

DPFC Board Meeting Minutes August 21, 2023

Meeting minutes by Nora Bryne

In Attendance: Brock Auerbach-Lynn, Victoria Birkbeck, Whytnee Bush, Nora Bryne, Christine Bucheit,, I'Talia McCarthy

Meeting Agenda (Decision)

Meeting agenda approved unanimously by the Board.

Owner Comments (Listening, XX)

Positive feedback on new signage and return of bulk spices in glass containers.

David Resigned to Become Produce Manager

David's resignation from the Board due to accepting the Produce Manager role approved unanimously by the Board.

Board Secretary Going Forward

I'Talia noted the Board Secretary is a critical role for business licenses and other licenses. Due to Mike leaving his seat, the role needs to be filled by a Board member with a longer term due to the setup process. Christine taking on the Board Secretary role for the year approved unanimously by the Board.

Action Items

- *Christine to work with Brock to complete finger-printing.*
- *Mike to sync with Christine and I'Talia to review role duties.*
- *I'Talia to remove Mike from Chase account and add Brock.*

Operations

June and July Financials

Brock noted June revenue increased from the previous month and July is expected to increase as well. Christine asked how the staff are feeling. I'Talia noted staff are feeling positive and writing smiley faces next to sales totals. I'Talia reported a good amount of local vendors have been paid, and the store will continue to bring back more local vendors. Monthly restaurant tax is changing slightly due to sushi. I'Talia noted an increase but not drastic. Suzanne asked how ordering and stocking is going with Firebrand's suggestions. I'Talia noted the challenge due to UNFI running out of product frequently. I'Talia reached out to NCGI asking about challenges, and they indicated a warehouse change is not allowed currently. I'Talia noted managers will order outside of Firebrand sets to fill holes on shelves.

Hiring

I'Talia discussed hiring three new people for the center store, produce, front end, and cashier. Alexis will return to take on an open night lead cashier role. I'Talia has more time to focus on GM duties. Currently

hiring is paused to ensure trends for next month stay within 16-17% range. Suzanne asked if I'Talia will stay in the deli. I'Talia noted difficulties in hiring for the deli and would prefer to stay to train new deli staff. I'Talia also noted growing pains with the produce department due to the new manager. I'Talia will continue to work closely with David on ordering. David is attending monthly produce manager group meetings led by Tim of NCG. Victoria asked I'Talia if Lis started in the marketing role. I'Talia noted Lis started in late July and happy with work so far. There is more engagement on social media, especially Facebook and Instagram. I'Talia also noted a need for more people to take pictures with products and in the store to use in social media posts.

Update on landlord and building next door

I'Talia reported no communication with the landlord. No communication since May. Leaks from a nearby building continue, so no rent is being paid. I'Talia noted the potential need to contact an attorney. I'Talia noted the need for more painting per Firebrand's plan, as well as touch-ups to the vinyl due to the type of paint used on walls. Christine asked about timing for painting. I'Talia noted the earliest time would be October, and most likely after the holidays in January.

Action Items

- I'Talia to report back on produce manager's training progress.
- I'Talia to contact person for free vinyl touch-ups.
- Brock to check in with the Alderperson about landlord communication.
- Board to take pictures with products and in the store, and email them to I'Talia.

Additional Topics

FY23 Financial Review

Suzanne noted a need to get loan deferral negotiated as soon as possible to complete FY23 financial review. Preferred due date for a signed loan deferral agreement is by October 1. Suzanne also noted \$6,000 in cash flow needed by November regardless, as well as payment to Culminate.

Feedback from Firebrand

Brock asked I'Talia about upkeep of Firebrand's sets, ordering, maintaining signage, and customer service. I'Talia noted most staff have a strong desire to upkeep sets, especially with increased revenue. New reusable opening and closing checklists are helpful with accountability and training new team members. I'Talia noted changing work culture is hard and takes time. Victoria asked about all staff meetings. I'Talia noted all-staff meetings typically occur twice a year and the last one was in April. The Union regularly meets and updates all staff. I'Talia reported staff are meeting in team huddles regularly, and using Slack to communicate. Whytnee asked if Slack can be used for checklists. I'Talia noted not all staff want to use Slack on their phones. Whytnee asked about the status of the merchandising book per Firebrand. I'Talia recently received information and will print it out for employees.

Brock asked I'Talia how close Edwin and Phil work with ordering and the process of finances. I'Talia noted Edwin is financial controller to ensure the store is not in negative and cushions it, and uses cash flow spreadsheet from old CPA and ensures bills are mapped out. Phil is ordering for the entire store except produce, and works closely with Edwin. Brock noted a need to have consistency of items on the

shelves. I'Talia reported her process of Monday walkthroughs with Phil throughout the store to check on inventory. I'Talia noted UNFI discontinuing 200-300 items a week, and they usually put an expected return in stock.

Victoria noted maintenance from Firebrand sounds good but unclear about implementation/growth. Whytnee highlighted takeaways from Firebrand and noted deli could make a lot of money. I'Talia reminded the Board that hiring for a deli is difficult right now, potentially due to the pay. Brock asked if a deli manager role would help with hiring. I'Talia noted continued increase in revenue is needed before establishing that type of role. I'Talia has not received a margin report from Firebrand to update store tags. Nora asked about sustainability of the work with people's roles. I'Talia noted there is a process and assisting roles with management are out. Mike noted policy B.9 to ensure services continue after GM leaves. Brock noted Firebrand was brought in to help the immediate store situation. Christine noted the store is still in the stabilizing phase.

Action Items

→ Brock to follow-up with Firebrand about the margin report.

Love Local Event

The Love Local Event will take place on September 17, 2023. Brock asked I'Talia when the store will start publicizing vendors. I'Talia reported Lis suggests waiting two weeks prior to the event. I'Talia noted local neighborhood businesses will also have tables at the event, along with local producers featured in the store. Victoria asked what the Board roles are during the event. I'Talia noted all vendors will bring their own tables and supplies to set up. The Board will set up their table and promote the upcoming Annual Meeting and elections.

Action Items

→ Board to promote Annual meeting, elections and potentially volunteer sign-up at Love Local Event.

→ I'Talia to send vendor list to Brock for a newsletter.

CCLF Meeting

The upcoming in-person meeting with CCLF will be at DPFC on Wednesday, August 23 at 12:00pm. Brock reported a need for \$10,000 full deferral. Brock asked the Board about concrete events and goals for the store to report to CCLF. Christine noted the deli manager role, removal of salad bar and painting store. Suzanne reminded the Board that updates must be accounted for in the current budget. Whytnee noted a need for a more robust hands-on owner program. I'Talia noted that would require hands-on training during owner orientation. I'Talia also noted hands-on owner programs take capacity to facilitate. I'Talia reminded the Board that the store is still in very early stages of turnaround, and culture changes take time. I'Talia noted positive feedback from staff, customers, and owners. Suzanne noted a need for deferment regardless of Firebrand.

Elections / Recruitment

Brock asked the Board for feedback on messaging with recruitment for elections. Whytnee noted the intake form is live and a few owners have shown interest already from word of mouth and Board tabling. There are five vacant seats from Victoria, Whytnee, David, Mike, and Troy. Brock noted the Board will promote elections at the Local Love event.

Action Items

→ *I'Talia to make a QR code for the Local Love event.*

Annual Meeting Planning

Christine reported the Annual Owner Meeting is scheduled for November 2, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the cafe. Christine and Victoria met to work on planning. Christine noted owners will vote on local nonprofits for the quarterly round-up register program. I'Talia noted a hot bar and goody bags will be available for attendees.

Action Items

→ *I'Talia to work with Lis on creating an Annual Owner Meeting share out in future social media and marketing.*

→ *Suzanne to ask Nilda for a list of local nonprofits.*

Firebrand Phase 2, Upcoming Maturity, Co-op's plan for Capital Raise

Not discussed due to time.

Upcoming Items, Next Agenda (Decision)

No upcoming items discussed due to crisis management status of the store and Board meetings.

Approvals (Decision)

All items listed below approved unanimously by the Board:

- July meeting minutes, p.2
- Aug Finance Committee Minutes, p.4
- New Owners / Owner Equity Repurchases, p. 8

Adjourn (Decision, XX)

Meeting is adjourned unanimously by the Board.

PROPOSED AGENDA

Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, Aug 21, 6-8pm @ Dill Pickle Food Co-op + [Zoom Option](#)

Facilitator: Brock Minutes: TBD

Time	Item (lead, outcome) // Reference, page #	Mins
6:00	Opening, Check-in (Meeting norms + director check-ins)	5
6:05	Meeting Agenda (Decision) <i>Adopt proposed agenda, p.1</i>	5
6:10	Owner Comments (Listening, XX)	5
6:15	David Resigned to Become Produce Manager	2
6:15	Board Secretary Going Forward	3
6:20	Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● June Financials ● July Revenue Numbers ● Hiring ● Store Changes ● Update on landlord and building next door 	10
6:30	Additional Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FY23 Financial Review - timing and cost ● Feedback from Firebrand - how to implement it and future assistance needed ● Love Local Event ● CCLF Meeting - Wed, 8/23 at 12pm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Firebrand Phase 2 ○ Upcoming Maturity ○ Co-op's plan for Capital Raise ● Elections / Recruitment ● Annual Meeting Planning 	45
7:15	Upcoming Items, Next Agenda (Decision) <i>Review Annual Board Calendar, p.XX</i>	5
7:20	Approvals (Decision) <i>July meeting minutes, p.2</i> <i>Aug Finance Committee Minutes, p.4</i> <i>New Owners / Owner Equity Repurchases, p. 8</i>	1

7:21 **If Time Allows:** [Crisis Management plan](#)

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7:36 **Adjourn** (Decision, XX)