

# OKLAHOMA FOOD COOPERATIVE

## BOARD MEETING

### OAEC

February 7, 2010

Board members present - Deedra Hovey, April Harrington, Dawn Mahiya, Chelsey Simpson, Greg Parker, Leah Afill, Robert Waldrop, Kara Joy McKee, Paulette Rink, and Walter Kelley.

Robert brought the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. The Board adopted the agenda and approved the minutes for the January, 2010 meeting.

#### **V P for Customers report**

Chelsey is still working with KOSU on advertisements and member underwriting. A Mac G4 computer has been donated to the Co-op, and it is at the Operations Center. She also has a spare laptop if we need it. Larry Wright wants to have a two day conference in El Reno this summer to get people together to discuss local food. Chelsey would like the conference to emphasize the distribution issue. Robert mentioned that the Nebraska co-op is applying for a grant to bring together all our daughter co-ops, of which there are now about 16. This meeting would allow representatives to share their experiences and challenges.

Chelsey plans to partner with Food and Agricultural Products to design a survey for our customers. The most important goal is to determine why some people have never ordered or have stopped ordering. They could also ask producers about their experiences with the Co-op. Customers could be asked about their priorities in ordering food: organic, local, etc. and about their view of customer service. FAP has done similar surveys with other groups. They will want our permission to publish the results. Chelsey will ask them to send a representative to our next meeting to make a presentation.

She has been in contact with the Nebraska co-op, and they will allow us to use their template for the front page of their website. We should consider a new logo for the Co-op, since the current one is not good for small reproductions. She suggests a logo contest, which could involve students and be good PR for the Co-op.

**Motion: the Co-op will conduct a contest for a new logo.** (Deedra, Paulette)

The motion passed with one negative vote.

The membership books are done with a first printing of 250.

## **Standards report**

Lori told the Board that Lisa is now acting as secretary for the Standards Committee.

**Motion: the Board approves Lisa as a new member of the Standards Committee.** (April, Dawn)

The motion passed unanimously.

The Standards Committee is currently discussing procedures for changing standards and for processing applications. They will also work on formulating standards for processed foods involving co-packers. Really Good Barbecue has applied to sell barbecue sauce that is made with the help of a co-packer.

**Motion: the Board delays considering the application of Really Good Barbecue until new standards for prepared foods using co-packers are adopted.** (Walter, April)

The motion passed with 7 in favor, 2 opposed, and 1 abstention. The following motion passed unanimously:

**Motion: the Board approves Topeca Coffee to sell coffee through the Co-op, subject to a successful inspection.** (Deedra, April)

Lori said that some producers are including free samples with customer orders, and some of these do not list ingredients. The next motion was adopted without dissent:

**Motion: All samples must include a list of ingredients and be marked clearly as a sample.** (Chelsey, Kara Joy)

The Standards Committee has suspended new applications until they complete their present discussion. Lori asked what other issues Standards should be addressing. Paulette would like for the application form to include a place to list references of people associated with the Co-op. Also, there should be a question about the ingredients of feed. The Standards Committee should study what ingredients the Co-op will allow in feed. The application should also include a question about how long animals are being maintained by the producer after they have been purchased. The Co-op should have an animal-specific policy on this. The Standards Committee is planning to have separate application forms for whole foods, processed foods, and foods prepared with the use of a co-packer. Finally, additional questions about religious content of products may be added to the nonfood application.

Based on a request by Kim Barker, the Board passed the following motion with one abstention:

**Motion: the Board approves the refunding of Kim Barker's membership and writing off his balance owed as bad debt.** (Greg, Leah)

### **Financial report**

April reported that the cost (\$6,486) of the stolen trailer was written off this month, resulting in a negative net income of -\$3,854 for the month of December. We had a surplus for 2009, partly due to the grant money received. The Co-op delivered 125,932 products in 2009, which had a value of \$694,383. They are still writing off bad debts, but the new system will allow this process to terminate.

April has completed a breakdown of work credits paid for various locations. For example, 42% of the credits were earned at the Operations Center. Some routes are of concern because of the high ratio of cost to the value of product sold. The worst case is the Guymon site, which cost \$1488 for 20 orders delivered! Ponca City and Tahlequah are currently losing money as well. There are other areas where we should consider establishing pickup sites, such as Guthrie/north Edmond.

Taxes are in progress: income data needs to be extracted cleanly. 1099's are done for the 19 people who are collecting significant work credits.

### **CIO report**

Greg is still doing a lot of work on the system. He will let prospective producers know when applications are restarted. He had a very satisfactory virtual meeting about the on-line financial work.

### **Producer report**

Paulette said that inspections of new producers are ongoing and everything is under control.

### **General Operations Manager report**

Kara Joy will be seeking candidates for the open Route Coordinator and Volunteers Coordinator positions. She is working with Matt on the logistics team. Workdays will be scheduled regularly on Thursdays. A time sheet has been sent to Board members to show how her hours will be recorded. Photos will be taken at the annual meeting to make it easier for members to put faces with names.

### **Membership report**

Dawn said that 49 new memberships were received in January.

**Motion: the Board accepts the new memberships and issues stock for them.**  
(Dawn, April)

She has been getting an unusually large number of applications for low income memberships, including at least 3 in the last week. We have only \$490 in the fund for these memberships. April reported that we can now track work credits more accurately, so in some cases people can earn a membership by that route. We now have about 2900 memberships valued at about \$59 per membership. We need to complete the membership audit.

### **Wallace Center Program**

April and Kara Joy attended this meeting in Washington DC. April was one of five speakers, and she talked about the history of the Co-op and its organization and procedures, as well as the government regulations we deal with, emphasizing that reasonable regulations are essential for our model to succeed. The audience, which was made up largely of policy makers, showed much interest in her presentation. The USDA is doing a study that includes our model. Some policy makers have expressed an interest in meeting with us, and it is important that we examine our mission, standards, etc.

They also met with an aid of Representative Dan Boren. They are enthusiastic about working with us in order to stimulate agricultural economic development in their district. Greenmarket also wants to visit us to exchange ideas.

### **Annual Meeting**

Announcements of the meeting must be posted at each pickup site in February. Prizes will be awarded at the meeting, so tickets will be distributed when people check in. Also, ballots will be given out to each membership represented at check-in. People who are going to vote in place of an absent membership must be identified by previous email or by written statement from the member.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Submitted by Walter Kelley, Secretary

