

## **April 6, 2016 Board Meeting**

*@Meetinghouse, 7-9*

**Board present:** Jim Eisenstein, Chris Rand, Joshua Brock (by phone), Sara Spock Carlson, Michele Marchetti, Grace Emmerling, Catie Rasmussen

**Staff present:** Stacey Budd, Jenn Landry

### **Minutes**

Follow-up items from last month's minutes:

- Jenn planned to follow up with staff and volunteers about “match time”: completed
- Follow-up with students about additional insurance questions (Friends School food as inventory): Grace will follow up with insurance policy provider to determine what they consider “inventory” and will cover
- Raw milk disclaimer on the website: yes, has been updated
- CCMA (Amherst, MA) conference in June 9-11; can anyone go? (We could get help with funding.) Contact Michele with interest. Open to volunteers and staff as well.

*The board approved last month's minutes.*

### **Committee updates**

- Outreach/membership (Stacey)
  - Every board member should plan 2 strategies for increasing membership – deadline: April 18.
  - 427 members currently; we need to set the next goal. We are shooting for 600 by the membership meeting. Chris: might want to have an “internal” goal and an “external” goal so we can realistically meet public expectations.
    - Becky: Member referral program: do we have incentive/reward? Cash reward, free delivery, promotional item... Stacey: currently, referrers are eligible for invites to private events.
  - Planning events featuring local experiences – progressive breakfast (coffee roasting at Cheese Shoppe, baking at Gamelli's...)
  - We have been selected to participate in the PSU student seminar. Three teams of students are working on PR strategies for us. Group 1: They will try to engage students at Local Food Night in dining hall, try to get them to sign up for our newsletter. Group 2: will do storytelling interviews, with farmer vendors and local loyalty partners. Group 3: will focus on fitness component – shopping habit studies, etc. They will all present at the Sustainability Expo, April 25. Please attend if you can!
  - Festa Nic is a fundraiser event for F&F, May 22 in Pleasant Gap. We will receive 50% of proceeds after expenses. Board members should plan to attend.

- WPSU is doing a “why I stayed” series. We should piggy-back on their hashtags.
- Stacey could use help making seed bombs Sunday during Earthday Birthday celebration.
- Communications (Sara & Michele)
  - Met with the Grozniks (Brad and Andrea) about our communication campaign.
    - Editorial calendar planning the year’s promotions and messages. We will coordinate social media messages, leaving Diana in charge of publishing updates. Coming up with content (staff, volunteers) will be easier to plug in, if we already know the focus of content we need.
    - Private FB page – concerns arose about creating an exclusionary space/strategy.
    - More ways to get members talking and excited
    - Meeting again next Wednesday at New Leaf, 7pm; anyone is welcome to attend.
- Law school updates (Grace)
  - Grace met with two law students and Ross. They drafted four memos:
    - USDA Organic certification: we don’t need to be certified for what we’re doing, or for the grocery store. We can say we use certified organic [product] but not that we *are* organic.
    - Scope of liability for damaged goods: yes, we are liable for injury/illness due to “damaged goods” under PA law.
    - Raw milk: we need raw milk permits for all raw milk and cheese vendors. Disclaimer has been posted on the website.
    - Personal liability for members and directors (as discussed previously)
  - Should products be considered inventory? We were advised to check with insurance company. (She will.)
  - Michele: we will create a binder for legal reference documents that lives at the Meetinghouse, so it’s always available, through succession.
- Fundraising (Chris) – also see report Chris will circulate
  - Budget: what’s the process for board approval? **Chris will check with Maria about the next three months, request final comments from board members, then seek final approval.** He can get something to board by end of day Friday on budgeted vs. actual on the first three months and go from there.
    - Jim: check ratio of food sales to cost of goods sold
  - Capital campaign (donations): Do we want to do an annual campaign, soliciting donations? Typically, this happens with a “stated purpose” – what is our message and purpose? (Opening a store, etc.) We will work with Ross to get legal advice, build our team, assign work/roles. Chris will continue to work with Stacey on strategy.
  - Grant income (an option, no further discussion took place)

- Financing options (member loans): what's our timeline? Do we sign the lease and then ask for money? Or in reverse?
  - Stacey has learned in her co-op research and courses that doing the paperwork up-front is the way to go, so we have a plan to bring to potential donors.
  - Sara: real estate companies may not sign a lease with us unless we can prove we have money in the bank, coming in, etc. We may need to secure some large loans to go into the process (pre-lease).
  - Jim: we should look into getting a loan guarantee from the federal government.
- Membership: Working with Stacey to streamline the flow of memberships. We should identify opportunities to keep extra work off Stacey's plate.
  - One idea is getting companies involved and offer a business membership. That's on the backburner for now.
  - We can talk to businesses about their wellness programs and how we might be able to help them set up a plan or level of engagement with F&F.
  - Referrals will be a big opportunity for us. Sending specific appeals to members will benefit us, starting by looking through lists of members, identifying personal contacts for outreach.
- Harrisons just came out with a new event space. **Chris will approach them about doing a black-tie fundraiser.**

## OLM update

- General update on retail OLM (Grace)
  - Grace has been conducting weekly meetings with Melanie featuring short, brief updates. Has been good for communication and productivity.
  - Jim proposed finding a way to address the people who signed up for OLM but don't shop. Perhaps Diana can do a directed campaign.
  - We need tech support for OLM technology. Last week, there was a major malfunction with our various technologies (Nationbuilder, Local Food Marketplace, email) that created significant challenges for Melanie. **She predicts that by the end of the week, things should be resolved for now.** We should be on the lookout for an expert who can remain on stand-by.
  - Jim was approached by a grad student in Hershey who was doing a project on produce/veggie prescriptions and wanted Jade Family Farm to participate. Her professor put her in touch with a local professor interested in nutrition. **Jim is going to meet to brainstorm ways to do a local food promotional program.**
  - Michele: member vendors will be recognized with a carrot logo next to their name on the website.

- Amy Lake at Garden & Seafood Shack may be interested in vending through the OLM (or WOLM). They have an abundance of produce at the moment, having expanded by 6 acres and added a greenhouse. **Jim will follow up with her.**
- Free delivery for members? (Grace)
  - How would we compensate drivers, if we weren't collecting fees from customers?
  - Might not be a strong incentive for membership, as most of our delivery customers are members. (Most of our shoppers are members.)
  - *Tabled for now.*

### **Grant updates**

- USDA GRANT & WOLM (Jim and Jenn)
  - Communication has gone out to potential buyers to gauge interest.
  - Jade Family Farm is the only farm that has filled out the offerings form so far. Jay Young will fill one out, we hope.
  - Chef Chris at Otto's would like to be approached about being a WOLM customer. **Jim will reach out.**
  - It's been challenging recruiting customers and producers. One solution is to work with Amish farmers we don't already work with.
  - Jim and Melanie will present about the WOLM to the Southern Allegheny Chef's Association at their meeting – April 11, 7pm at Nittany Lion Inn.
- Update on FMPP grant application to be submitted by Central PA Community Action. Jim is requesting F&F support, which he believes will benefit the retail Online Market. (Jim)
  - Implementing SNAP benefits at farmers markets – Jenn noted this is not allowable through this USDA grant.; FMC is handling allocation of these funds now. **Jim will follow up with FMC for more info.**
  - Forming an umbrella organization of farmers markets, per Bob Ricketts and Laura Young proposal.
  - **Planning meeting will be hosted Thursday, April 7.**

### **Misc:**

- Every time a committee meets, the committee should come up with 4-5 sentences about how the content impacts communications – and send it to the Communications Committee. Jim requested reminders about reporting those communication points.
- Jim: we know what needs to be done, but we are short on time to brainstorm. We could use a second meeting each month for brainstorming. Michele: we will continue this discussion later.

*Meeting ended with a closed session of the board.*