

Watertown Food Co-op working groups meeting

July 29, 2018, 2-4 p.m.

Watertown Regional Library

Notes by Annie Mullin

16 attendees:

- Adrienne Kaufmann
- Tom Emanuel
- Ron Hagen
- Roberta Hagen
- Jon Janssen
- Mike Mullin
- Heather Pagel
- Wynette Rodriguez
- Michelle Grant
- Jan Mullin
- Clarice Schmidt
- Joelle Gramberg
- Tom Williams
- Linda Lindgren
- Kristi Mogen
- Annie Mullin

Items discussed:

1. Co-op name
 - a. Three possible names for the co-op were suggested, unanimous vote accepted Coteau Community Market and a domain name of coteau.coop. Annie will register the domain asap, so we can put information up. If that name was not available for use in the secretary of state's business database, the group suggested the alternative of Coteau Prairie Market.
2. Membership organization
 - a. There was extended discussion of membership types and pricing. Group consensus was reached, approving the following membership structure and prices:
 - i. Individual - \$100 one-time non-refundable payment, can be paid in installments with no additional costs if it can't be paid all at once (that procedure will be determined at a later date) - has one vote in co-op business.
 - ii. Institutional - \$500 one-time non-refundable payment - has one vote in co-op business. There was discussion about whether this membership can be paid in installments with no additional costs if it can't be paid all at once. We also need a

firm definition of what institutional will encompass, so that it's used for businesses or organizations that feed more people than the average US household size, rather than a business buying it for all their employees, but without setting a business type or size.

iii. Student membership - \$20 annual non-refundable payment, valid only for the student's use. (If the student decides to stay in area and convert to individual membership, previous annual payments will be credited towards individual membership total.) We didn't decide if this membership has a vote in co-op business or not.

b. Membership benefit possibilities

i. Patronage rebate (a share in the annual profits in the form of store credit, as determined by the board, proportionate to member's use of the co-op)

ii. Vote for board members and on special issues presented to the general membership

iii. Can run for the board

iv. Can participate in monthly/quarterly bulk orders

v. Annual membership meeting potluck picnic

vi. Monthly (or quarterly?) member newsletter

vii. Discounts on case purchases – possibly 10% per case

viii. Member-only specials

ix. Swag (e.g., reusable cotton bag, sticker, etc.)

c. Charter members will be anyone who pays their membership in full before a to-be-determined date. There was discussion of getting a memorial plaque done (in the future) with a list of the charter members' names.

d. We will investigate the use of non-voting investment stock to help raise the rest of the funds needed for the co-op's projected two or three years of expenses.

e. Procedures for partial payments of memberships (most likely because of financial hardship) will need to be figured out, but don't need to be part of the bylaws.

3. Upfront costs that will need to be paid before we can start soliciting general memberships:

a. Co-op incorporation in SD (one-time fee): \$150

b. Domain registration (annual): \$120

c. It was decided to accept membership payments from members who attended this meeting in order to pay the organization costs needed to get the co-op started.

d. Membership payments received:

i. Michelle Grant, \$100

ii. Kristi Mogen, \$100

iii. Tom Williams, \$100

iv. Annie Mullin, \$100

v. Jan Mullin, \$100

vi. Mike Mullin, \$100

e. These memberships were paid to Annie personally and will be tracked in a spreadsheet that all steering committee members can view.

4. Documentation

a. The official documentation has to be done in a specific order to start the co-op before we can start actively soliciting memberships:

i. Decide on the co-op name (done)

- ii. Bylaws written and approved (to do: steering committee)
 - iii. File articles of incorporation with the secretary of state (to do: Annie and Mike)
 - iv. File for an EIN from the IRS (to do: Annie)
 - v. Open a local bank account (two members must be on the account and required to sign each check) (to do: finance working group will investigate banks, two steering committee members will set up)
 - vi. Set up merchant services (credit card processing) (to do: same as previous)
5. Working groups
- a. Attendees were asked if they wished to be part of the steering committee, which includes being on at least one other working group and acting as the liaison between the steering committee and the working group. The following people accepted the work of the steering committee/interim organizing board of directors until our first official board election:
 - i. Michelle Grant
 - ii. Ron Hagen
 - iii. Roberta Hagen
 - iv. Jon Janssen
 - v. Kristi Mogen
 - vi. Annie Mullin
 - vii. Jan Mullin
 - viii. Mike Mullin
 - ix. Heather Pagel
 - x. Tom Williams
 - b. The working groups that will be convened are:
 - i. steering committee (done)
 - ii. legal/incorporation
 - iii. business plan
 - iv. location
 - v. producers
 - vi. fundraising
 - vii. marketing
 - viii. finance
 - ix. equipment

The next steering committee meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2018, 2-4 p.m. at Watertown Regional Library. The focus of that meeting will be bylaws. Steering committee members are expected to read through the bylaws of existing regional co-ops from the spreadsheet and to find what they think will work for ours.