

## **Alfalfa House Community Food Cooperative**

Minutes of Members Council Meeting

Date: Tuesday 27th October 2015

Time: 7pm

Location: Meeting Space, 8-10 Brown Street, Newtown

Facilitator: Maurice

Minutes: David

Timekeeper: Stevie

**Meeting opened at: 7:04pm**

### **Acknowledgement of Country:**

Before we begin the meeting, I would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners, both past and present, of the land we occupy and upon which we meet — the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. It is also upon their ancestral lands that Alfalfa House is built.

### **1 Attendance and Apologies**

Attendance: Adam Taylor (MC), Celine Massa (MC), David Begg (MC), Jonny Green (member), Katherine Lustig (MC), Maurice Cabrera (MC), Simon Holmes (Manager), Stevie Bee (MC)

Apologies: nil

Absent: nil

### **2 Approval of Agenda**

That the agenda be approved.

Moved: Stevie Seconded: Adam

### **3 Adoption of Previous Minutes ( FOUND HERE )**

That the minutes of the August 2015 meeting be adopted.

Moved: David Seconded: Stevie CARRIED by consensus

Consideration of the minutes of the September 2015 meeting was deferred.

### **4 Business Arising (Action Items from previous meetings) including any deferred agenda items**

#### **4.1 AGM Prep**

Noted that the email/letter to members, as notice for the AGM, had been sent out 27 November 2015.

Action The notice of proposed amendment to the constitution to be drafted by Stevie, Maurice, Simon and Jonny, and sent it out to members.

#### **4.2 Return to work plan**

Simon reported that Monika's return-to-work plan was on track.  
Action Simon will continue managing this process.

#### **4.3 Review of Accountants**

Maurice reported that the Finance Working Group (FWG) has put together a document concerning the process for considering alternatives to the financial services package presently provided by Keeping Company.  
Action The FWG will obtain quotes from two other bookkeeping firms.

### **5 Out-of-Session Decisions/Proposals**

#### **5.1 Out of Session Decisions Nil**

#### **5.2 Proposal re: hiring of Stock Coordinator**

Jonny had prepared and circulated the following proposal, and this had been circulated via the amended agenda:

- That we hire a Stock Coordinator to handle both produce and groceries as a permanent part-time or full-time employee. Additionally, that we delay the hiring process for both Stock Coordinators until the MC has had an opportunity to discuss the efficacy of having a single Stock Coordinator for both Produce and Groceries.
- Background: Now that Monika has resigned her position as Stock Coordinator (Groceries), we find ourselves in the position of trying to staff both the Stock Coordinator positions. At the moment, the Stock Coordinator (Produce) position is being handled, on a temporary basis, by Janne and Ella while we pursue the hiring of a new Stock Coordinator (Produce). As part of Monika's initially stated desire to take her long-service leave, it is my understanding that Anthea and Julia were going to be performing the responsibilities of the Stock Coordinator (Groceries), on a temporary basis. In light of Monika's resignation, Anthea and Julia (if they agreed to) could continue to fill the position of Stock Coordinator (Groceries) on a temporary basis.
- Why do we treat the produce and grocery inventories as needing separate management? What are the advantages/disadvantages to operating in this manner? Is this an historical precedent which has outlived its usefulness? What does Simon think about the current system and whether it should be continued? What do staff think about it? Can we operate more efficiently without the bifurcation?

It was agreed to allocate 30 minutes for discussion of this proposal.

Simon noted that the closing date for applications for the Produce Coordinator position was Friday 30 October 2015. The current work hours

were 32 for Groceries and 21 for Produce. An advantage of combining the roles was the removal of the tension of competition for resources; also there would be a need for only one point of contact. With two positions, we need a process for knowledge sharing. The total number of hours required for a combined position needs to be assessed. There was a possibility for reducing the hours, and hence the costs, for these roles.

Simon noted that a negative for combining the roles, could be a perception that the staffing structure would be more hierarchical. There was a need to present any proposal for combining the two roles thoughtfully and carefully to current staff. David noted that a combined role would provide an opportunity for the Coop's staffing structure to include a second full-time professional position, and this in turn could provide an exciting opportunity for moving AH up to the next level. Maurice suggested that the proposal would involve a very big change, and MC needed to (1) work on reviewing the two stock coordinator positions over the next three to four months, and (2) discuss this proposal for a combined role with staff.

The following motion was then proposed:

That the hiring process for the Produce Coordinator be put on hold while MC explores the feasibility of having a single Stock Coordinator, and that all staff and applicants be informed of this decision. Further, that the staff currently job-sharing the two stock coordinator roles on a temporary basis be asked to continue working in these roles until end of January.

Moved: David Seconded: Katherine CARRIED by consensus

## **6 Manager's Report**

That the Manager's Report be accepted.

Moved: Stevie Seconded: David CARRIED by consensus

Following on from discussions at the MC's earlier "In Camera" session, Simon recommended that

- any vacancies in the Shop Coordinators' roster be not necessarily back-filled; Simon noted that on weekdays there is presently not always the need for a second Shop Coordinator given the reduction in numbers of customers; filling these vacancies would be decided by the Manager on a case-by-case basis.
- AH implement a system of setting budgets for Stock Coordinators, for each particular week.
- AH introduce a just-in-time stock ordering system, i.e. we will order more frequently and in smaller batches; this will reduce over-stocking of inventory, and turn the store room into a receiving room
- the Manager be authorised to decide which stock lines/items should be continued/discontinued/introduced, in consultation with the stock coordinator/s, and

- MC re-confirm that the Manager has the authority to direct staff members in their daily duties/activities, within the parameters of the relevant position descriptions.

After discussion, it was resolved to accept these recommendations.

Simon was further asked to provide a more long-term financial analysis going back three years in monthly increments.

Moved: Adam Seconded: Katherine. CARRIED by consensus

## **7 Staffing**

That AH accept the appointment/resignation of Elizabeth Wilson effective from Friday 6th November 2015.

Moved: Adam Seconded: Celine. CARRIED by consensus

That AH accept the resignation of Monika Bauman effective from Tuesday 17 November 2015

Moved: Adam Seconded: Celine. CARRIED by consensus

Action – Simon was asked to arrange a farewell gift for Monika, with a budget of \$100, and

Action – MC will thank Monika at the forthcoming AGM, on behalf of the Coop, for her substantial contribution to AH over the past ?? years.

## **8 Workplace Health + Safety**

Item 1 – WHS report

Simon reported that despite repeated reminders and requests, the volunteer who undertook to prepare a WHS report for AH has not delivered

Action – Simon will contact Rhonda and offer to meet with her, take notes, and provide a written report for the next MC meeting.

## **9 Working groups**

### **9.1 Finance (Maurice, Stevie)**

A report from the Finance Working Group had been circulated.

Noted the discussion of matters relating to Finance at item 6 above.

Simon circulated a “Price drop sales comparison report”. It was noted that the discounts for bulk items had been most successful.

Action Simon was asked to repeat this price drop process on a weekly basis.

Action Simon was asked to provide similar reports to MC for future price drops, and to also to include a gross profit for each item.

Action Simon was asked to place on display in the shop a prominent notice concerning the discounted items for each particular week.

#### **9.1.2 Risk management (Maurice) Report: Nil**

#### **9.2 Shop Development (David) Report: Nil**

#### **9.3 Communications/Marketing (Stevie)**

##### **9.3.1 Website**

Stevie reported that work was in progress, and there was plenty of enthusiasm within the Working Group. Online purchasing was a current priority.

Action Stevie will ask two members of the Working Group, Kath and James, to provide advice concerning how this work should progress.

##### **9.3.2 Social Media**

Maurice noted the discussion during MC's earlier "In Camera" session, at which it had been agreed that we should focus on using social media to increase sales volume. He has in mind a person who might be willing to help us with working on strategies for this; she has a very good track record in this area. Additionally he proposed that the implementation of our social media work be given to staff; it should be Simon-driven, using Instagram, and organised by means of short weekly meetings that adopt one specific goal.

Action Maurice will contact the person he has in mind, to help us with social media strategy.

Action Simon will work with staff on utilising Instagram as per the arrangements outlined above.

##### **9.3.3 Marketing (Celine as member)**

Maurice commented that we really need to mark ourselves down on the Marketing.

Adam proposed that the future work incorporate KPIs; we need to find ways to measure the responses to particular campaigns.

The need for a written brief for the Marketing Working Group was then discussed.

Action Celine will prepare and circulate a draft written brief for the Marketing Working Group, for the next MC meeting. She will liaise with Stevie on this.

#### **9.4 Affordability (Needs convenor/contact point) Deferred**

#### **9.5 Operations (Adam) Report: Nil**

**9.5.1 Planning (New convenor/contact point required)** Report: Nil

**9.6 Compliance and Governance (No convenor/contact point)** Report: Nil

**9.7 Sustainability (Katherine/Celine)** Report: Nil

**9.8 Shop refurbishment (Celine)**

Action – Secretary to remove this item from the agenda for future meetings.

**9.9 Community & Membership (Adam)**

Adam report on the recent AH Open Day. 1,000 flyers had been delivered to residences near to the shop. There was a sense that we had had a better day, but this was not measurable. He proposed that we repeat the Open Day in future, say once a month, after the AGM, and create some measurable outcomes

Action: Adam will prepare a written proposal for MC meeting.

**9.9.1 Membership Development**

Adam reported that the Red Rattler fundraiser on 20 October went well; approximately \$1,800 had been raised for AH.

Action: Adam will prepare a written report for the next meeting.

Action: Stevie suggested that in future we review the demographics of the areas we target.

**9.9.2 Volunteer Engagement (David)** Report: Nil

**9.9.3 Community Outreach (Adam)** Report: Nil

**9.10 Staff Liaison (Jonny)** Report: Nil

**9.11 Product/Supplier (Adam, Katherine as a member)** Report: Nil

**10 New Members and Cancellations**

That members with the following membership numbers: 10904-10967 with the exception of 6 skipped records (10917, 10918, 10920, 10925, 10936, 10962) and 1 blank record (10923) be accepted as new members.

That members with the following membership numbers be cancelled: 2926, 3126, 3198, 3389, 3756, 3940, 4084, 4303, 4380, 4406, 4448, 4538, 4708, 4863, 5031, 5191, 5336, 6036, 6143, 6376, 6488, 6615, 6907, 6917, 6959, 7093, 7117, 7218, 7427, 7454, 7462, 7480, 7544, 7598, 7641, 7801, 7859, 8050, 8056, 8157, 8158, 8209, 8217, 8226, 8304,

8379, 8404, 8407, 8417, 8503, 8570, 8581, 8594, 8646, 8698, 8755, 8827, 8844, 8855, 8917, 8921, 8926, 8931, 8944, 8945, 8947, 8948, 8951, 8953, 8961, 8962, 8963, 8966, 8970, 8986, 8987 (blank).

Moved: Adam Seconded: Stevie CARRIED by consensus

## **11 Policy Nil**

## **12 Food Grants Nil**

## **13 Other Business**

### **13.1 Conference**

Katherine noted that she would be going to the Cooperatives Federation of NSW conference on 30 October 2015.

### **13.2 Potential MC members**

Action: Stevie will send to those enquiring the usual information package.

### **13.3 Eligibility of former staff members to join the MC**

The question was raised as to whether or not AH has a policy concerning the eligibility of recently resigned staff members to nominate for the MC. Stevie reported that we presently do not have a policy on this issue, but he noted that in the recent past newly-resigned staff members had decided not to nominate for MC, for at least a 12-month period from their resignation date.

Action – the incoming MC is asked to revisit this matter after the AGM.

**Meeting closed at 9.46pm**

**Agenda items deferred this meeting:**

## **9.4 Affordability (Needs convenor/contact point)**