

**La Montañita Food Cooperative
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
October 20, 2015 – 5:30 pm**

Board Present: Ariana Marchello, Marshall Kovitz, Lisa Banwarth-Kuhn, Tracy Sprouls, James Esqueda (Jessica Rowland and Tammy Parker on the phone)

Board Absent: None

Also Present: Bob Tero (Interim General Manager), Deborah Good (admin assistant), Jennifer Cornish (facilitator), Michelle Franklin (staff), Martha Whitman (SDS), Sharret Rose (staff), Will Prokopiak (staff), John Mulle (staff), Valerie Smith (staff), Peter Chestnut (finance committee), David Ritchie (finance committee)

The meeting started at 5:33 p.m. at the Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque. Jennifer Cornish facilitated and Deborah Good took notes.

1. Welcome

Issues Raised: None

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

2. Approve the Agenda

Issues Raised:

- Ariana moves and James seconds to approve the agenda.

Actions Taken: The agenda is approved unanimously.

Actions Required: None

3. Member Comments

Issues Raised:

- Board received an email from a clerk at the Gallup store in response to the Co-opera article on last month's Board Study, which focused on diversity and equity. This clerk made the suggestion that we might want to promote some of our materials/products using Native American terms for health and well-being. She acknowledged that the co-op does a lot but could do more to welcome diverse members.

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

4. Consent Agenda

- a. Board Meeting Minutes (September 15, 2015)
- b. Member Engagement Committee Minutes (September 21, 2015)
- c. Finance Committee Minutes (October 7, 2015)
- d. Board Officers Proposal

Issues Raised:

- Finance Minutes should note that Tracy was present. Deborah will make this change.

- Lisa moves and Ariana seconds to approve the consent agenda.

Actions Taken: The consent agenda is approved unanimously, with the one correction.

Actions Required: Deborah will update the roster per the Board Officer Proposal and send to La Montañita leadership.

5. Management Monitoring Reports – Ends and X1

- Ariana moves and Lisa seconds to approve both reports.
- Interim General Manager (IGM) missed last month’s meeting for a conference, which he reports was time well spent. He presents first on Policy X1, which focuses on customer service, and is the report typically given in September:
 - Pricing is the chief concern raised by member-owners in the Annual Survey.
 - Survey results are generally positive.
 - La Montañita communicates with member-owners in a variety of ways, including through social media, the website, emails, occasional mailings, etc.
- Discussion:
 - Board: Any idea why there was an increase in the response rate?
 - IGM response: Second year that we did it electronically. It was nice to see.
- IGM then provides highlights from the Ends Report, stating that overall, La Montañita is at a good place on the Ends:
 - 53% of CDC sales go to customers other than our stores. This is up from around 20% when we first started.
 - The Southwest Development Services Project supports the second End, “a growing regenerative agricultural sector” by providing consultation to stakeholders all along the value chain. Services include consultation in key areas (e.g. finance, food safety) and capital through the La Montañita Fund.
 - 21,550 pounds of food have gone to homeless shelters in 2015
 - 300 co-op volunteers work with over 60 non-profit partners
 - La Montañita Fund: \$151,250 invested in the LaM FUND by over 60 member-owners; \$64,000 given in loans to New Mexico food producers in 2015
 - Goals: Continue on P-6 work; grow CDC sales; implement a new pricing strategy; and providing education on the importance of the Ends.
- Discussion/Comments:
 - Board member notes that the IGM worked very hard to “connect the dots” to results.
 - IGM was not expected to do Ends reporting, but he thought it was important, and board member is glad for it.
 - Board member expresses interest in a breakdown of the types of entities supplied by the CDC.
 - Board question: What kind of data would you add to next year’s report on the third End, “A thriving and sustainable local economy”?
 - The business plan is key. Success on this End starts with the health of our financial situation.
- Both Monitoring Reports are approved unanimously.

6. Board Study – Diversity, Equity, and Privilege: Part 2

Issues Raised: See Appendix A

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

7. Board Functioning

Issues Raised:

- a. Board members to review self-evaluation – First Half of R Policies
 - Average score exceeded the minimum required.
 - There was only one comment in the evaluation related to R2.2 needing an update. Ariana will work on updating R2.2.
- b. Retreat dates – Art Sherwood is scheduling for February and March. We are considering having our retreat then, so we need to schedule with him. Board members should hold March 19 and 26. Ariana will check with Art.
- c. Monthly call with Art Sherwood – Ariana will send information to the new Board officers.
- d. Upcoming committee meetings:
 - Member Engagement – Monday, November 9, 5:30pm at the CDC
 - Board Development – TBD
 - Finance – Wednesday, November 11, 5:15 at the CDC

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

8. Task List

Issues Raised: Tasks will be added to the ongoing to-do list in Basecamp:

- Deborah to make requested change to Finance Committee minutes.
- Deborah to write Co-opera article.
- Deborah to prepare the Self-Evaluation Survey for the Second Half of R Policies.
- Deborah to type up notes from the co-op cafes.
- Ariana to work on updating R2.2.
- Deborah to update roster with Board officer changes and send to La Montañita leadership.

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

9. Meeting Evaluation

Issues Raised: No comments.

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

10. Next Meeting Agenda Construction

Issues Raised:

- Patronage dividend
- Proposal for the New Board Member Orientation agenda
- Report on unofficial election results

Actions Taken: None

Actions Required: None

11. Adjourn Regular Session

Issues Raised: James moves and Lisa seconds to adjourn.

Actions Taken: Meeting adjourns at 7:30pm, followed by an executive session.

Actions Required: None

ATTACHMENT A: BOARD STUDY

La Montañita Food Co-op
Board of Directors Meeting – October 20, 2015

Topic – Diversity, Equity, and Privilege: Part 2
Led by: Pauline Lucero, Guest Speaker

Description of Topic: At last month's Board Study, the Board discussed issues of diversity and equity in the co-op's membership, staff, and on the Board. This Board Study is part two of two. Pauline Lucero shared insights based on her one-on-one conversations with several Board members and her reading of the minutes from the September Board Study.

Pauline Lucero Introduction

I am a life-long New Mexican, and I have lived in Albuquerque since 1985. I am the mother of three children. My formal education includes a Masters in Counseling. I have a lot of experience serving on Boards and working with Boards, including serving as the past Board President for Enlace Comunitario and as incoming Board President of Emerge New Mexico. My introduction to cultural competence was through a family advocacy center where I was a therapist. I also work with adults with disabilities, primarily with Spanish-speaking families. I have also worked a lot with Native American communities around the country. Rosemary Romero is a friend, and made the connection.

I want to thank you, the Board, for your efforts. The goal today is to further your conversations about diversity in the La Montañita organization.

Framing the Conversation

I believe that cultural competence is a journey, not a destination – a process, not an event. Cultural humility is key. This means that you are always open to learning and also open to the many different types of diversity that there are. Diversity is so much more than skin color. When we think about ourselves and the many hats we wear in our lifetimes, we can see that diversity encompasses race and ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, language, and others. While we may have privilege in one area, we may not in another.

Every single one of us as a human being has had an experience of being marginalized. And it feels awful. If we can remember what that felt like, we can be more ready to hear what it is like for other people. One of my favorite quotes: *We want to be judged by the intent of our actions. We want to judge others on the impact of their actions.*

We have a common goal. We don't want anyone to feel attacked or judged. Someone in a workshop once said, "I want to participate in sticking my foot in my mouth." Mistakes are okay. Groups don't get very far when individuals feel defensive.

Diversity training is not like getting a CPR card. It is an ongoing process.

Theme 1. La Montañita Policy and Practice

- La Montañita does not have a diversity policy in place. This might be something to think about. (What if a decision was made that policies should address the needs of young families, for example?) A Board member points out that La Montañita has a policy only in the sense that there are no policies that exclude anyone.
- Who do you want your Board to reflect? Enlace Comunitario recently decided that they needed a member of the LGBT community on the Board, and that they needed more men on the Board, so they strategically recruited men and people who identify as LGBT.
- At last month's meeting, you discussed the fact that La Montañita does not currently collect any demographic information on its member-owners. If you started to gather information on the demographics of your member-owners, what would you do with it? Why would that information be important to you?
- Do we want the Board and staff to be reflective of the membership? Do we want our membership to be reflective of New Mexico's population as a whole, or the communities in which we are embedded? If so, we need to know the characteristics of our members. What areas of diversity are you going to focus on? Race and ethnicity? Sexual orientation? Gender?
- There is a stereotypical "co-opper." We need to be aware of the diverse needs and different opinions of our member-owners. We make assumptions that aren't always correct about who they are and what they need. How to introduce ourselves into communities that may not know we exist or who we are, or have their own assumptions that the co-op is "a bunch of white hippies who drive Subarus"?
- People like to go places where they feel welcome—where they see themselves. Opportunity: The more diverse our staff are, the more welcome new employees and member-owners from diverse backgrounds will feel. Eventually that will impact the composition of the Board.
- There are ways to operationalize an interest in welcoming a more diverse membership. And then it would be important to track the change. For example, "Yo hablo Español" signs can be effective.

Theme 2. Having Cultural Humility and Awareness

- In New Mexico, it is important to remember the cultural differences between native New Mexicans and recent Mexican immigrants. If you want someone on the Board to help represent the Hispanic population in New Mexico – which Hispanic population?
- There is a model called Community Readiness out of the University of Colorado. People would try to address a problem by pouring resources at it, and the projects would fail. Why? They realized that if they didn't meet the community where they were at and just threw money at the problem, real change did not happen. In order to move a community, you had to know where they were on a continuum and had to have the strategies to move them to the next place. It's important to move more methodically or slowly than to push things through. Success usually requires that you achieve buy-in from a community's leaders.
- It could make sense to make some changes in marketing or product selection to meet the needs of a more diverse community, but one note of caution - Doing little cosmetic things can backfire, especially if you don't include the important people in that community, and you're using their culture without their permission. Relationship-building is very important.

Theme 3. Self-Awareness

- To what extent can you have a successful change in an organization without wrestling your own personal bias? Self-awareness is important to being a human being. Biases are learned. Self-awareness is important in the hiring and supervisory processes.
- The Google video that Board members watched in preparation for Board study showed that over time, a little bit of bias made a significant impact in an organization. The video refers to an online Implicit Association test to help individuals recognize their own biases:
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>
- Self-awareness can result in change. Start tracking what you eat and the money you spend, and you will start to see changes in your behavior.

Theme 4. Consequences of Diversifying

- When we include people who are different from us, it is a lot less cozy, and certain organizational practices and policies might need to change. In some organizations, the dress code has needed to change to welcome a more diverse staff.
- When you start to diversify, some people will leave. This can happen at the board level. These are volunteer positions, and if someone no longer feels like it is a fit for them, there is not a lot keeping them. People can feel like they will no longer be relevant. It can be difficult—because what you are talking about is sharing power.
- And sometimes people will voluntarily step away because they recognize that there needs to be room for other perspectives and backgrounds not currently represented.