

Board meeting 05-14-2018

Attending (Board): Marshall Clabeaux, John Reich, Chris Bardenhagen, Stephen Gasteyer, Michele Bridges, David Reyes-Gastelum

Visitors: Anbareen Shefa (SHC)

Staff: Peggy

Meeting called to order at 7:15pm

1) – Board approved the minutes from 3-19-2018

2) – Reviewed and revised the minutes from the 04-16-2018

Marshall motioned, seconded by John, board unanimously approved the 04-16 minutes as amended

3) – Board will review the minutes from the 04-29-2018 Annual Meeting

4) – Owner Bryant Busso – concerned about long-term financial management

Board agreed that his concerns were valid and that we need to be realistic, but we are conscious of the issue and trying to move forward as rapidly as possible. Among other things, we can and should add grant revenue to get a store organized and producing.

5) Weekly finances. CPA expenses are always pricey. Still have \$143,000 in funding. The ending date for claims of excess equity is May 15, 2018. Anything postmarked by that date will be accepted. If not postmarked we will revisit at the future meetings. Peggy will be sending out reimbursements. There was some question or the logistics of doing this.

D&O insurance: The board unanimously approved renewing D&O insurance.

6) City Meeting – Met with Tim McCaffrey, Director of the Dept. of Parks & Recreation for the City of East Lansing and two other Parks & Rec staff members – the City sees Farmers Market as community building...

Old BWL Building – would be expensive to renovate\$250,000 at least to get up and running... might have potential in the future. Has parking and location, but needs work.

MDARD – they have 4 different grants that might apply to our kind of project. Chris will work on a one pager. John is willing to help. Need to emphasize farm to consumer sales. Need to include who we've talked to, the dollars and cents of how the Argus' model works. Board agreed that Chris should develop a one-page proposal draft that will be circulated and sent on to MDARD.

7) We will be reaching out to the EMBA Director to try to work follow up and to get the students enrolled. We will need their help marketing, and other issues.

8) Farmer survey – 8 responses by email -- all very positive – and 4 by paper to date, 2 that want to and 2 that do not. Fairly diverse supply. Marshall will send a document.

The Argus initiative had lots of farmers enrolled. We will need to do a lot of reaching out to farmers to get farmers to take up this offer...

9) Building – Marshall – the Battery store – seems like the store is available at \$16/sq ft. 1400 sq ft. -- \$3,000/mo with utilities and insurance... seems like it would work for us – but we need to cost out

10) Anbareen – moving from desk research to interviews with coop managers--The take away from the Up and Coming Conference clear that the produce manager will be key. We have existing job descriptions for General Manager and Produce Manager, but we will also reach out to Alex at Argus to develop a job description that is much more farm coordinator. ELFCO also needs to think about updating the logo.

– Should start looking into USDA Community Food Development Grant... Would be looking to fund partnerships... RFP June-July 2019 -- \$750,000. Anbareen could coordinate with help of the board.

11) Chris's Idea -- A two part strategy – part 1 – work with the Battery venue; part 2, would work with developing a partnership to work with the City of East Lansing to develop the old BWL into a value added location – working with the Historical Society (talk to Dan Bowman) – and we also could work with the City on the Community Places Community Spaces grant (Nate Scramlin).

a) Could we work, down the line, with the city on getting the appraisal done – but there was a sense of the board that we should move forward on the Battery Giant

12) Next Steps on Battery Giant location – cheapest rent; lowest buildout cost

If we are moving forward, we need to get a produce manager who can help with layout

Argus worked with CDS consultant for layout... might contact Senior Consultants (SCORE) – office in Detroit/Grand Rapids, etc.

Need to work with MDARD to move into negotiating the renovations for moving into the Battery Giant location (Peggy will contact)

13) New Board Member – David -- interested in being a board member to keep the coop going. Has a background in Stats and Mathematics. Has been a long member of the coop and therefore has a Has made life choices

14) Stephen moved that Dave be appointed to the board for a period through the next Annual 2019. Seconded by Marshall and approved unanimously.

15) Following Board elections and having resolved a tie vote between two candidates (which would affect which candidate received a longer term of office), we now have the following term ending dates: 2021 John Reich, Stephen Gasteyer; 2020 Michele Bridges, Chris Bardenhagen; 2019 Marshall Clabeaux, David Reyes-Gastelum

16) New Officers – Stephen Gasteyer – Board President, Marshall Clabeaux, Vice President, John Reich, Treasurer, Secretary, Michele

17) Lake Trust Account Question. Need someone be the name of the account. Once we have a general manager, that person will have the account. Peggy will be the name on the account holder until such time as a GM is hired. Marshall motioned, seconded by Chris, approved unanimously.

18) Last issue – at the next meeting, we will need to begin talking to partners. We will draw on the list of contacts on the Moving Forward community – MIFMA, etc. The point is to reach out and get buyin.

19) Next Board Meeting Monday, June 4, 2018

20) Priority actions, Farmer interviews, Details on buildings, Crunching numbers, Excess equity; David will talk with Argus about design, equipment, who helped.

21) Meeting Adjourned 9:25pm