Adopted Minutes
East End Food Co-op Board Meeting
Hybrid Meeting held in EEFC Conference Room and via Cisco WebEx
February 17th, 2025

In attendance:
Board Members: Tom Pandaleon, President; Nick Leise, Vice President; Desmond Zheng, Secretary; Tyleda Worou, Treasurer; Mark Bowers, Nico Demkin, Mike Murphy
Management: Tyler Kulp, General Manager
Member-Owners: Carrie D'Ambroso, Taylor Koppenhofer, Iris Powell, KC Carney, Fredric Price and Ellen Wilson, Liz, Mollie, Julie Paris, Breezy, Judy, Call-in User 1, Simone Shapiro
Board Clerk: Jessie Ryan
Absent Board Members: Heather Kenner

Introduction
Tom called the meeting to order at 7:05p.m. and Mike read the Ends Statement aloud.

The East End Food Co-op exists to enhance physical and social health in our community.
To these ends, we will create:

1. A sustainable member-owned business open to everyone
2. An ethical and resilient food infrastructure
3. A vibrant, dynamic community of happy, healthy people
4. A creative vision to transform the future

Check-In
Directors in attendance checked in to express their feelings and any needs.

Amend/Approve Agenda
Decision: Desmond motioned to approve the agenda as written. Second by Nico. There were no objections.

Amend/Approve Minutes
Decision: Tom motioned to approve the minutes as written. Second by Nick. There were no objections.

Tyleda joined the meeting at 7:13p.m.

Member-Owners Open Session
Several Members in attendance took a moment to share their thoughts regarding the Union's petition to boycott Israeli-made products and endorse the BDS movement.

February Working Meeting Report
The Board met on February 3rd and discussed the possibility of seeking an outside consultant to assist with the strategic plan, expansion opportunities in the area, and the structure and recording of the B reports.

GM Update
This report is in addition to the monthly monitoring reports. The expectation of this update is to give additional information to the Board of Directors that may not be included in the month's monitoring report. This report aligns with parts of sub-policy B7: Communication to the Board…. 'The General Manager shall not cause or allow the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.'

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Membership:
Current active Member-Owners: 17,029
New Member-Owners: January – (net) 63
Total Member-Owner Sales: January – $797,322
FYTD New Members – (net) 298

Register Round-Up Total:
January-March (Q3) Recipients:
Harmony Dog Rescue – https://www.harmonydogrescue.org/
National Opera House – https://www.nationaloperahouse.org/

Operations Update:
- Supply issues with eggs remain a hot topic throughout the store, and the entire industry. Low supply and high demand have led to vendors adding high "surcharges" to each dozen eggs. There has been a lot of sticker shock on the shelves.
- We are closing the store early at 5pm on Wednesday 2/12 to have an all-staff meeting followed by a winter party with food from Mana Meals and beverages provided by Commonplace Coffee. We will discuss the strategic plan draft, changes to our accounting/finance department, and other operational topics.

Finance Update:
- YTD sales week ending 02/09/2025: $8,323,791, which is (still) 5.2% growth over prior year. Our weekly growth has ticked down over the last few weeks by approx. 1-2%, hard to pinpoint exactly why: Aldi's, supply chain issues (increase in out of stocks), winter weather, all contribute. But year over growth has remained steady, so far.
- Customer count continues to increase year over year, only very slightly at this point. We still remain far from our pre-COVID (March 2020) avg of 6,800 per week.

Updates/Questions/Comments:
- 35 new carts arrived on Friday. We put them right into service and took away the old carts. Vince will assess what parts can be saved to fix the new carts when that time comes.
- Are you happy to see 63 new member-owners this month?
    - January tends to be one of the highest months for new members. This could result from New Year resolutions to eat healthier or shop locally. The number of new members halfway through the year aligns with previous years.
- Is the member sales number still around 60%?
    - Yes, that number usually stays between 58%-60%.
- Is the egg shortage causing a hit to basket size?
    - Not yet. Tyler looks at the top 10 most purchased items almost daily, and there has not been a decline in staple items.
- Do you think the egg situation will be resolved any time soon? Will there be egg substitutions available in the store?
    - Tyler believes this will be an ongoing issue for a while. He spoke with the Grocery Manager to ensure we are keeping products such as Just Egg, as well as baking replacements, in stock.

B5 – Customer Service and Value

The Policy Register states, "The General Manager shall not be unresponsive to customer needs."

Updates/Questions/Comments:

- Tyler discussed the key points of the B5 report, including the Customer Experience Survey, comment cards, health inspections, recalls, security guards, cooler monitoring, and incident reporting.
- Tyler usually presents this report later in the year, so the period that he reported on is nine months instead of twelve. He compared the first 31 weeks of this year to the first 31 weeks of last year.
- There was almost a 9.5% increase in customer count, and we were only one transaction away from 172,000.
- If product availability increased and sales were added, how much of a linear trend would that create?
    - If a customer purchases everything they intend to, they will have a more satisfying experience. When we can eliminate out-of-stocks, we see a dramatic increase in customer satisfaction and also an increase in sales because customers purchase everything they want. Some out of stocks are out of our control if the product is unavailable, but sometimes the product just hasn't made it to the shelf yet.
- Are there times when a customer says a product was unavailable but it was?
    - Yes, but not often. We do get product availability alerts or low scores when customers say that a product is unavailable, but they just couldn't find it on the shelf. It doesn't have a significant impact on the data.
- Desmond recently took the survey. Some questions were not applicable to his shopping experience, and there was no option to skip them. He just chose the neutral answers, but it still asked him to provide a reason. This could result in negative scores.
    - Tyler isn't sure that this would result in negative scores. A drawback of the survey is that we do not have any control over the questions, but this is the only way we can compare ourselves to other Co-ops.
- Approximately 1,000 surveys were completed in a year. Any idea how much participation other Co-ops are getting? Does membership size affect this?
    - You do not need to be a member to take the survey. The cadence of the survey is to print one out every 25 transactions, which is what most stores do. Tyler increased that to every 20 transactions in the fall because of some changes in the store, such as the Café reopening, and he wanted more data.
- Not every customer who receives the survey completes it. How many responses are other stores getting?
    - Tyler isn't sure how many responses other stores are getting, but according to the company that runs the survey, 30-40% of surveys that are printed are filled out, which is the industry standard.
- Do you feel that we are being treated fairly by suppliers and distributors?
    - Tyler feels that we are, but the availability of products is an area that has a lot of room for improvement. We have a new Grocery Department Coordinator, so he hopes to see that score go up over the next few months.
- How often are you getting these results?
    - Tyler looks at the scores every week. He receives product availability alerts in real time. If he gets multiple alerts in one day, he will look at the survey results to see what is going on. He posts the results by the Buyer's office every week for staff to see.

- There was some discussion about the Café services and other ways to get customer feedback. This topic has more to do with Operations than the Board.
- According to the graphs in the report, the difference in basket size and sales was dramatically different at the end of December and January. Do you have any idea why?
    - The numbers on page 16 are per week, and January had 5 weeks. We usually see higher basket sizes than customer count at the end of each quarter because members are using their quarterly discount.
- Do the comment card numbers fluctuate?
    - 10-15 comment cards a month is pretty standard.
- Is parking lot security the landlord's responsibility?
    - Yes, it is. The Co-op still gets all of the complaints.
- Were the reports of theft from May to December of 2024 because of meat theft?
    - Mostly yes. We tend to see an uptick in theft in December around the holidays, but meat theft is a regular issue for us.
- What is the corrective action process for these incident reports?
    - Any time a staff member or customer fills out an incident report, it goes to the Front End Manager first in case we need to capture security footage. Then it goes to HR so Jen can follow up with whoever filed the report.
- Are the complaints mostly from employees or customers?
    - We do get both, but mostly employee compliants about customers. There has been an increase in customer complaints over the years, especially in 2020.

Decision: Desmond motioned to accept the B5 as compliant. Second by Nick. There were no objections.

Committee Updates:

Finance

The Committee will meet to discuss the B1 report before the March Board Meeting. Tom and Tyleda will be in touch to schedule the meeting. Mike has joined the Committee.

Board Perpetuation and Elections (BP&E)

The Committee is not very active this time of the year, so they have not met recently.

Member-Owner Participation (MOP)

The Committee will meet on Wednesday, February 19th. They will continue to discuss events and work on updating the charter. Board members would like to have more of a presence at Co-op events. Jessie will email all Directors when an event is scheduled.

Executive

The Committee met twice this month to discuss the strategic plan and the possibility of hiring a consultant to help with the process. They also discussed having a better structure for evaluating expansion opportunities.

Action Items

Directors reviewed progress or lack thereof on Action Items from previous meetings.

Appreciations

Those in attendance took a moment to share their thanks.

Closing
Next Meeting: Monday, March 17th, 2025
Packet submissions due: Monday, March 10th, 2025

The meeting adjourned at 8:45p.m. without objection.

The Board and General Manager entered Executive Session at 8:45p.m. to discuss the strategic plan timeline, expansion, B Reports, and vacant Board seats.