

**La Montanita Food Cooperative  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
February 17, 2015 – 5:30 pm**

**Board Present:** Marshall Kovitz, Ariana Marchello, Martha Whitman, Lisa Banwarth-Kuhn, Jessica Rowland, Leah Roco, Tracy Sprouls

**Board Absent:** Jeff Ethan Green, Rosemary Romero

**Also Present:** Jennifer Cornish (facilitator), Deborah Good (admin assistant), David Hurley (research assistant), Terry Bowling (general manager), John Mullé (staff), Robert Tero (staff), Sharret Rose (staff), Michelle Franklin (staff), David Cortez (guest)

The meeting started at 5:32 p.m. at the Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque. Jennifer Cornish facilitated and Deborah Good took notes.

**1. Welcome – food & refreshment**

Issues Raised: All present introduce themselves.

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

**2. Approve the Agenda**

Issues Raised: Ariana moves and Tracy seconds to approve the agenda.

Actions Taken: The agenda is approved unanimously.

Actions Required: None

**3. Member Comments**

Issues Raised:

- A guest speaks in support of two bills (SB 94 and HB 357) that would legalize hemp production for industrial purposes. The new legislation would effectively roll back legislation that criminalized hemp and marijuana. Hemp is harmless and its production could be beneficial to the local economy. The guest suggests that individuals support the bill.
  - A board member asks about the climate needed to grow hemp. Response: NM climate is reasonable for growing hemp, which requires very little water. Currently countries like China and Canada are leading the hemp market. Legalizing hemp production could make New Mexico competitive.

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

**4. Consent Agenda**

a. Board Minutes - January 2015

b. Board Development Meeting Minutes – January 15, 2015

Issues Raised: Martha moves and Ariana seconds to approve the consent agenda.

- Board member requests a change to the Board Minutes specifying that the Board Study notes are “available to members upon request.”

Actions Taken: The consent agenda is approved unanimously.

Actions Required: None

## 5. LaM Fund ROI Proposal – Terry

### Issues Raised:

- Marshall moves and Leah seconds to approve the proposal.
- This proposal is to give the general manager approval to disperse funds to holders.

Actions Taken: The proposal is approved unanimously.

Actions Required: None

## 6. Management Monitoring Reports – X2.5 and X9.0-X9.4

### Issues Raised:

- Ariana moves and Jessica seconds to approve the report.
- General manager:
  - General manager provides a financial report.
  - Bulk repackaging has started and is going well.
  - Co-op management team is improving data management to inform real-time decisions about inventory.
  - General manager reports that he has decided against NCGA board presidency due to other commitments.
  - This month's reporting includes data on employee wages.
- Discussion:
  - Board member asks whether the wages reported are an average over the year. Response: It is a snapshot at the time in January when the report is created. Wages vary depending on how long staff have been working for the co-op, and can therefore vary at different times of year.
  - Board member asks: Is this policy really helpful? There are a significant limitations to the data on wages, including that we can't compare the benefits we offer employees to state data, which is wages-only data.
    - The policy was developed in response to a concern as to whether La Montanita is paying market wages.
    - The general manager states that he provides data on the dollar value of the benefits employees receive in a monitoring report later in the year.
    - Board member states that he does value seeing the wage comparison.
    - Other interesting data that could be reported: There were no layoffs throughout the recession, or the average raise increase every year.
    - Policy Development Committee will review the policy and consider possible changes. The GM should be present for the discussion.
  - Board member conveys appreciation for the work of La Montanita, knowing that other cooperatives have not been successful.

Actions Taken: Monitoring Report passes unanimously

Actions Required: None

## 7. Board Study – Brainstorming and Mapping Out of Future Study Hours

Issues Raised: See Appendix A

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

## 8. Board Functioning – All

### Issues Raised:

- The Policy Development Committee should move X5.2 to January in the schedule of GM reporting.

- CCMA
  - Board members should let Ariana know by email if they are interested in attending.
- Board Study materials should be posted in the Board meeting folder prior to each Board Meeting rather than the Board Study folder. Following the meeting, Deborah will move the documents.
- Nominations and Elections Committee needs new members. If interested, contact Ariana.
- Committee Meetings
  - Member Engagement: Mon, March 23, 5:30pm at CDC
  - Board Development: Wed, Feb 25, 5:30pm at church (followed by Wed, March 25, and the fourth Wednesday of the month, going forward)
  - Policy Development: tbd

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

#### **9. Administrative Assistant Duties**

Issues Raised: Tasks will be added to the Ongoing To Do list in Basecamp:

- Deborah and Ariana will discuss Deborah's role in constructing the Board Meeting agendas.
- Deborah will send out the First Half of B Self-Evaluation via SurveyMonkey. Board members should respond before the March meeting

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

#### **10. Meeting Evaluation**

Issues Raised:

- The Board Study discussion was fun.
- Board members plan to discuss at the next meeting the process for requesting an endorsement from the Board, or that an item be discussed at the board meeting, so that this is clear for everyone.

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

#### **11. Next Meeting Agenda Construction**

Issues Raised:

- Clarification of Board process for requesting that an item be discussed at the board meeting

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

#### **12. Adjourn Regular Session**

Issues Raised: Ariana moves and Marshall seconds to adjourn.

Actions Taken: Meeting adjourns at 7:20pm.

Actions Required: None

ATTACHMENT A: BOARD STUDY

La Montanita Food Co-op  
Board of Directors Meeting – February 17, 2015

**Topic – Brainstorming and Mapping Out of Future Study Hours**

**Led by:** David Hurley

**Goals for discussion:**

- Identify topics board members are interested in learning more about as part of a long-term visioning process
- Identify resources that could assist us in learning about each topic

Background: At a recent Board-Staff Retreat, the general manager stated that he sets goals and plans 3-5 years into the future. The group discussed that the Board should be engaged in long-term visioning beyond five years, perhaps 5-40 years into the future.

***End #1 – Increased access to, and purchase of, healthy foods***

<b>Topics of Interest</b>	<b>Possible Resources</b>
Water - Predictions of mega-droughts - Will Albuquerque be here in 40 years?	NASA models Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
Changing demographics as they relate to food decisions	
Changes in owner needs	
For whom are we trying to increase access? (community members in needs, co-op staff members)	
Alternative/additional distribution options and models - Schools - Hospitals - Grab n go - Buying clubs, drones (e.g. how to deliver food to the South Valley)	
Subsidies for small/local agriculture	

***End #2 – A growing regenerative agricultural sector that uses sound environmental practices***

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Future of farming in New Mexico - Rural New Mexico is shrinking - Water shortage – how will this impact farming practices? - NMDA is not paying attention to water shortages	Wallace Center Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Weston Price Foundation Steve Warshawer NMDA Mid-Rio Grande Conservancy Districts Natural Resource Conservation Service (part of USDA)
GMOs	

***End #3 – A thriving and sustainable local economy that benefits members and community***

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Models for measuring the power of the local dollar	
Models for community response to disasters and other problems – Ways to mobilize our owners	
Service co-ops	
How can the co-op adapt to changes in owner needs? Will we still be selling food in 40 years, and/or will we be offering other products/services/programs?	
How to teach cooperation, culture shift, “reprogram” values, attitudes, behaviors Biology of Altruism	Marx Santa Fe Institute Sam Bowles Elinor Ostrom Art Sherwood can direct us to resources as well
What is the future of the cooperative economy?	
Acequias as a model of cooperation	NM Acequia Association

***End #4 – A strengthened co-operative community***

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Education of community - Partner with co-op-minded organizations – field trips for schools; tie into gardening programs (co-op does some of this already, could do more)	
How are other co-ops thinking about their communities? - Member engagement approaches and initiatives	Art Sherwood has contact with a number of co-ops that we might be able to learn from Connect with NM co-ops
Lessons learned from co-ops that have closed	