

People's Food Co-Op Annual Meeting
April 18, 2016
Cobblestone Farm, Ann Arbor

Welcome: Vice-President Gaia Kile started meeting at 7:30, thanking everyone for attending.

President's Report: President Ann Sprunger thanked everyone for coming. She reviewed some of the challenges from 2015. The Board proactively worked to meet these challenges, including putting together a long range plan with the GM. Thanks to help from the staff, we had an outstanding election this year.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Matthew Graff reported on the financial situation at the co-op, highlighting a typographical error in the report. He talked about the senior discount situation, and offered to discuss any matters with members.

Ken King Award: Linda Diane Feldt of the Ken King Committee presented this annual award to Sandor and Laszlo Slomovits, the award-winning musical duo Gemini. Linda Diane thanked Rebecca Kanner and Judith Cawhorn for their service on the committee. Cathy King talked a bit about Gemini and the award. Gemini performed for the meeting.

Book Launch: Patti Smith gave a brief talk about the process of writing the book *A History of Ann Arbor's People's Food Co-op*.

Election Results: Gaia announced the election results. He thanked everyone for getting out the vote. 1,014 valid votes were cast.

- Two Year Terms: Ann Sprunger and Jenny Blair received the top votes. Jenny Blair had to step down for personal reasons. Therefore, the next top vote getter Jaime Magiera received the position.
- Three Year Terms: Leah Hagamen, Persephone Hernandez-Vogt, and Keegan Rodgers were the top three vote getters.

The board is now Ann Sprunger, Jaime Magiera, Gaia Kile, Bruce Curtis, Leah Hagamen, Persephone Hernandez-Vogt, and Keegan Rodgers.

The initiative to expand the board passed with a sizeable majority. Therefore, from now on, we will have three open seats available until we have a board of nine members.

GM Report: Lesley thanked staff for their hard work. Lesley handed out door prizes, after which she updated us on the new lighting and floors. She also talked about the adopt-a-park and how the landscaping has improved in the area in front of the co-op.

Lesley opened the floor for Q&A. There were no questions from the audience; however, Gaia had a list of questions from the store. Per our by-laws, posted a list to let people ask questions or make comments.

- Someone suggested that the Washtenaw County ID card be accepted as identification. The county is asking that vendors put up signs to indicate that this identification is accepted. Persephone spoke to this matter. She and Lesley will follow up on this.
- “Move towards using biodegradable packaging, i.e. no plastic”. Lesley indicated that we have move from plastic bags to cellophane bags. We are looking at other types of containers for the hot bar. There was support for encouraging people to bring their own bags.
- “Ideas for funding co-op memberships and patronage”. There was some confusion as to what that meant. The first part possibly spoke to paying for people who cannot afford a membership. Gaia indicated that there is a payment plan for people who cannot pay all at once.
- “Conversation on current finances and trends, how it was made, longer term financial planning, risk and status”. Currently, there is not open book management at the store; however, our financial management information is available at the store. There was support for more transparency, especially getting out information regarding finances to let members know that we need their support. A member suggested looking at co-ops worldwide and see how they are meeting modern challenges.
- “Where do co-ops fit into the next Michigan and next U.S. economy?” Gaia said that seeing these sorts of broader, philosophical questions seems to mean that these are on people’s minds. Lesley explained that we work with other co-ops in the Great Lakes and country.
- “Recommended vs. other” for candidates. Gaia explained how to run for the board—you can be put on the ballot by the nominating committee or you can petition to run. All of the candidates were put on by the committee. The board had some questions about a candidate, so the nominating committee recommended this strategy. It was a legitimate process that was democratically achieved at both committee and board level. There were a number of questions from members, however, regarding the fairness of this strategy. The board will have a discussion about this to determine if it should continue this in the future.
- A member asked about changing the name to People’s Food and take off the Co-op part. She has presumed it was a members-only venture. Lesley indicated that are “everybody welcome” signs and logos to address that question. Gaia explained that any name change would be voted on as a bylaw change.
- A member asked how often the product line is evaluated. Lesley said that the co-op’s buyers are constantly reevaluating this process. Shelves are refilled frequently and so it may appear that items are not selling, but they are being refilled very quickly.

Closing: Gaia thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting 9:00.