

Weavers Way Cooperative Association General Membership Meeting Sunday, May 23, 2010

Fifty households enjoyed the meet and greet BBQ at the Chestnut Hill Friends Meetinghouse. The meeting began promptly at 6 PM with Board Vice-President David Woo introducing board candidates Sue Wasserkrug, Joe Pientka, Jonathan Barnes and Bob Noble. Nikla Lancksweert withdrew her nomination due to personal reasons and candidate Stu Katz did not attend.

Approval of Minutes from Fall 2009 General Membership Meeting

The minutes of the Fall 2009 GMM were approved unanimously.

President's report

Board President Nancy Weinman stated that although other markets are experiencing a decline in sales, sales have increased at Weavers Way (WW). The opening of the Chestnut Hill (CH) store and the hiring of 30 new employees has had a positive impact on WW as well as the CH business community. Nancy reviewed the co-op's Ends, noting that they are goals to serve the greater good of members and the community. She commented on the remarkable quality of the Shuttle and the noteworthy level of member involvement. She also described the Mid-Atlantic Food Cooperative Alliance (MAFCA), a newly formed group of nearly 30 food co-ops that work together to support each other in promoting the cooperative economy. She encouraged members to buy early and buy often and to support the Ogontz store.

Nancy expressed appreciation for the General Manager (GM), Board member Bob Noble, Weavers Way staff, volunteers and members for their enthusiastic work, and she stated it has been her pleasure to serve as board president. Nancy explained that the Board of Directors (BOD) works under policy governance, now a common model of co-op governance throughout the country in which the General Manager reports to the BOD on progress toward achieving the co-op's Ends.

David Woo announced the closing of elections at 6:30 PM and asked members to consider running for BOD in future elections to maintain a vibrant leadership.

General Manager's Report

Glenn thanked the BOD, particularly Nancy for her advice. He introduced the manager of the newly opened Chestnut Hill store, Kim Spellman-Hall, who worked tirelessly the last six months on the CH project, and he expressed appreciation for all GMM planners. He noted that in the months leading up to the opening of the CH store, outreach efforts brought in 200 new members. He introduced staff member Kentu X and displayed the award WW received for working with the disabled. Dorothy Guy spoke about the wonderful time in the 1950s buying fresh produce from the back of Jules Timmerman's car and recalled how he transformed a defunct mom-and-pop drugstore into the first Weavers Way store.

Financial Report

Susan Beetle reported on the financial challenges presented by the new building (including additional debt) and the change from the work requirement to a work option. She indicated that WW remains hopeful that members will continue to work, maintaining the spirit of the store. Susan

explained the working-member discount system and the additional accounting effort required to implement it. She noted that in recognition of the complexity of a multi-store operation, an outside accounting firm, Your Part Time Controller, has been engaged.

Chestnut Hill Report

Kim Spellman-Hall spoke about the sense of accomplishment of finally opening the CH store and the great success of the store in its first few weeks of operation. She expressed thanks to all the folks who helped and indicated that she hopes to have a soft opening celebration of some sort. Daily sales of more than \$22,000 exceeded the goal of \$11,000; sales for the first week hit \$107,000. Kim encouraged members to shop and make suggestions for items they would like to see at the store, thanking members for waiting so patiently. Finally, she reported that work slots are on the work calendar for CH.

Weavers Way Community Programs (WWCP) Update

WWCP Marketplace Coordinator Carly Chelder presented slides of new partner schools including Our Mother of Consolation, Eastern University and Lingelbach. Nine schools participate in a curriculum that creates valuable lessons in all aspects of the cooperative marketplace, from outreach, education, growing, tasting and deciding upon profit recipients. WWCP Executive Director Rachel Milenbach congratulated Carly for achieving her Masters and acknowledged the new farm educator, Adams Forbes.

Rachel reported on various farm projects. The Garden at Stenton Family Manor homeless shelter began in 2009 and feeds over 200 daily. The Environment Committee granted \$745 for a Cobb Oven kitchen, a very rustic outdoor kitchen made of clay, slag and tile, and a greenhouse grant is underway. The children at Stenton are building a picnic table and shelter residents are learning self-sufficiency. Gardens at Cheltenham High and Henry Schools are in full swing.

Nina Berryman, Co-Manager of the Henry Got Crops Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project at Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences, reported the CSA has sold all 120 shares. Two new hoop houses were installed at Saul and the students and farmers are putting in warm weather crops. In other farm news: The Awbury farm is selling at a plethora of farmers markets; composting toilet has been installed at Awbury in partnership with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society; two apprentices and interns were added to the team; the farm is involved in a prison seedling distribution program; and donations of 20,000 lbs of vegetables were made last year.

Yael Lehman, Executive Director, The Food Trust

Ms. Lehman stated The Food Trust (FT) was created in 1992 by Reading Terminal's manager, with the mission to insure that everyone has access to affordable and nutritious food. Targeting schools and low income areas, the FT runs farmers markets, helps establish fresh food stores and provides school education programs to 50,000 children. The FT, which is seen as a leader in promoting access to healthy food, operates projects throughout Pennsylvania, 18 of which are located in Philadelphia. A comprehensive effort is being made to target corner stores located near schools where children gain most of their extra calories, because of the lack of fresh food. A \$400 million budget has been designated toward resolving the dearth of quality food stores and creation of jobs. These stores are now selling fresh fruit bowls, which have become a popular snack.

A Q&A session followed.

Election Results

Brian Maher reported that votes were cast by 124 households. The three highest vote-getters were Sue Wasserkrug, Bob Noble and Stu Katz. A full election analysis will be published in the Shuttle. Nancy Weinman encouraged those who ran to run again even though they did not win. Bob stated that co-op by-laws dictate that directors may serve only two terms (before taking at least one year off), so new directors are often needed. Members were reminded that the Board is not the only way to be involved; the various WW committees also offer opportunities to participate in the life of the co-op.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.