

Minutes
Fiddleheads Natural Food Co-op Board of Directors
CCi Inc., 190 Broad St. New London
7:00 - 9:00 p.m., April 20, 2010

Call to order at 7:00

Directors Present: Richard Virgin - President, Ed DeMuzzio Vice President and Treasurer, Sheila Herbert, David Jensen, Allen Longendyke - Secretary, Jim Stidfole, Ellen Anthony, Suzanne Cattanach, Ned Ruete

Coop Members Present: Cory Auger, Betty Stecher

Betty expressed concern on how the issue of beer sales will be handled. Dick explained that since his name was on the permit, there was no way beer sales would occur until the store was sufficiently staffed with a fully dependable work group. In addition the placement of the beer would be in clear sight of the cash registers.

A motion was made by Jim and seconded by Ned to approve the Minutes of the March 16 2010 minutes. Approval of the minutes was unanimous.

Secretary's Report: "As of today's date we have 1088 member households."

President's Report - Dick spoke to Fiddleheads participation in the May 12th Food Stroll. There was discussion on whether the food served would be fiddleheads or asparagus. Due to the possibility of not being able to get fiddleheads, asparagus seemed like the more likely option. Dick also said he would like to recognize the working members who helped out in the past year during the annual meeting and for Board Members to get him lists of the working members.

Old Business:

Lights, Windows, Brickwork. Jim stated that Scott Loring (mason) had look at the building. The following was noted: Glass brick windows would cost about \$2,500 per pair (too expensive at this point). The interior brick face needs cleaning with a steel brush. It should not be covered. It is otherwise in good shape. The exterior brick wall needs facing and sealing at most points but is sound. Some sealing was done in recent

years but it was not a professional job. The brick “tower” by the front door is not in good shape on the outside, the bricks are slowly breaking up and structure above the roofline should be removed. Ed indicated that the first lighting strip would begin going up this week with a combination of paid and volunteer labor.

New Business:

Bookkeeper/Better Communication - Allen stated that Ed needed to notify the Board he was hiring Anne Lang to finish up the bookkeeping until the new volunteer Bookkeeper (Moir Ross) could take over. Ed agreed he should have. He stated he hired Anne out of his own pocket and did not expect reimbursement. In turn Anne told Ellen Anthony that she had been hired to do the bookkeeping, which would have normally been a Board Decision if it involved Fiddleheads paying for her services.

Hiring a Store Supervisor/Bookkeeper - David proposed that he be hired for \$400 a week to be the Bookkeeper/Accountant. David also stated he was ending his daily reconciliation of store income, bank deposits and weekly reports due to his Census job. Dick indicated he had a different plan to propose. The Board passed on David’s proposal.

Hire a General Manager/Budget - Ellen felt it was time to hire a General Manager however there is no funding to do this so a better plan might be to first propose a budget to include Big Plan expenses, staffing, and funding for conferences and seminars. Ed agreed and said he would get a small group together to work on this (Sheila, Ed, Ned, Suzanne and Nancy).

Pro Forma Plan - Ellen proposed that we hire Cooperative Consultant Bill Gessner to develop a Pro Forma Plan, which is something that Chuck Bromley suggested to her. Ed indicated we already have a business plan and did not need to pay to have another done. He brought up that Cooperative Consultant Elizabeth Ahern (aka Apple) was paid \$25,000 by one of the original Boards to develop the original Fiddleheads business plan, which ultimately turned out to be money not so well spent. Sheila spoke in favor of the general idea of getting advice from Bill Gessner. Dick indicated he was not in favor of the Pro Forma idea but that Bill Gessner had agreed to look at the current business plan for no charge to see if there were any issues with it.

Membership in the NCBA - Dick indicated if we joined the National Cooperative Business Association we could access a lot of the information that we could obtain

through CGIN without having to meet all the criteria expected of CGIN members. The cost would be \$400. The Board felt this would be a good idea.

Welcome Wagon - Dick had spoken to the Welcome Wagon people regarding the inclusion of Fiddleheads material in the Welcome Wagon packet as a Merchant Member. It turns out that Welcome Wagon does not do New London (it does do most of the surrounding towns). Allen noted that people into green/progressive living often find out where to shop from an on-line search. The Board decided to pass on Welcome Wagon.

Volunteer Coordinator - Dick proposed hiring a Volunteer Coordinator on a contracted basis to make sure that all store shifts are covered and recruit more volunteers from the membership. The budget for this position would be \$100 a week. Discussion ensued regarding whether or not this individual would have to fill in empty shifts and it was determined they would not. Ed suggested that the person should get a big discount on groceries rather than pay. Sheila indicated the big discount was a bad business practice. David indicated if the Board had take up his proposal to be hired as Store Bookkeeper this would not need to occur. Ellen moved the question to hire a contract volunteer coordinator, and Ned seconded. The vote was 7 in favor, 1 opposed, and 1 abstention.

The Newsletter as a Separate Email Item - The Board agreed the Newsletter needs to be separated out from the E-Blast. Cory suggested we look into a paid service to do the E-blasts as the emailing list could be updated more easily.

The meeting adjourned about 9:30 p.m.