



North Coast Co-op  
Earth Action Committee (EAC) Minutes  
January 26, 2017– Ten Pin Building Mezzanine, Arcata

EAC Members present: Leah Stamper and Colin Fiske

Member-Employees present: Melanie Bettenhausen and Nicole Chase Kala Eichamer.

At 5:36pm the meeting is called to order and introductions.

Agenda Review: Discussion included: Leah would like to discuss having all meetings be waste free in support of Zero Waste. Colin would like to add Zero Waste Policy implementation. Melanie, possibly discuss the deli remodel if there is time.

**Consensus reached to approve the November 2016 minutes.**

Board Meeting follow up:

- Direct staff to conduct a member survey regarding how much they would value Zero Waste Certification and report back.
  - Question in January Coop News, review in February
- Direct staff the develop an index of indicators to measure environmental impact and how they will track these factors. By next phase, management will present the board with information to ensure zero net impact.
  - This is addressed in the GM report for the February Board meeting, first the floor plan needs to be discussed. Most likely this information will be available at the March board meeting.

New Business:

- Exercising Zero Waste at Meetings: How to have waste free meetings? If we could demonstrate Zero Waste by having our meeting snacks be free of packaging, for example snacks from bulk in reusable containers vs. packaged items like chocolate bars. This would make a big statement to our members and reflect the Co-op's dedication to reducing waste. Outreach already uses a Zero Waste philosophy at events. Melanie mentions that the recent employee party was Zero Waste focused. In the future, staff could ask local vendors to give us product in reusable containers. Melanie adds that we already have Kinetic Coffee fill our reusable coffee containers at the Ten Pin already, implementing this at all Co-op locations could be a possibility.
- ZW Policy update: Colin has rewritten the draft policy after reviewing the materials that Maggie Gainer sent him. He reads the draft policy:
  - “The coop is committed to continuously reducing our waste production in order to reduce our negative environmental impacts and increase our positive impacts. Our long-term vision is to be an organization that produces no waste at all, where the volume of our discarded materials is small and all such materials serve as reusable resources for other organizations. Our commitment to Zero Waste extends through all aspects of our operations, management and community footprint therefore we strive not only to reduce our own operational waste but also the waste associated with the products our shoppers take home from our stores. To begin, over the next ten years we commit to reducing the amount of waste we produce by at least 5% annually. The General Manager will submit annual reports to the board documenting the Co-ops progress toward our waste reduction goals.”

The Co-op is already at 87% of waste diverted, according to Derick and Blue (maintenance staff).

Colin asks how staff is calculating their percentage number to measure waste. Melanie replies that it

is determined by the maintenance department and is the amount of waste we produce that is diverted from the landfill. Colin wonders if there are many other retailers measuring their waste produced by packaging that customers take home. Melanie notes that some vendors are exploring reusable packaging, example of ceramic yogurt containers that customers pay a deposit that is refunded upon return. Melanie suggest that instead of focusing measuring all trash that leaves the store, focus on a small number of vendors and track. Colin, tracking by product category, possibly 3-5 each year. This would break the process into to smaller, more manageable steps. Leah adds that limiting packaged product choices combined with consumer education could influence how customers shop. Melanie mentions that we are making measurable changes in the type of packaging used by prepared foods. The new containers will be compostable with our logo and a message to address waste, we can provide information about its disposal. The new disposal bins that are close to being installed in the stores will help to bring attention to single us packaging and better alternative choices as well. Colin asks how difficult would it be to have staff fill reusable containers for customers. Melanie adds that returnable durable deli containers for prepared foods is in the works. Implementation of Zero Waste policy will be followed by creation and execution of sub-policies by staff.

- ZW deli remodel indicators: Melanie, the revised layout for the store would move produce under the atrium and bulk to where produce is. This would increase traffic through both departments and highlight package free products. Measuring bulk & produce department sales before and after the remodel could be an indicator. Discussion of bulk tofu, Melanie could notify the deli staff that they are no longer required to prepackage the tofu. The remodel will include a cheese counter which would be staffed, customers could have cheese cut to order and packaged as they wish. At this point in the meeting the group moves to Melanie's office to review the revised floor plan. Key metrics used should include Waste, Energy and Water. Construction waste is a big factor, discussion of how to measure it against the other things. The EPA has some guidelines, Waste Wise is a helpful tool to set waste reduction goals. The LEAD program could also have information. For the remodel to work staff will have to cut grocery items, which could affect sales. However, there are currently holes and double facings of products on the shelves. Discussion of bottled water as an example. Moving all the bottled water to one location instead of throughout the store and installing a water bottle refill station then tracking sales could be an indicator. Discussion of the problems associated with bottled water. Reusable water cups, plates and bowls should be provided. Discussion of the possibility of having sparkling water on tap.

Prioritize outstanding items from Charter: not discussed

Discuss agenda items for next meeting:

- Detailed look at the Zero Waste policy, PPC could send the policy to EAC.
- Revisit solar panels for hot water use, see January GM Report for updates.

Discussion of construction needs for the Arcata store. Leah, when the roof is to be replaced she would like to see bigger plans to raise the roof and create more space. Melanie, nothing will happen for FY2018 though an entry way vestibule is badly needed, in the cold and rainy weather clerks at the registers are exposed and cold. In extreme weather the north doors must be blocked off completely.

Review: Next meeting will be February 23 at 5:30pm

Meeting Adjourned at 7:23 pm

Minutes by Kala Eichamer