

BRIARPATCH COOPERATIVE OF NEVADA COUNTY, INC.
Annual Owner Meeting
MINUTES May 25, 2021
Via Zoom Conference Call

Board of Directors Present: Rachel Berry, Kwong Chew, Jonathan Collier, Richard Drace, Kali Feiereisel, Mark Fenton, Katie Ivy, Alana Lucia, Alan Weisberg

Staff, Owners & Guests Present: see list of participants in Appendix attached.

1.0 Land Acknowledgement & Call to Order: Owner Relations Coordinator, Chelle Wheatley opened the meeting and offered an acknowledgement of our use of the lands of the Nisenan people. The meeting was called to order by Alan Weisberg, at 7:02 p.m.

2.0 Election Recap: Rebecca Torpie, Marketing Manager, summarized the 2021 Board Election results, confirming incumbents Rachel Berry, Richard Drace and Mark Fenton as winners. 917 owners voted this year (9.2% participation) and the Co-op donated \$2.00 per vote, or \$1,834, to the Bear Yuba Land Trust Trails Fund.

3.0 Board Chair Address:

2.1 Board Director Alan Weisberg announced that Alana Lucia has been elected as Board President for 2021-2022 and acknowledged the strength and diversity of the current Board. He went on to summarize 2020 Co-op activity, including the highest ever patronage dividend, store improvements, future Auburn store expansion and pandemic response during a challenging year. In addition to a strong financial position, our focus on social, environmental and justice issues this past year have aligned strongly with our Ends Policies. Highlights included the local farm loan program, proactive sustainability goals, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work done by the Board and staff. The expansion to a second store in Auburn in Spring of 2022 is a culmination of years of planning and hard work.

3.0 2019 Financial Results:

3.1 Board Treasurer Mark Fenton presented the Co-op's 2020 financial results. He noted it was a profitable year, with a high net income due to pandemic sales surges, reduced staff availability and expense, and an \$800,000 Paycheck Protection Program loan which was used for pandemic "Hero Pay" and staff wage increases. There was an increase in sales over last year, due largely to the pandemic, with a majority of sales coming from owners. Gross profit and operating costs as a percent of sales remained consistent with the prior year. Our balance sheet is favorable, with a strong cash position and low debt balance in relation to assets and equity. Owner equity increased with over 1,000 new owners joining in 2020. Lastly, the annual auditors' review showed no irregularities or concerns.

4.0 State of the Co-op

4.1 General Manger Chris Maher reflected on the state of the Co-op, after a very challenging pandemic year. He noted the creative pivoting that occurred to support owners, staff and the community. Highlights included leveraging our relationship with national suppliers to keep the shelves stocked, an appreciation campaign from our marketing department for first responders and health care workers, and support of staff with augmented paid time off and premium Hero Pay that continues to this day.

Beyond navigating the COVID-19 pandemic, the Co-op stayed focus on progress toward our Ends policies, with community support of non-profit organizations, loan guarantees for local farmers and online cooking classes, all while offering a payout of patronage to our owners and retaining funds to reinvest in our store. The expansion to an additional Auburn store is slated for Spring/Summer of 2022.

Chris extended his thanks to the Board of Directors for their resolve, positivity and creativity throughout the year.

5.0 Owner Q&A

5.1 Chris opened the meeting to participant Q&A and offered the following responses:

- Staff information biographies are no longer on our website, as we have learned our Marketing department is more effective at funneling questions to the appropriate staff member.
- The Co-op is actively working to understand the issues faced by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) farmers/ranchers in the area and the country. The expansion to Auburn will offer more opportunities to aid in this effort.
- The most tenured members on staff are Mary Lou and Liz (35 years).
- Special orders will begin again in the future, with changes, as staffing levels allow. We know it is a high priority for many customers.
- Appreciation was expressed for the Annual Report and for the Curbside Program.
- Bakery packaging post-COVID will be evaluated, for better alignment with our sustainability goals.

6.0 Meeting Adjournment: The Owner Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Mary Hunter on May 27, 2021.

APPROVED BY: 

DATE: 6/30/21

(These minutes were approved by the Board of Directors on June 29th, 2021. The official signed copy is on file.)

APPENDIX

2021 BriarPatch Annual Owner Meeting – May 25, 2021

Attendee List

Board Directors and Panelists (13)

Mary Hunter, Admin
Chelle Wheatley, Owner Relations
Mark Fenton, Board Director
Richard Drace, Board Director
Jonathan Collier, Board Director
Kwong Chew, Board Director
Rebecca Torpie, Marketing Manager
Alana Lucia, Board Director
Chris Maher, General Manager
Kali Feiereisel, Board Director
Rachel Berry, Board Director
Katie Ivy, Board Director
Alan Weisberg, Board Director

Registered Attendees (17)

Andrea Echegaray
Wendy Yun
Karen Ahrns
Leslie Gault
Tomas Kuzara
John Watson
Allen Seidner
Bruce Waln
Sonja Marbry
Janet Collins
Jason Patton
Aimee Retzler
Joseph Guida
Stephanie Mandel
Kaitlyn Chow
Carol Lee Meinhold
Rick Partridge

Registered, did not Attend (34)

Camille Wilkinson
Kay Hogan
Ann McCandless
Olivia Mumpower
Kevin Hanson
Christine Newsom
Rachel Finson
Amber Vanderpol
Julia Carol
Judy Springer
Elizabeth Healy
Mary Henry
Kathleen Sanguinetti
Jill Corrigan
Tammi Riedl
Paul Schwartz
Hilary Dart
Deb Gibbs
Mike and Canyon Sharits
Claudia Orlando
Becky Goodwin
Susan Hennings
Megan Black
Judy Silberman
Carolyn Battaini
Karen Tanner
Janet Bullock
Kimberly Clouse
Gary Lehar
Christy Barden
Lynn Fillo
Sue Nepstead
Julia Urcis
Alina Torres