

Draft Minutes  
French Broad Food Coop  
Annual Owners' Meeting  
June 7, 2015

The meeting started at 2:30 pm. with facilitator Desiree Adaway. The meeting began with welcome remarks and introduction of Board members and managers present.

Cari Watson moved to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Scot Quaranda moved to suspend Robert's Rules of Order. Motion carried.

### **Meeting Summary:**

- **Owner Comments at the start of the meeting & throughout**
- **President's address**
- **Minutes of 2014 Annual Meeting approved.**
- **General Manager's (GM) Report, attached**
- **Q & A session & additional owner comments**
- **Break out groups & reports, attached**
- **Introduction to opportunities for owner investment in expansion**
- **Q & A**
- **Discussion of proposed bylaws revisions**
- **Board candidates introduced**
- **Closing comments from owners**

### **Owner comments:**

- Paul Gallimore – Is there someone here who can give us a historical perspective on the coop? Response – that is part of the celebration & dinner later.
- Mary Stair – I'm so pleased with this co-op and what it is saying without words. We create open space to linger, feel safe, meet friends. I would encourage more grass & trees. Keep it a place that says, "Welcome"
- Ann Gietzen – Would like an update on what's happening with the purchase of the building at 76 Biltmore. Response – Bobby will address in the GM report. Thanks to Bobby, all staff, and the Board – this is the best the co-op has ever been.
- Rachael Bliss – Requests that we have bananas that are not from Del Monte or Chiquita. Buy from companies not owned by larger corporations.
- Evangeline Glasgow – Would like to see more meat options.
- Geri Soloman – I see more & more growth in staff, fewer worker owners. The co-op really cares about being a co-op.
- Jeff Mendelson – appreciates fresh food; co-op is doing a great job.
- Steven \_\_\_\_\_ - appreciates the co-op hours, the diversity of local foods, and places to sit.
- Hari Mander – appreciates local foods and GMO-free foods.
- Susan \_\_\_\_\_ - Glad to see the co-op at LEAF.
- Sage Turner – We have the largest living wage population in the US. We are the first grocery in the nation to be living wage certified.
- Michelle Smith - Appreciates our fiscal health, the management of resources, and the thought that has gone into operating the co-op. Hope we are committed to having member voices heard.
- Cari Watson – I appreciate that I don't have to check labels in the produce department.
- Razi El – Thanks the co-op for the opportunity to lease space.
- Kiri \_\_\_\_\_ - It's exciting to walk into the store & feel like I'm at home.

- Jenny Johnson – I'm utterly appreciative of every staff member. There is so much expertise, it blows me away. One request – please label gluten free foods on the food bar.
- Ann Craig – Thanks to the Board for all you do. This is the first year in many that we're not having to drag people in for the meeting. The vibe is so different – people are joining together for a common cause & vision. It can be a struggle to get to where the good of the whole benefits the good of the individual.
- Sage Turner – I've never heard so many appreciative comments.
- John Senechal – long time owner – It's as good as it could have been.
- Will Kaylor – appreciates people showing up. The Board has always tried to get owners to come to meetings. The store looks & feels great.
- Justina Prenatt acknowledged all former Board members.

**President's address: Justina Prenatt**

Minutes of the 2014 Annual Owners' Meeting were approved as presented.

**GM Report: Bobby Sullivan** (full report attached)

**Q & A session and additional owner comments:**

- Phil Pritchard asked for a few highlights of the trip to DC. The trip was about defeating the proposed law for GMO labeling.
- Cari Watson – I'm confused as to how the housing piece fits in to the co-op expansion. Response – It has to do with the need in our area for affordable housing. MHO (Mountain Housing Opportunities) may be able to help with financing. With affordable housing, we can be better contributors to the community.
- Ann Gietzen – asks for clarification – are we trying to buy this building (76 Biltmore)? Response – yes. We can't speak to numbers at this point, but the grounds lease is in our favor. Ann – So the Board has the authority to put us in debt? Response – yes. The total acreage is approximately 2.15 acres.
- Marty \_\_\_\_\_ - Question about selling certain items because they are on our national ads? Response – Some companies have donated to fighting GMO labeling; sometimes it is a parent company. Co-ops are trying to get away from being food police – give people information – sometimes shoppers don't know who the offenders are.

**Break-out groups:**

All participants were invited to circulate and pollinate ideas at one of six stations to further refine ideas put forth at the Community Input Meeting. Each station sought community input on the question,

“How can FBFC fulfill the vision of creating \_\_\_\_\_, while still having a dedicated focus on our natural food store?”

1. a community hub & cafe
2. an environmentally sustainable building
3. green space (possible food production, bee raising)
4. education and community outreach
5. stores/offices/affordable housing
6. a local/cooperative business incubator

Groups were asked to distill 3 top ideas from the brainstorm. They are as follows:

1. Community hub & cafe
  - Entertainment – paid, volunteer, send out email about events, music/poetry/education; inviting

avenue into the space, dedicated areas both indoors & outdoors, monthly email for these events & entertainment.

- Cafe – juice bar, raw food, in-house food, refresh hot bar/salad bar, Health Dept guidelines for safe service, grain free options, larger more comfortable eating area.
2. Environmentally sustainable building
    - Renewable energy – photovoltaics, battery back up, microgrid, geothermal, wind, solar hot water
    - Advanced building engineering – LEED; Living Building Challenge; support for future expansions; super-insulate new construction.
    - Energy capture & recycling – wastewater capture/greywater; freezer heat hot water; rain capture/filtration.
  3. Green space
    - Garden – buildings filled with hydroponics; using local farmers; ionized water – local resources' fruit trees on site & off; local perennial permaculture garden involving local schools; off site food production; rooftop gardens; outdoor local vending; water feature.
    - Bees – population of bees (non-aggressive); butterfly/bee/hummingbird garden
    - Inviting space – swings, hammocks, picnic tables, courtyard, open space accessible only through the building.
  4. Education and community outreach
    - Handicapped accessible – first floor space for classes
    - Divisible space that is visible & seen by shoppers
    - Sign in store announcing classes and worker/owner opportunities (both in store & in community opportunities).
  5. Stores/offices/affordable housing
    - (Summary sheet was not submitted.)
  6. Local/cooperative business incubator
    - Teach co-operation. Make available educational materials on co-op model & loving wage
    - Temporary office space to rent during the day; possible band practice in evening
    - Synergy with Mountain Bizworks.

### **Opportunities for owner investment:**

- Board member Pauline Heyne talked about fixed-rate investment. We are currently working on updating our owner database.
- Board member Bob LeRoy gave examples of how other co-ops around the country have handled owner investment in expansion projects.

### **Q & A**

- \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ Would like to find copies of information about dimensions of the property. Would like to start doing sketches of possibilities. Response – We will figure out how to get that information to owners.
- Anne Craig – Suggestion: When you have a price, divide that number among all owners and publicize, “If each owner lends this amount...” Talk to friends; encourage them to join the co-op.
- Steven \_\_\_\_\_ - Suggestion: Create a section of the website with categorical tabs – ways to donate to individual areas.
- \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ - Clarify that this would not be a donation.

**Discussion of proposed bylaws revisions:** (see attached) An over view of the proposed changes was given. Voting for these changes will be via ballot, along with Board elections.

**Board candidates introduced:** The following candidates introduced themselves and made a brief statement. Ballots for Board elections and bylaws changes will be sent via USPS later this month.

- Josh O'Conner
- Andrew Goodheart Brown
- Jennifer Heeder, incumbent
- Danielle Goldstein, incumbent
- Sarah Oram, incumbent
- Pauline Heyne, incumbent

**Closing questions/comments from owners:**

- \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ Do we have an advisory board? Response – There are several committees involved with expansion; most committees may include owner participants.
- Daav Wheeler – We are in the process of creating an expansion advisory council for owners.
- Joanna Walsh – Please send an email reminder about Board meetings and also post information about committees. Response – Board meetings are always the third Thursday of each month and are always open to owners. We have an owner comment period at each meeting.
- Aja Wright – reminder that you can get worker/owner credit for committee work.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:37 pm.

Jean Karpen, Board Assistant