



MEETING MINUTES
Whitewater Grocery Co
Board of Directors

Whitewater Grocery Co.'s mission is to support farm to table eating, to be a model of environmental sustainability, to stimulate the local economy, and to create a "third space" for the Whitewater community. To accomplish this mission, we will build a grocery store that sells local and organic foods and is as affordable and accessible as possible.

Date: January 8, 2018

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Cravath Lake Park Community Building

Attendees: Al Stanek, Anne Hartwick, Brienne Diebolt-Brown, Greg Majkrzak, Jennifer Crone, Joanna Baker, and Lacey Reichwald.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Lacey Reichwald. The mission and vision for the Whitewater Grocery Co. was read by Brienne Diebolt-Brown. The goals for this meeting are to update the Board and owners on the progress of the committees and to create preliminary plans for 2018 actions based on the Stage 2a checklist from the Food Co-op Initiative Guide to Starting a Food Co-op.

The Board allowed time for owner comment, although no owners were present.

Brienne moved to approve the minutes from the [December Board Meeting](#) with one change to the section regarding the delivery of annual meeting report. Second by Al. Motion passed without dissent.

Outreach & Ownership Committee Report

Brienne delivered the Outreach & Ownership Committee report. As of today, we have 311 owners. We processed 7 gift memberships in December. Two gift recipients have returned their ownership agreement forms.

Our first Whitewater Winter Market is on Saturday. The committee is asking Al & Greg to sign-up for a volunteer slot via [Sign Up Genius](#) to help them prepare for when they table on their own.

We have two community presentations scheduled for Fairhaven, and we are currently scheduling presentations for the Lion's Club and for the City Council. Anne extended an invite to Greg & Al to join us for the Lion's Club presentation when it has been scheduled. Lacey is meeting with the City Council President Patrick Singer tomorrow and is planning to bring him up to speed about our latest developments. Brienne has also been in contact with Jan Bilgen at the University regarding how we can get faculty educated and involved in the GroCo. She has also reached out to Young Auditorium regarding purchasing ads or inserts for the next season.



MEETING MINUTES
Whitewater Grocery Co
Board of Directors

Field trips for nearby co-ops (Yahara River Grocery Co-op in Stoughton and Willy Street North in Madison) are being scheduled. These tours will include meetings with a co-op Board member and the GM.

The development of scholarships for ownership shares has been tabled. Fairhaven would like the additional funds they donated to be invested back into the co-op or to go for additional ownership shares for their residents. Brienne did talk about in the future there may be a potential to partner with the Whitewater Community Foundation to facilitate this process.

We are running out of certain T-Shirt sizes, so another order will be placed shortly. Brienne updated the Board about the committee's plan for our January and February newsletters.

The cost for a lawn sign has been increased from \$8 to \$10 to match the cost of a T-Shirt. We are creating role descriptions and applications for internships.

Business Administration Committee Report

Jen delivered the report from the Business Administration Committee. She has invited six people, including Greg, to participate in a Doodle Poll to schedule their next meeting which will take place before the February Board meeting. Jen is serving as interim chair of the committee, until a chair has been designated. Jen has a full agenda for their meeting, topics of which include filing their tax return, paying sales tax for T-Shirts and lawn signs, distributing 1099's, etc.

Office Space

Five of us toured the Innovation Center with the Director Mark Johnson to look at office space today. The Innovation Center is one of two potential office spaces under consideration. The other one is at 162 W Main Street for 500/per month including heat.

Some additional information was obtained after our Innovation Center tour regarding the shared space. For 20 minutes, twice a day, they grind ice for the purpose of research and it can be loud. The space in the Innovation Center includes two offices and a conference table space which would cost between \$450-500 a month and would include Wi-Fi. Mark showed us another space that amounted to a desk in a shared working space that would cost us \$150 per month. There was very little room for meeting or storage. The Innovation Center can provide a VOIP phone account for \$15 a month but cannot provide copying or printing services. Mark said he could provide us with a could help us with furnishing the space. Shared conference rooms would be available for our use in the building. Another big benefit of renting the space at the Innovation Center would be the ability to access their start-up business resources, including a marketing professor, HR law professor, and other businesses in the building that could be great partners. We thought by renting space in the Innovation Center, we could help bridge the gap between the community and the University.



MEETING MINUTES
Whitewater Grocery Co
Board of Directors

We talked about some whether or not we have explored all of the options available to us for office space. We anticipate hiring an intern and expanding our volunteer base in the next year and thought that the larger space was more suitable for our needs.

We talked about the office space providing us with the ability to streamline processes, have the opportunity to utilize other meeting spaces, capitalize on the incubator environment for start-up businesses. Two other reservations were expressed about the space...not being centrally located and having to transport all of our materials to downtown Whitewater all of the time. We haven't reached out to members that are business owners lately who might be able to provide some of the resources that we need in terms of extra space that we could rent out. Questions were raised as to whether or not we are reaching out enough to ask for support from all of the people that want us to succeed. The lease is only a one year commitment at the Innovation Center. With a one year lease, we can continue to look and research other office space that might become available over the next year. Lacey did reach out to DLK, Walton and other owners and determined that they don't have any space that would meet our needs. Coburn company has office space in their building, although it has not been renovated. Al suggested the Old Bank Building, but Lacey was told that they wouldn't be able to meet our budget.

Brienne moved that we apply for a year-long lease at the Innovation Center to begin in February. Second by Lacey. Motion passed without dissent. A suggestion was made that after we sign the lease and move in, we should announce it via a news release, on social media and via our newsletter.

Financial Report

Jen Crone presented the financial report. The dashboard has been updated to include two new features: bank account balances and project quarterly priorities. Jen watched a video on co-op accounting. As a result, she has decided to display cash deposits, cash spent, previous balance and current balance on the dashboard along with the other new features. She is trying to reconcile everything on a one month calendar schedule. We have 18 new members who invested in December 2017. The top issues for the first quarter of 2018 include preparing to file our first tax return and issues 1099's to our consultants and paying sales tax for the t-shirts and the lawns signs sold. Budget and dashboard is all we need. We reviewed the sources and uses budget and a line has been added to report unused member equity as % of budget is located in the lower right corner. Jen will include unused member equity as % of actual expenses in the next version of the report. Jen has set up PayPal Here accounts for Greg & Al. She will be updating the the job aid to reflect the revised deposit process.

Preliminary Planning



MEETING MINUTES
Whitewater Grocery Co
Board of Directors

The next portion of the meeting was devoted to reviewing our checklist for proving feasibility and planning. After reviewing the checklist, we decided to move forward with developing a concept paper describing what we hope to accomplish and why. The latest viral Facebook post is the first time we have attempted to convey the experience of shopping at our community-owned grocery store. Our consultant, Keith Wick, has given us a baseline for what can work in Whitewater. We need to amplify our mission statement and reiterate the information contained in our preliminary market research study. Jo offered draft the concept paper and will share it with the Board at our next meeting.

Other items included on the feasibility checklist include:

- **Strategic Planning** - Once the concept plan is complete, we can start working on the strategic plan. This is a task that would be developed with the help of a consultant, most likely CDS Consulting. Lacey will reach out to Bill Geisner at CDS Consulting to see what he needs from us to move forward on the pro forma. The next two months, February & March, will be spent researching and doing the prep work we need to do to start working on the financial pro forma. We'll aim to have Bill start working on it in April.
- **Newsletter** - We started a monthly newsletter in June 2017.
- **Website** - Our website was created during the summer of 2016 and went live to accept the purchase of ownership shares in May 2017.
- **Community Events** - We've been participating in community events and presenting at city and at service organization meetings since the beginning of 2017.
- **Conduct Surveys, including Marketing and Fact Finding** - We want to hear from our owners. Lacey is in contact with the University to see who we can partner with. We want to have a good idea about our membership demographics. We discussed sending out a survey of our membership to understand their shopping habits, average age, average income, where they are concentrated, and the average amount their spending on groceries.
- **Identify Areas of Strengths and Weaknesses, Recruit or Hire Consultants** - We've been reaching out to experts and consultants as we proceed through the development stages.
- **End of stage 1: Decision Point -> Does your organization have at least 15-20 actively engaged volunteers?** We also discussed that we are moving towards this number, but are not there yet. Everyone was asked to review the Owners List and identify those that could be actively contributing experts to this development process.
- **Needs Assessment** - We started an initial assessment of our needs during the meeting and identified the following: Volunteer Coordinator, Newsletter Contributors, Communications Specialist, Tax Specialist, Board Education (Stage 2a), Market Research, Social Media Influencers and Contributors (Marketing Plan), Conceptual Plan, Photos of Other Co-ops, Project Management (Tools and People) Anne will create a document on our Google Drive where we can list our needs, ideas for fulfilling those needs and when we fulfill them, who helps us.



MEETING MINUTES
Whitewater Grocery Co
Board of Directors

- **Research Local Real Estate Market** - This is ongoing. A suggestion was made that the location with the computer store is located off of main. We discussed the pros and cons of trying to retrofit a current building vs. building a new structure. Keith Wick said that we should at this point start contacting people who design grocery stores. He mentioned three possibilities:
 - www.theretailplanit.com - Sheboygan
 - <http://www.cdsconsulting.coop/consultants/nicole-klimek> - California
 - <http://www.mehmert.com/> - Milwaukee
- **Market Study** - Our preliminary market study was delivery on December 15, 2017.
- **Fundraising** - Ongoing. We have yet to approach banks, or conduct an ownership loan drive or sell preferred stock. We are focusing on increasing our owner numbers and will engage in our first ownership drive in February.
- **Conduct Thorough Process of Assessing Feasibility** - We started to asses market feasibility, financial feasibility (proforma), and organizational capacity/readiness.
- **Make Plans to Include Preliminary Design and Design Feasibility** - Not yet started.
- **Assess Your Accounting System** - This task has been delegated to the Treasurer and the Business Admin Committee.
- **Research Suppliers and Account Requirements** - An important part of feasibility is to make sure we are able to gain access to suppliers. Lacey, Greg & Jo said that they would take this task on when we get to this point.
- **Develop/Revise Your Budget and Checklist for Stage 2b** - We review our budget at every Board meeting. We have plans to revise our budget based on stages.
- **Partnership Outreach** - We need to start having a conversation with people who are not owners and our owners who are potential partners. We should be visiting every business to ask if they would show their support for the GroCo. We talked about the need to invite the city planner, Chris Munz-Pritchard, to our board meetings, as well as CDA Director Dave Carlson.
- **Best Practices** - Board members are participating in monthly start up food co-op peer calls, Up & Coming Food Co-Op Conference, the resources available on the FCI & CDS Consulting websites.. As we come across informative resources, we asked that we share those with one another.
- **Owner Campaign** - With 300 owners, we are currently 37% of a goal of 800. Ownership & Outreach is going to spearhead the first owner campaign in February. We hope to reach 400 owners by June 2018.
- **Ownership & Outreach** - We need to keep telling the story of the progress we're making about building a conventional full-service grocery store in Whitewater via news releases to Whitewater Register, Daily Jefferson County Union, and the Whitewater Banner.



MEETING MINUTES
Whitewater Grocery Co
Board of Directors

Meeting Debrief

Each of us shared how we felt the meeting went. The general consensus is that as we move forward, we can work on doing a better job at time keeping and streamlining decision making. There are going to be times when meetings are long. This meeting was particularly productive in that we reviewed the checklist and identified those items we need to focus on.

Board member requests for future agenda items

Membership Surveys - Anne volunteered to reach out to the Food Co-op Initiative and the UW Center for Co-Ops to determine if there were some examples of membership surveys we could review for our next meeting.

Brienne moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Jo. Motion passed without dissent and the meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Anne Hartwick, Secretary.