

**TPSS Membership Committee**  
**September 19, 2011**

**MINUTES**

**In attendance:** Sherri Collins (TPSS Outreach Coordinator), Anu Aiyar, Karin Bouis, Emily Townsend, Steve Dubb (Committee Chair), Meghan McCoy (scribe), Mike Kats, Andrew McLeod, Don McCubbin, David Walker

**Summary of Actions, Decisions**

- Next meeting of advisory committee chairs will take place in February 2012 at Takoma Park store.
- Workgroup created to work on drafting a TPSS Co-op boycott policy. Members to be: Tanya Whorton, Meghan McCoy Emily Townsend, David Walker, Nelson Graves.
- Member Benefits policy (MC-7) amended by the Committee and approved. Item to be placed on the Board's consent calendar in October.
- Steve Dubb, David Walker and Anu Aiyar volunteered to assist with membership meeting set-up on October 23<sup>rd</sup> (1 pm, an hour before the meeting starts). Meghan McCoy and Emily Townsend said they *might* be able to do this.
- Meghan McCoy, Steve Dubb, and David Walker volunteered to assist with staffing the TPSS Co-op booth at the Takoma street festival on Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Anu Aiyar will assist with staffing the TPSS Co-op in Silver Spring on Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Don McCubbin said he *might* do so, but that he may be out of town that day.
- Items for October 2011 meeting (to be held in Takoma Park on Monday, October 10<sup>th</sup>: October Membership Meeting, Communications Protocol, Boycott Policy.
- Food Advisory Group is taking responsibility in developing a history timeline tool.

**I. Check-In/Agenda Approval (Discuss/Approve)**

**Meeting called to order at 6:40 pm. Agenda approved as submitted by consent.**

**II. Approval of Minutes from August 8, 2011**

**Minutes approved as submitted by consent.**

**III. Reports from Advisory Committee Chairs and Next Steps (Discuss)**

This item came out of a discussion of the need for the different “new” committees that have developed in the past year — the Food Advisory Group, the Local Foods Committee, the Takoma Park Advisory Group, and the Silver Spring Advisory Group —

**Steve:** Information coming out of Advisory group, there should be a staff person attached to each committee and that staff member should have no more than one or two members

**Karine:** One goal of Local Foods group, outreach grow the group, recruit people to develop focus. Have been working on creating a consistent supply of local in both stores. Pulling out information on what is local and compiling percent change not complete due to not all items

**TPSS Membership Committee**  
**September 19, 2011**

being , data is being collected but its complicated and for produce in particular its difficult (need more information how produce is entered and sourced needs clarity and to possibly be resolved)

To measure GM success or approach we left to GM to decide on how to measure, Abdi said that they could improve how to track local sales by department

**Anu:** Looks like good opportunity for local and food group to coordinate

Outreach: Sherri said that seminars have not worked well for TPSS; however, providing samples has been effective. Films have not worked well: not many in audience, two people at a time.

Suggestions: Having films outside (screen on wal) may improve attendees  
Maybe partner with cheesecake, screen outside on wall may work.  
Entertainment for children included in event may be successful.

Sherry: Field trips with schools we do currently. I have had success with a day care center providing seeds and tools for gardening then follow up we made soup with their group as a follow u sequence. Neighborhood schools involved with gardening.

Question: Did the legislation to let local schools have active gardens become law in Montgomery County?

Anu: Not at the school but off site

Meghan: Could do a reciprocal harvest day where the schools participate providing their produce for an annual harvest fest at the Co-op (could include local farmers)

Other work of the advisory group: Research Group is work on developing a Point of Sales Group. Also: Tasters group is part of the Food Advisory Group.

Steve: Highlighted importance of marketing. Could marketing become a mission of the food group?

When should Committee Chairs meet together? Should we do this again?

**Decision: Yes, let's keep it quarterly.** December not seen as good time to hold next meeting.  
**Time of next meeting: hold next meeting most likely in February in Takoma Park — i.e., after the New Year.**

#### **IV. Boycott Policy (Dave and Meghan) (Discuss)**

Boycott Policy: David talked with Meghan about the idea. The Food Group (outreach, tasters, research subgroups) – research group intends to address this issue.

Steve gave a bit of the history. TPSS Co-op used to have boycotts. Right now no specific framework.

**TPSS Membership Committee**  
**September 19, 2011**

Meghan: Dave said there might be an unwritten banned ingredient list. Boycott – not something we should do lightly. What we want to discuss: how do we want the policy to look? Do we want to ban brands or ingredients? Decide what kinds of bans we want to have. How much of an economic impact will the boycott have on the store? How is it decided? Dave – thinks it should be decided by membership, not just out of committee. May require a super-majority vote for boycotts.

Steve: thinks it pretty common to require a two-thirds vote to initiate a boycott.

Sherri: did Dave talk with the Co-op Advantage group?

Emily: A related issue – what are the sorts of things we want to support? So besides just boycotting, another way we can exercise our power – give a lower mark-up to local food than California food. It could be a governance issue or an operational issue (something the GM can say). These are the sorts of things we want to support. Guidelines for Product Selection.

Andrew: It's important to be very streamlined in our discussion of the boycott policy – Israel boycotts are turning into huge messes. This is a really good conversation to have. Good to figure out how we handle boycotts before we have boycotts.

Dave: I am trying to reserve rights to the membership – and where there is agreement, we can do it smoothly and with legitimacy.

Michael: Usually when you establish your core values, your core values often reflect product selection, no pesticides. You limit your product choices. Glut in the 1980s – torn apart by a group that wanted to provide local products regardless of whether it is healthy or organic. Basically they split. Your core values define who you are as a co-op in terms of your product selection. Any kind of boycott: 1) political. Are you a political organization or a co-op or are you a political co-op 2) Social, 3) Economic: carry goods that people can afford or not. The overarching stuff determines most of this. Israeli products: that's a political boycott. Co-ops come into existence because other markets aren't meeting your needs. Boycotts don't work unless they are consistent with core values.

Dave: Core values change. For example, TPSS Co-op members voted to change to sell meat. It is possible to change your core values. If a boycott passes, what happens? You can't buy whatever it is. What happens if a boycott fails – it doesn't mean that you have to carry that item?  
Emily: In addition to a boycott policy, you can have a policy that guides the buyers positively.

**Decision: Create workgroup to craft boycott policy proposal. Members: Tanya Whorton, Meghan McCoy, Emily Townsend, David Walker, Nelson Graves.**

**V. October (fall) membership meeting planning**

Yes there is a general membership meeting on October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011, from 2 to 4 pm.

Agenda, annual report board, expansion, board elections

Need for volunteers to set up and break down (Steve, David, Anu, committed, Meg & Emily Maybe)

**TPSS Membership Committee**  
**September 19, 2011**

Pablo's jazz band (Capital City Jazz)

There will be a tent

Tables, chairs, PA system (Dave), food going to wait until before then

**VI. Revisiting Member Benefits Policy proposal (MC-7)**

Benefits for business members Motion to remove

**Amendments Delete paragraph regarding "benefits for business member-owners" plus an Amendment (add word policy to last line, Annual Review of Member Owner Benefits)**

**Motion approved as amended by consent. Revised text of MC-7 reads as follows:**

**Member Benefits Policy (MC-7)**

**Purpose:**

To promote a sense of Co-op community

To provide shopping incentives to our member-owners

To show our appreciation to our member-owners for shopping with TPSS Co-op

**Benefits for Member-Owners**

1. Super Tuesday: 10% off your total purchase on the first Tuesday of each month.
2. 10% discount on all special orders.
3. In-store weekly members-only specials.
4. Member discounts everyday on a growing list of 100+ grocery staples ("member basics").
5. Patronage rebates when declared by the Board.

**Annual Review of Member-Owner Benefit Policy**

Benefits listed in this policy will be reviewed by the Membership Committee and authorized by the Board on an annual basis.

**VII. Communication Protocol Development Update (Sherri) (Discuss)**

Insert handout from Sherri on Communication policy (notes will be revised/bulletized and then add information on communications regarding how to communicate from without to within the organization for members and committee members, and to be more explicit to how to achieve the dissemination of information and to identify which things are deserving of communication).

Outreach protocol that Sherri submitted conformed to what was called for in Board Meeting regarding outreach.

**VIII. Takoma Festival**

**October 2<sup>nd</sup> Takoma Park:** We have a booth, need to have energy, lots of screaming, smiling, energetic, Co-op products to give away, membership meeting, come ready to talk a lot. Only expect commitment of 2hr shifts 10am-5pm is there an online signup on the web? No not currently there is a general signup sheet. A timeline Sherri will create to have members interested in participating. What about sending an email out regarding the event to the volunteer listserv. **Volunteers: Meghan McCoy, Steve Dubb, and David Walker.**

**October 2<sup>nd</sup> Silver Spring:** New info: there is an event the same day at the Silver Spring store (Rock Creek Community Day) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October, maybe Advisory group for Silver Spring store can help support Sherri in recruiting? **Volunteers for Silver Spring: Anu Aiyar, Don McCubbin (if in town).**

**TPSS Membership Committee**  
**September 19, 2011**

**IX. New Business**

**Date of next meeting**

**Membership Committee: October 10<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:30 pm**

Normally meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, so this is going back to the normal pattern.

Meeting will take place in **Takoma Park**.

**Items for October membership meeting agenda:**

**October Membership meeting**

**Communications policy back on the agenda**

**Boycott policy on the agenda**

**Food Group: will be developing a history timeline tool**

**X. Meeting Evaluation & Wrap-Up**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.**