

**FIDDLEHEADS**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**October 13, 2014**  
**6:00-8:30 PM**  
**105 Huntington Street, New London**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Board Action/ Outcome</b>	<b>Leader</b>
6:30	Meeting Preamble <i>Each of us is a member of the coop community and has been elected to be leaders in serving our members. May we conduct this meeting by empowering each other, treating each other with kindness, and maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect.</i> Check-in			President
6:30-6:35	Agenda Review		Make any needed adjustments	President
6:35-6:40	<b>Minutes</b> September 30 (Board Packet)			
6:40-7:45	<b>Executive Session</b> • To discuss personnel matter			President
7:45-8:00	<b>Action Items</b> • Take any action as discussed in executive session			President
8:00-8:15	<b>President's Report</b>		Ask any questions	President
8:15-8:30	<b>Closings</b> • October 28 draft agenda (Board Packet) • Meeting Checklist o Everyone was present physically and attentively o No sidebar conversations o Maintain topic focus o Everyone had a voice and was heard o Be honest but not brutal o Don't monopolize o Clarify the purpose of each agenda item to begin o Signal if you feel personally attacked, disrespected, or put down • Review Decisions, Tasks, Assignments • Adjourn Meeting		Review Evaluate meeting process: what worked and what needs improvement	President  President

**BOARD PACKET:**

- 1) Draft September 30 minutes
- 2) President's Report
- 3) October 28 Draft Agenda

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **October 13, 2014**

To keep the board fully informed in the absence of the GM, I am submitting a report of my activities since our board meeting on September 30, 2014.

- Reported on NFCA Fall Gathering—*see summary below*
- Confirmed board meeting with Attorney Hinda Kimmel on October 13 at 6:30 PM
- Discussed board needs with Joel on board support call--*see call notes below*
- Emailed Carolee Coulter to expect a contract for the GM Search after our October 13 meeting. And availability of coach for acting co-manager per Joel's suggestion (see board support call)
- Sent past and sample monitoring reports on Staff Treatment and Compensation to acting co-managers
- Emailed sample Planning and Budgeting Monitoring report to Board Treasurer to follow-up on concern about budget approval process raised at the last board meeting. Forwarded report sample to acting co-managers with Joel's response—*see email exchange below*
- Sent acting co-managers board monthly workflow. Followed up with dates for meeting with Board President to discuss agenda for next board meeting
- Sent grievance form to complainant—*see grievance package below*
- Discussed expansion build out allowances with Doug Berson, Elm City Market CFO. As a follow-up, Doug emailed information about the natural foods consultant who advises Elm City—*see email below*
- President, Vice President, and Treasurer met with Kyle Klewin and team to discuss Parcel J expansion—*see meeting summary below*
- Briefed acting co-managers on meeting with Klewin and discussed briefly response to community "boycott"—*see Sheila's email below*
- Obtained confidentiality contract with working member who is providing HR support—*see contract below*
- Contacted Petie Reed to discuss Parcel J expansion project
- Attended meeting of Board Governance Committee on October 7

# **NFCA Fall Gathering Report**

NFCA Fall Gathering  
Hanover, NH  
September 27, 2014

Submitted by Susan Zimmerman  
October 2, 2014

- **Attended by 41 cooperatives**
- **Ideas from the conference**
  - Sales growth in the cooperative sector is flattening due to competition from big box store organic produce sales and venture capital investment in coop-style stores.
  - New definition of economy
    - “Complex set of relationships people use to provide themselves with goods and services they need to live meaningful lives in their communities.” Tom Webb, Cooperative Management Education program, St. Mary’s University, Halifax
  - CAN’T MANAGE WHAT CAN’T MEASURE. Coop accounting measures the difference we are making. Examples:
    - Sales/member per year
    - Community income equality
    - Member engagement
    - Member satisfaction
    - Kilos per CO2 per member
    - Community health impact
    - % Local food
  - The bigger the coop the more sophisticated the organizational systems
  - Use social media as a tool in strategic planning
  - Growth covers up mistakes
  - Good managers know what not to do
- **NFCA Initiatives**
  - Peer to peer trainings
    - Healthy Food Access
    - Produce Department Staff
  - Regional sourcing-Cave to Coop
  - Annual Survey and promotional materials such as coop month packet, shelf tags, ads, announcements
- **Board Recruitment**
  - Plan for 5 year time horizon

- Identify skill sets
- Candidates agree to Code of Conduct before running for the board
- Complete orientation before candidates run for election
  - Dinner with interested candidates
  - 4-hour training before being on the ballot
  - Timed so candidates who are not chosen have time to petition to be on the ballot
  - Solves confusion between managing vs governing
- When there is a vacancy, always appoint
- Communicating to members the impact the co-op is making is part of the recruitment process
  - Information for newsletter and annual meeting
  - Exercise: image that Whole Foods makes an offer for the store, the offer is turned down by the board, and the community is supportive

Included in my report is an email from Bonnie Hudspeth with more information about the Gathering and links to presentations.

Hi NFCA Member Co-ops, Start-Up Initiatives & Partners,

Thank you for helping make NFCA's Fourth Annual Fall Gathering a success! At the end of this e-mail is a **list of resources from the gathering** and to help spread the word about the work that we are doing together. We hope that you will find them useful and share them with people from your organization who were unable to attend.

For the first time, we had over 100 people in attendance from our member co-ops, start-ups and partner organizations. We were so excited by your participation and contribution to a great day together. We have posted some great **photos of you all** from the gathering on our Facebook page. Check 'em out and help us break 1,000 likes if you have not done so already: [www.facebook.com/Neighboring](http://www.facebook.com/Neighboring)

Tom Webb's keynote address on the potential for co-ops to help build a better world offered special inspiration to the work we are doing together. "The values and principles of our co-operatives and credit unions are not a sea anchor dragging behind the ship and impeding its progress," said Webb. "Rather, they are the mainsail that provides its power and can ensure business success."

We appreciated everyone's contribution to discussions on creating stronger alignment among boards and members, start-up development, and issues of competition and growth. Topic Tables offered a special opportunity for peer to peer dialog and we are grateful for the contributions made by our members and partners to these conversations. Special thanks to our guests Dave Blackburn of the NCGA Development Co-op and Michelle Schry, General Manager of People's Food Co-op of WI and MN, who

joined Hanover Consumer Co-op General Manager Terry Appleby to discuss the increasingly competitive environment in natural foods retailing and opportunities for food co-ops and start-ups to work together to support our success and increase our impact, and to Suzi Carter of Food Co-op Initiative for her collaboration in supporting our start-up members. "I am impressed by the quality of the sharing that was happening throughout the entire day," said Michelle Schry of People's Food Co-op.

As always, we want to thank representatives from other co-operatives and co-ops support organizations for their sponsorship, participation and enthusiasm. Reflecting on the day together, Regina Beidler, organic dairy farmer and member of Organic Valley said, "The co-operative model highlights the values of democracy, food and economic justice and a desire to see the benefit of the many over the benefit of the few. This is exemplified in the efforts of the NFCA."

We also appreciate the feedback received through your evaluations to help us continue improving our member gatherings. Tom Bradbury, Operations Manager of River Valley Market, had this to say: "Inspiring conversations about how we can co-operate to move us all forward."

Below and attached are some resources as a follow-up from the meeting:

- A **SAMPLE STORY** about the gathering to use in your newsletter, e-news or website (attached).
- **NOTES FROM TABLE TOPIC DISCUSSIONS** for your reference and follow up (attached).
- **HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS AUDIT FORM** (attached). \*Email [bonnie@nfca.coop](mailto:bonnie@nfca.coop) for the HFA Manager Audit form & Audit instructions
- NFCA Staff & Board's **NFCA FALL GATHERING PRESENTATION** to share with people who could not attend: <http://nfca.coop/memborgatherings>
- **THE NEW NORMAL: Growing Our Co-ops & Thriving in a Competitive Landscape**, workshop with Dave Blackburn, Terry Appleby & Michelle Schry: <http://nfca.coop/supportingco-opsuccess>
- Tom Webb's keynote presentation, **THE CO-OPERATIVE DIFFERENCE IN CHALLENGING TIMES: Why Co-operatives Matter:** <http://nfca.coop/coopdifference>

Speaking of Tom Webb's presentation, many of you asked for additional resources related to his presentation. He recommends a 4 DVD set of presentations from the "Imagine 2012 International Conference on Co-operative Economics." The NFCA recently co-sponsored the development of this resource. To order a copy, please e-mail Tom Webb at [tom.webb@smu.ca](mailto:tom.webb@smu.ca)

We've updated the NFCA's combined **social & economic statistics** for 2013 on the "About" page of our website: <http://nfca.coop/about>

**Finally, it is Co-op Month!** The NFCA has posted lots of resources for celebrating at [www.nfca.coop/co-opmonth](http://www.nfca.coop/co-opmonth). Please share with us your plans for celebrating so we can spread the word.

We're already looking forward to seeing you all at our NFCA Annual Meeting in Spring 2015!

In Co-operation,

Erbin and Bonnie

## **NFCA 2014 Fall Member Gathering Table Topic Discussion Notes**

**Table topic:** Member Engagement for Established Co-ops

**Facilitator:** Kay Litten, Margaret Drye, Genie Braasch

**Note Taker:** Glenn Lower

### **Highlights from table discussion:**

- The Board President speaks for the Board. Member contacts either Board President or Board Administrator.
- If a reporter calls a board member, s/he directs them to communicate with Board President or Board Administrator.
- Co-op Food Stores is holding five educational forums during October such as 1) What is a Co-op? 2) Co-op Networks, and 3) Co-op Finance
- How do you find out from your members what they want? Not just a survey...
- Need to figure out how to tap into the next, younger generation of members.
- Middlebury's engagement process is called "Co-op Conversations."
- For more info: [www.co-opconversations.blogspot.com/](http://www.co-opconversations.blogspot.com/)
- Train staff to be ambassadors around engaging with members
- Tom Webb's presentation: measure your difference, and inform your members

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**Table topic:** Board Member Grab Bag  
**Facilitator:** Mark Goehring, CDS Consulting Co-op  
**Note Taker:** Mark Goehring

**Highlights from table discussion:**

- Nominations process, qualifying candidates, perpetuating a strong board
  - Talking “purpose,” board taking leadership position in expressing positive impact of the co-ops
  - Develop and practice understanding and fluency of articulating co-op difference
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**Table topic:** Measuring and Communicating Our Impact  
**Facilitator:** Kari Bradley  
**Note Taker:** Kari Bradley

**Highlights from table discussion:**

- How to communicate our measurement? Signage, advertising, etc.
  - Next level measurement: health, home ownership, 401k, etc.
  - Frontline staff is critical in communicating impact
  - Need to get aggressive in marketing our impact—chain stores do a better job—counter co-op price image
  - EBT data is going to be increasingly important to measure
  - Could NFCA help individual co-ops report larger economic impact? E.g. Rule of thumb for measuring local purchasing amount = number of jobs.
  - SIMS: NCGA has a new environmental and social tracking system online. Could NFCA participate?
  - Hanover Co-op Coffee Private Label—percentage goes to co-op development; tells a more detailed story
  - Small regular measurement is much easier than one big event at year end
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**Table topic:** Planning Successful Annual Meetings  
**Facilitator:** Suzette Snow-Cobb  
**Note Taker:** Suzette Snow-Cobb

**Highlights from table discussion:**

- Using the Annual Meeting to kick off elections
- What issues motivate people to attend when it’s not a contentious issue?
- Brief keynote speaker, if at all
- Who plans the meeting? Brattleboro Vice President is the liaison with staff to plan
- People “BINGO” and drink coupons
- Patronage dividend: a benefit and incentive for attending annual meeting
- Location and time of meeting matters
- Oxford Swindle? Gloucester would have 4 annual meetings in different locations
- Ideas for adding to patronage dividend
- How do we measure member participation?
- Tom tells about a co-op “store tour” focus group. Management would get back to the focus group with the ideas that they would use. Important to be clear on the set up and to report back.
- Focus groups throughout the year can engage members and encourage them to attend the annual meeting

- Most effective way of learning the needs and ideas from members was the “Open House” format Brattleboro Food Co-op used during the initial planning for expansion. Over a period of two weeks, 350 people had conversations with the Board of Directors.
- Tom: idea of online (closed) group discussion to get feedback and discussion. Possibly have a closed group through Facebook

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**Table topic:** Planning a Successful Member Loan Campaign

**Facilitator:** Rochelle Prunty

**Note Taker:** Suzi Carter

**Highlights from table discussion:**

- Ensure the site lease with contingencies is secured and controlled by co-op
- Listen to Bill Gessner
- Separate membership drive from member loan campaign
- Use FCI, CDS CC and co-op securities lawyer to put together paperwork (or NCGA if you have access)
- Leverage low interest in CD/savings market (e.g. 4-5% is really good! Incentive for members to give larger loans)
- The Member Loan Committee built in a social investment desire/awareness—local economy (one third of the previous lenders made second loans)
- Team: planning = 4 – 8 weeks
  - Database prep
  - Have at least 700 prospects
  - Multiple callers
  - Closer staff and
- Don't hire an outside consultant to do your campaign. Co-ops are different. Board members have to ask.
- Use the Member Loan Toolbox to guide calling: [www.foodcoopinitiative.coop/FinancialTools](http://www.foodcoopinitiative.coop/FinancialTools)
- Use events to collect people who have decided—focal point

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**Table topic:** Planning & Executing Successful Healthy Food Access Programs

**Facilitator:** Bonnie Hudspeth

**Note Taker:** Bonnie Hudspeth

**Highlights from table discussion:**

- After launching new Food For All program at River Valley Market, staff has seen an increased diversity of customers and observed that the co-op is starting to reach a new demographic: <http://rivervalleymarket.coop/food-for-all/>
  - Importance of including healthy food access in mission statement or Ends
  - Avoid having different levels of membership (for many reasons!)
  - Instead, co-ops can have a revolving account to help offset the cost of co-op membership
  - Healthy Food Access audits: Bonnie will email to whole group as a follow-up
  - Examples of HFA marketing materials/website pages from other NFCA member co-ops: <http://nfca.coop/hfaprograms>
  - Resources to help with planning and implementing successful Healthy Food Access programs to make healthy food and co-op membership more affordable and accessible for low-income community members: <http://nfca.coop/healthyfoodaccessresources>
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**Table topic:** Using External Investment to Grow Your Food Co-op

**Facilitator:** Michelle Schry

**Note Taker:** Ed King

**Highlights from table discussion:**

- Preferred shares law varies from state to state, so we need to support member co-ops and start-ups to make sure they have included a mechanism in their bylaws that allows for preferred shares (even if they never use them)
- Why pick preferred shares over member loans?
- People's Food Co-op converted member loans to Class C stocks
- There are tax implications and balance sheet impacts. Member loans are above preferred shares in priority of payback.
- Preferred shares pay dividends, declared annually.
- Five year no call period. Can be recalled.
- Dividends can be reinvested.
- Demand for preferred shares meet all of People's Requested Sales.
- Is there a concern about non-member investment? Not really.
- Long term plans and goals about equity.

**Question:**

- Is offering shares across state lines an issue? Securities reporting co-op exemption? Need a securities lawyer to investigate for NFCA members.
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**Table topic:** Food Co-ops & Credit Unions

**Facilitator:** Joanne Todd

**Note Taker:** Molly O'Brien

**Highlights from table discussion:**

- Willimantic was talking about starting a credit union (15-20 years ago), but this is hard to do. Instead, they became a member of NE Family Federal Credit Union.
- Why should co-ops work with credit unions?
  - Both are co-operatives, cross membership
  - Credit unions can and should compete on the co-op difference. Hyper-local, member-owned
  - Many credit unions offer fair values, and better rates
- Obstacles:
  - Credit unions are too small and have lending restrictions
  - Highly regulated
  - Justifiably fiscally conservative
  - Hesitant to make business loans, especially over \$50K
- Co-op Month activities with food co-ops and credit unions working together could include:
  - Host co-op meetings
  - Invite each other to annual meetings
  - Joint ads and marketing around co-op month and the co-op difference
- Look at credit unions that do business lending as a source of financing food co-op expansion
- During financial crisis, credit unions who didn't have risky loans (most) did well and kept lending
- In 2012, the CUNA Co-op Alliance published *A Guide on How Credit Unions can Improve Their Interactions with Cooperatives from Other Sectors to Grow Their Business, Build Advocacy Allies and Improve Their Communities*:  
<https://www.mncun.org/?page=coopcollaboration>
- It would be great to have co-op employees receiving services from credit unions
- Financial awareness workshops offered by credit unions for co-op employees and members

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**Table topic:** Food Policy Matters

**Facilitator:** Roger Noonan

**Note Taker:** Sean Halliday

**Highlights from table discussion:**

- GMO labeling: transparent conversations, Farmers Unions supports it, heading toward a national standard for labeling?
  - Organic is a choice with its own set of principles and expectations
  - Pricing stabilization for dairy—insurance not just for dairy, but the whole crop. Diversified crops included.
  - Food safety/EPA: Needs to be less one-size-fits-all
  - GMO Labeling: Leverage technology to fit within organic framework to make informed change
  - Are producers able to assist/provide support for considering the GMO labeling issue?
  - Price is a factor in conversation of conventional vs. organic
  - US: “Cheap food” policy that has fooled us into thinking we deserve cheap food
  - Disparity in funding, communication, advocacy
  - This includes specialty crops vs. conventional commodity crops
  - How do we get back to center and include more dialogue?
  - Wood boring beetle—would destroy maple trees if we do not get insurance to cover these losses based on current policy
  - Farmer education covering GMO and organic practices needs to happen
  - Dialogue needs to increase on the local level to build grass-roots support and drive change on a national level—money is a large factor in this conversation
  - Food Safety Modernization Act: Majority of players are pleased about changes
  - Not perfect, but the re-write is a major improvement
  - Implementation is the next step
  - Raw Milk: States are certifying dairies
  - Side safety issue is food handling with possible food safety risk increase to handler--water is a medium for bacterial growth
  - Food Processing: Recent study working to combine best practices from both industries to improve overall product base
  - Cost of organic certification: based on total gross sales
  - In VT & Federal: up to 75% of cost back for fee
  - 6-12 hour annual inspection
  - Consumer issues:
    1. Feeling of a corrupt system
    2. Vermont co-ops: GMO large issue due to legislation
    3. Vermont house and connection is important; community based
    4. Rutland: considering way to explain what labels mean
    5. Challenge to bring in producers that use GMO tech.
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## Board Support Call

Thanks for the call today!

We talked about:

- The pending report from the attorneys at the meeting on Oct 13
- Interim management options
  - hire outside (CDS CC has resources)
  - keep co-managers in place
    - how to 1) best support them and 2) ensure that we are moving towards best practice co-op, given their relative lack of experience and the co-op's lack of established culture
    - I (Joel) suggest requiring that the co-managers engage with a former GM as coach (including weekly check-ins) and ask for a written weekly FYI report both on operations and on the professional development with the coach. I recommend Jeanie Wells or Melanie Reid.*
- Co-managers moving ahead with staff survey
- Budget & Planning and the Board's role (B2)
- Bonnie resignation & spring elections
  - I have attached some great resources for thinking about recruitment and some tools. I highly recommend doing the brainstorm activity!
  - [President's Note: Refer to Joel's email for the five referenced resources]

Peace.

Joel

## Planning and Budgeting Template

Sheila and Kristin,

Glad to hear that you are already working on next year's budget and will be meeting with Ed on Friday. I am forwarding an email I sent earlier in the month to Ed with the link to the sample monitoring report. Also forwarding the thoughtful response from our consultant on the board and manager roles in the budget process.

Susan

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Joel Kopischke <joelkopischke@cdsconsulting.coop>

**Subject: Re: SAMPLE MONITORING REPORT, BASED ON CBLD TEMPLATE POLICY**

**Date:** October 2, 2014 9:26:20 AM EDT

**To:** Susan Zimmerman <susanpzimmerman@sbcglobal.net>

**Cc:** Ed DeMuzzio <EDeMuzzio@gocci.com>, Joel Kopischke <joelkopischke@cdsconsulting.coop>, Mark G Roberts <hrmmark@gmail.com>

The other way I like to think of the board's relationship to the budget is that the budget is a planning tool for the organization's operations and as such we know that it's something we have delegated. Plus it's our best guess at the future and we know that it will change. And the board should be sure that the budget is appropriate. What criteria will we judge the budget on? We should know that ahead of time and communicate it to the GM, so there are no surprises. The board essentially says "any budget that conforms to this is acceptable" (kind of giving conditional pre-approval). The GM shouldn't find out after the budget is created that there were some expectations that weren't expressed. That's not just good leadership, but it's common courtesy. So, the board sets expectations through policy and the GM creates a budget and then demonstrates that it meets a reasonable interpretation of the policy. The board decides if it is, in fact, reasonable and if so, the budget is de facto "approved". (If not, then the GM reworks it.)

If we put formal approval of the budget on the board's plate, then the board owns that decision. Budgets change as the year goes on and we react to actual conditions. Does the board have to then approve every change made to the budget? If so, then that will be a very inefficient budgeting process. If not, then it seems that the initial approval was somewhat meaningless.

Peace.

Joel

Joel Kopischke  
Owner/Member, CDS Consulting Co-op  
414.803.6725  
[JoelKopischke@CDSConsulting.coop](mailto:JoelKopischke@CDSConsulting.coop)

On Thu, Oct 2, 2014 at 7:49 AM, Susan  
Zimmerman <[susanpzimmerman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:susanpzimmerman@sbcglobal.net)> wrote:  
Hi Ed,

Just to help you understand how we could develop a budget that does not require board approval, here is the link to the sample planning and budgeting monitoring report from the CBLD library. Let's discuss what we can incorporate in our process before proceeding with any budget for 2015.

<https://cdsconsulting.centraldesktop.com/home/viewfile?guid=558177869E91E9B97AB27CDF31A9812CFD31B3CE6&id=33622623&aa44d22815bfa6a1ace6a6f543c087ec>

Susan

## **Grievance Form**

### Grievance Committee Process and Forms

Contents include:

Instructions for filing a grievance including forms

Confidentiality forms (2) for staff and Co-op members

Workings of the Grievance Committee

Grievance Committee Evaluation Form

## Instructions for Filing a Grievance

Any Fiddleheads employee can file a grievance with the Grievance Committee, and can be assured they can do so without any risk of retaliation. The Grievance Committee provides a means to appeal a management decision affecting an individual employee that cannot be resolved by direct communication with their manager.

The categories for filing a grievance are:

- Violation of an existing policy
- An unfair situation and there is no applicable policy to cover this situation
- An existing policy that is unfair or discriminatory and has caused an unfair situation

If the proposed grievance does not fall into one of these three categories, then the Grievance Committee is not the appropriate route. If an employee has a complaint, and is unsure of how to proceed, they should speak with either someone in management or a staff representative to determine how best to handle it.

If the employee is making an allegation of harassment or discrimination on the basis of membership of a protected class, they need to immediately notify someone in management or a staff representative. These allegations require a separate investigation, and are not appropriate for the Grievance Committee. Employees can be assured that this type of complaint can be brought forward and investigated without any risk of retribution.

Please use the provided form to record your grievance. The grievance must be filed within 7 days of the action or decision being appealed. If you need assistance, a staff representative can answer any questions you may have. The grievance form should be submitted to a staff representative to initiate the process.

Once your grievance is filed, the Committee will review the grievance, request any additional information from the employee or the supervisor involved, and set a meeting date for the issue to be discussed. The Grievance Committee will make every attempt to meet and resolve the issue within 7 days of the grievance being filed.

*The Fiddleheads Board of Directors is not involved with the operational aspects of the Co-op. They will not be available for employee complaints or grievances. Should any issues or requests be sent to a Board member, these would be forwarded, without Board discussion or action, to a staff representative for appropriate follow-up.*

## GRIEVANCE FILING FORM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Following the Grievance Policy (pg. 51-53 in the Fiddleheads Employee Handbook), your grievance must fall into at least one of the following categories. The Grievance Committee may refuse to deal with the case if they believe that it does not fit into one of these categories. If you are unsure about the category, you may speak with a staff member of the Grievance Committee before filling out this form.

Please check off which description best fits your grievance:

I believe that there has been violation of an existing policy

I believe that there is an unfair situation and there is no applicable policy to cover it

I believe that an existing policy is unfair or discriminatory and has caused an unfair situation

If your grievance concerns an existing policy, please name the policy with page number in the Fiddleheads Employee Handbook.

Please describe the specific management decision that you are appealing, including the date of the decision and any other facts that you consider relevant.



Have you taken steps to resolve this with the manager who made the decision? (*The Grievance Committee may refuse to hear your grievance if they believe that prior attempts to resolve it have not been made in good faith.*)

Remedy Desired: Please describe the specific results you are seeking through filing this grievance.

- Reverse or change a prior action taken by management
  
- Change a policy or management actions in the future
  
- Other?

The information provided on this grievance filing form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that falsified information or significant omissions may be considered justification for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. I understand that it is necessary to maintain confidentiality during the grievance process. I agree to only discuss the case with the members of the Grievance Committee, and the other managers involved in the decision I am appealing.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Confidentiality Agreement for Staff Member

## Fiddleheads Grievance Committee

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that as a Member of the Fiddleheads Grievance Committee, I will be privy to information that may or may not lead to an investigation or grievance procedure at the Co-op. I understand that all information disclosed to and by me is considered confidential. This means that all information pertaining to an investigation into an allegation of illegal or unethical treatment, a personnel decision by management and/or a staff grievance about a personnel decision is not to be discussed with any person(s) who are not directly involved in the case. The only individuals with whom I may discuss the above are the employee who brings the matter to me as Grievance Committee member, that employee's manager, the other members of the Grievance Committee and the HR consultant, and then only on an as needed basis. No information about an investigation or grievance is to be disclosed to any external parties, except as required by law to governmental authorities.

I also understand that if I make an unauthorized disclosure of information about any investigation or grievance during my employment with Fiddleheads, I will be subject to loss of the Grievance Committee Member position. I also may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. If I disclose unauthorized information on an investigation or grievance after my employment ceases with the Fiddleheads, I may be held liable by individuals involved in the investigation or grievance.

Agreed to by:

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Signature

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Print Name

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Confidentiality Agreement for Co-op Member

## Fiddleheads Grievance Committee

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that as a Member of the Fiddleheads Grievance Committee, I will be privy to information that may or may not lead to an investigation or grievance procedure at the Co-op. I understand that all information disclosed to and by me is considered confidential. This means that all information pertaining to an investigation into an allegation of illegal or unethical treatment, a personnel decision by management and/or a staff grievance about a personnel decision is not to be discussed with any person(s) who are not directly involved in the case. The only individuals with whom I may discuss the above are the employee who brings the matter to me as Grievance Committee member, that employee's manager, the other members of the Grievance Committee and the HR consultant, and then only on an as needed basis. No information about an investigation or grievance is to be disclosed to any external parties, except as required by law to governmental authorities.

I also understand that if I make an unauthorized disclosure of information about any investigation or grievance, I will be subject to loss of the Grievance Committee member position. If I disclose unauthorized information on an investigation or grievance, I may be held liable by individuals involved in the investigation or grievance.

Agreed to by:

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Signature

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Print Name

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Workings of the Grievance Committee**

### **Validity of a Grievance**

Once the Grievance Committee has received a grievance, the first task is to determine if the grievance is valid.

1. Does it fit into at least one of the three categories for appeal?
2. Has the employee attempted to resolve the issue through direct communication with the manager who made the decision or with higher-level management? If not, have they provide to a staff representative an acceptable reason for not pursuing direct communication?
3. Does the filed appeal fit within the 7-day time limit for consideration by the panel?

If the grievance does not fall into one of the categories, if the employee has not attempted direct communication with management or provided an acceptable reason for not doing so, or if the time allowed for filing a grievance has lapsed, the Committee will declare the grievance invalid, and the original decision will stand.

If the facts around any of these decisions are unclear, the Grievance Committee will proceed with the grievance. In the course of investigating the grievance, the facts may become clear and the Committee can decide whether the grievance is valid or not.

### **Investigation and Research**

Most grievances will require fact-finding. This may be limited to interviewing the employee and manager involved, or it may involve other interviews or research. Each person interviewed by the Grievance Committee will be requested to sign a confidentiality agreement similar to the one that employee members sign.

The Grievance Committee may request that the general manager produce relevant documents from the personnel file of the employee filing the grievance. For example, if the employee is grieving:

a) A disciplinary action, the Grievance Committee may request the documentation of the disciplinary action being grieved. If the employee claims, "Others did the same thing and weren't disciplined, while I got the book thrown at me," the Grievance Committee may request a verbal summary by general manager of other disciplinary actions taken, if any, for the alleged same offense.

b) A promotion or hiring decision, the Grievance Committee may request information on the criteria used to make the decision, and how the qualifications of the employee filing the grievance compared to those criteria, and how the qualifications of the person given the promotion compared to those criteria.

The Grievance Committee should limit its investigation to facts relevant to the policies in question. If the facts are in dispute, and there is no way to verify them, the Grievance Committee may decide to acknowledge this uncertainty in its final report.

### **Finding of the Grievance Committee**

The Grievance Committee's work product will be a report on the claim made in the employee's grievance filing and will include written recommendations to management on how to proceed in the light of the finding. The report should list the agreed upon decision(s), the unresolved issues and a recommendation(s) to resolve the remaining issues. It will be incumbent on management to enact the agreed upon decisions and provide timely follow-up decisions for unresolved recommendations. The GM will report back to the Grievance Committee to inform the members of the timing and outcome(s) for implementing the recommendations, and also final actions taken for the unresolved issues. The report of the Grievance Committee will be placed in the file of the employee filing the grievance and copies are provided to the employee and to management. The Grievance Committee members should sign each report.

It is expected that the Grievance Committee will strive for consensus. In the absence of consensus, they may issue a majority/minority finding. The Committee will determine how those findings will be reported with regard to voting identification.

### **Format of the Report**

The recommendation of the Grievance Committee will include these components:

#### 1. Statement of the Parties and Grievance

*Example: A grievance was filed by \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_. Pursuant to the Fiddleheads Grievance Policy set forth in the Employee Manual (of \_\_\_\_\_ date). The Grievance Committee investigated the grievance, and this report is the unanimous recommendation of the Grievance Committee. (Or this report is the recommendation of a majority of the Grievance Committee.)*

#### 2. The Specific Grievance Complaint

#### 3. Findings of Fact

This may include a statement that certain facts are in dispute, and could not be resolved with certainty.

#### 4. Statement of Policy Issues

Listing which of the three categories the grievance was discussed.

#### 5 Policy Conclusions and Recommendations to

- In cases of complaints of violations to existing policy, the Grievance Committee

will determine if in fact management has violated the policy. If so, the Grievance Committee overturns the original decision and sends the case back to management for a new decision in line with the policy.

- In cases of a complaint of an unfair situation for which there is no applicable policy, the Grievance Committee determines if the situation is, in fact, covered by an existing policy. If so, the Grievance Committee determines whether management violated the policy, as above. If there is no applicable policy, the Grievance Committee recommends to management to create a policy and decides how this specific case should be handled, without setting precedent.
- In cases where the fairness of an existing policy is questioned, the Grievance Committee will do its best to determine what the intent of the policy was when it was adopted. The Grievance Committee will then determine whether or not it is indeed unfair and, if so, on what grounds, and recommend a change in policy to management. The Grievance Committee will then decide how this specific case should be handled.

6. Submission Statement & Signatures of the Grievance Committee Members.

*Example: This report was submitted to General Manager \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_, to be placed in the employee's personnel file, and a signed copy was also provided to the employee. (All Grievance Committee members sign and date the report.)*







## **Natural Foods Consultant**

His name is Kurt Luttecke. I brought him in and each week he works by phone with various departments, including marketing promotions. He first comes on site and meets the team and does a thorough walk through.

He'll then speak with you about his observations and gather additional information. He'll begin to make recommendations and then those approved are turned into plans. He is always available and has been in high positions at large fresh food and organic companies.

He will get into the details of product mix/category management, etc. and big picture planning so all aspects of the business are aligned and aimed in the right direction.

Douglas B. Berson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Elm City Community Market, Inc.  
203.624.0441 ext. 205  
[dberson@elmcitymarket.coop](mailto:dberson@elmcitymarket.coop)

## Parcel J Update

Fiddleheads Board of Directors,

A quick update to let you know that Mark, Ed and I met today with Kyle Klewin and his associates to discuss the Parcel J project. It was a very cordial meeting. Our concerns regarding the build out allowance were discussed and we have new information to share with the consultant who is working on our pro forma study. Once we get new pro forma numbers based on the information from today's meeting, I anticipate that we will have a full discussion with the board and with the acting co-managers about the project.

One important piece of information from our meeting is that Klewin has already named a project manager for this project. The Project Manager is local and very experienced. Kyle is still waiting to hear from the state about the grant but remains confident that they will hear by the end of the month. Construction start date remains fluid based on hearing about the grant.

One of the new opportunities we have with this project if we go forward is to define co-tenants. I learned from Sheila and Kristin that Perennial Harmony is interested in partnering. I will follow up. Let me know if you have any other ideas for businesses that would be synergistic with our store.

If you would like to discuss today's meeting in greater detail, just give me, Mark or Ed a call.

Susan

### Co-manager Update

I think we are past the immediate fire fighting but, there are definite smoldering embers! This came out quite clearly in our planning meeting for the next staff meeting.

According to a few staffers some of the words going around some New London area circles characterize Fiddleheads as "unethical" and that a "boycott" is in effect.

Operationally, we'll be pro-active in promoting Fiddleheads outside the store by our Outreach Work and our advertising.

During the past month the staff has become more involved with planning staff meetings. They also have been taking on assignments and projects that they 'own'. Regular Department meetings have also been instituted. Additionally, we are doing weekly "Staff Updates". Staff morale appears to be improved. Kristin and I will continue to develop staff involvement.

Kristin and I are still in a 'catch-up' mode but, we're getting there. We'll be looking to outside resources as we work to strengthen our organization.

sheila

**Confidentiality Agreement**

Confidentiality Agreement

HR Consultant for Fiddleheads

I, Kellean Giffin, understand that as an HR consultant, I will be privy to information of a confidential nature for Fiddleheads Co-op. I understand that all information disclosed to and by me is considered confidential. This means that all information pertaining to business strategies, personnel actions including performance issues and terminations, staffing decisions, or other general business and HR practices is not to be discussed with any person(s) who are not 1) internal to Fiddleheads Co-op, 2) in a "need to know" role and 3) authorized to have such information. No information about internal Fiddleheads Co-op business is to be disclosed to any external parties, except as required by law to governmental authorities.

I also understand that if I make an unauthorized disclosure of information, I will be subject to loss of the HR working member role. If I disclose unauthorized information, individuals involved and/or Fiddleheads Co-op may hold me liable.

Agreed to by:

Kellean Giffin

Signature

Kellean Giffin

Print Name

Date: 2 Oct 2014

**FIDDLEHEADS**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**October 28, 2014**  
**6:30-8:30 PM**  
**105 Huntington Street, New London**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Board Action/ Outcome</b>	<b>Leader</b>
6:30-	Meeting Preamble <i>Each of us is a member of the coop community and has been elected to be leaders in serving our members. May we conduct this meeting by empowering each other, treating each other with kindness, and maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect.</i> Check-in			President
6:30-6:35	Agenda Review		Make any needed adjustments	President
6:35-6:40	<b>Member Comments</b>			President
6:40-6:45	<b>Minutes</b> October 13 minutes (Board Packet)		Accept minutes	President
6:45-6:50	<b>Manager's Update</b>		Ask questions as needed	President
6:50-7:15	<b>GM Monitoring Report</b> B6 Staff Treatment and Compensation		Review and accept	
7:15-7:30	<b>Action Items</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBLD Contract for 2015</li> <li>• Board Budget</li> <li>• Board Calendar</li> <li>• Electronic Communication Guidelines</li> <li>• Approve Auditor</li> </ul>		Accept Accept Accept Accept	
7:30-8:10	<b>Board Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review Code of Conduct</b> (board packet) <i>Should board members sign annually a Code of Conduct agreement as described in the CBLD Field Guide to Board Discipline?</i></li> </ul>	<i>Field Guide to Board Discipline (in board packet)</i>	Take action at future meeting	
8:10-8:15	<b>Consent Items-Any item can be removed for discussion at the request of a board member</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board Monitoring Report C3 Agenda Planning</li> <li>• Board Monitoring Report C4 Meetings</li> </ul>		Approve consent items not removed	
8:15-8:20	<b>Consent Agenda Items Needing Discussion</b>		Approve after discussion	
8:20-8:30	<b>Closings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November 4 draft agenda (Board Packet)</li> <li>• Meeting Checklist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Everyone was present physically and attentively</li> <li>○ No sidebar conversations</li> <li>○ Maintain topic focus</li> <li>○ Everyone had a voice and was heard</li> <li>○ Be honest but not brutal</li> <li>○ Don't monopolize</li> <li>○ Clarify the purpose of each agenda item to begin</li> <li>○ Signal if you feel personally attacked, disrespected, or put down</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		Review Evaluate meeting process: what worked and what needs improvement	President  President

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review Decisions, Tasks, Assignments</li><li>• Adjourn Meeting</li></ul> |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|

DRAFT