

Annual Meeting  
**Monday, October 25, 2021** via Zoom  
Facilitator: Brock Auerbach-Lynn | Minutes: Gretchen Johnson

**Directors:** Victoria Birkbeck, Peter Frank, Mike Strode, Whytnee Bush, Troy Martin, Brock Auerbach-Lynn. **Owners:** l'Talia McCarthy, Gretchen Johnson, Nancy McClelland, Christine Bucheit, Katie Maxwell, Sean Shatto, Suzanne Keer **Employees:** Phillip Shoemaker, Robert Curtis, David Nobel

**6:03 Welcome** (B.Auerbach-Lynn)

- Opening comments: Imagine the Dill Pickle in 2022. What are your dreams?
- Interactive poll: (profitable, tied to the community, increased diversity of offerings)

**6:10 Overview of Board Candidates** (B.Auerbach-Lynn)

- Voting open now through 11:59 pm on October 27
- Candidate presentations
  - V. Birkbeck: Would like to continue to build on work, follow through on plans
  - B. Auerbach-Lynn: Challenging/invigorating work, would like to provide guidance & support, see fruits of labor
  - C. Bucheit: Advocate for DPFC in her personal life, has contributed/participated, would like to continue to build community
  - A. Abdullah: Previous prepared foods manager at DPFC; would like to invest in DPFC so it can be model for other coops in the city
  - S. Keers: Very committed to coops (most democratic form of business); has served twice before on the board
- Proposed bylaw amendments
  - Staff ownership (Section 2.1): Creates pathway to staff ownership option
  - Employees as directors: Sets parameters for employees to sit on board of directors

**6:20 Operations Report** (l. McCarthy)

- Our ends: Collective responsibility to support success at coop
- 314 new owners this year; now at 3000 total. 600 transactions/day; facing decline in sales.
- Focus on building relationships with local vendors; safety practices; educating owners & deepening participation
- Overview of wages/benefits for employees
- Expanding Coop Basics program/LINK Match/EBT sales
- Despite challenges, proud of new initiatives: 80% of staff are local residents; revamped onboarding process; anti-racism education program for staff & directors

- Facing challenges: Still in a scary financial situation, unless sales increase we will be back in the same dire situation.
- Actions to take: Join Hands On Owners program; refer people; contribute to campaign; max out equity
- Humbled and awed by resilience of community.

#### 6:30 **Treasurer's Report** (P. Frank)

- Fiscal year overview (7/1/20-6/30/21): Been a year of crisis. Sought support from owners and other partners.
- Profit/loss sheet: Fell short by \$300,000 in sales projection; got close to closing. As sales declined, costs increased (mostly personnel). Attempted to lower costs but most were unavoidable.
- Assets declined primarily due to depreciation; liabilities grew
- Haven't been able to pay loans; in close communication with lenders. Also owe nearly \$500,000 to vendors.
- Member equity continues to grow, although it will be negative for a long time.
- Overview of how DPFC managed to stay open: Raised capital; reduced expenses; deferred debt payments; built new accounting and financial management systems; monitor cash closely to prevent future fraud; applied for federal assistance programs.
- Currently waiting for funding from federal government; lots of red tape and bureaucracy
- Will keep maintaining relationships with loaners and vendors; need to grow sales!

#### 6:58 **Board President's Report** (V. Birkbeck)

- Very difficult year: Aware of precarious of situation in January
- Thanks to owners, I. McCarthy, directors: always conscious of duty to owners
- One year since agreement with IWW; devastating coverage of relations but things have improved
- Conflict can lead to generative change
- There has been a lot of growth; only coop with a storefront in the city of Chicago
- Emphasis on need for sales growth
- Look forward to seeing plans come to fruition

#### 7:05 **Photo Slideshow** (V. Birkbeck)

#### 7:10 **Q&A Session**

- Main reason for decline in sales?
  - General economic climate + more eating out as city opened up
  - Issues with IWW
  - Challenges with inventory
- Plan to increase owner participation?
  - Discuss this question every month in owner linkage committee
  - Quarterly owner forums
  - The Brine newsletter

- Owner orientations
- How can people help?
  - Shop, encourage ownership, max out equity, participate in owner loan program
- What was the song in the photo slideshow?
  - “The Pickles Song” by John Cosgrove
- What is DPFC doing for marketing?
  - Reach new customers through ownership campaign and incentives for referral
  - Outreach to new residential buildings in neighborhood
  - Great press with vendors
  - Heavily targeting local population
  - Working on updating external store appearance (have received feedback that it doesn’t read as a grocery store)
- Positive press opportunities?
  - Opportunities for sure! Union signage in neighborhood; union solidarity shop on Wednesdays

**7:25 Interactive DPFC Trivia**

**7:36 Adjourned.**