copy of Ingham Co. Health Department's invoice to SHC on which the amount of \$3,924 is circled.)

Marshall suggested that given the Board minutes from Feb. 8, 2019, we will explain to SHC that our grant writing has not been successful and we don't have the resources to pay the other half of the VISTA cost at this time. However, if we do get grant money, this makes it much more likely ELFCO could contribute to more of the cost. Stephen will SHC with this message.

- **Other Business:**  
We will have to keep working on grants, but we will also have to think about raising money from owners. Thoughts about yearly membership model as a way to raise more revenue. Thinking about the future.
- NEXT Board Meeting – March 4, 2019.
- Meeting adjourned – 9:15pm