

MMFC Annual Meeting
Sunday, September 13th, 2020 6:30pm
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom
Barb Button, Emcee

- Item#1: Call Meeting to Order
- Item#2: Read Ends Statement
- Item#3: Final Call for Candidates
- Item#4: President's Report
- Item#5: Voting Closes
- Item#6: General Manager's Report
- Item#7: Fund Our Foodshed and Cooperative Community Fund Awards
- Item#8: Announcement of Election Results
- Item#9: Celebrating MMFC Staff
- Item#10: Public Comments
- Item#11: Adjourn

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Sunday, September 13, 2020
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Headcount: 48 computers or telephones connected to Zoom, plus 4 presenters.

Call to order: Meeting was called to order at (6:33)

Button **called for additional candidates.**

Button **ended online voting** at 7pm.

President's Report (Rick Remington)

1. My name is Rick, I've served on the Board since 2012.
2. Thank you for joining us for this meeting, especially online and during this beautiful day. We've had a lot of settings, and we hope to share a meal again some day.
3. I continue to serve our co-op because of you, our staff, our producers, and our economic model. I also love the people I serve with - we take our jobs seriously but do it with a smile.
 - a. We're a very functional board.
 - b. Thanks to Wendy MacDougall for her years of service.
4. Roles of the Board:
 - a. Educate ourselves: on farming, co-ops, governance, and more. Community leaders such as Mayo Clinic, Public Library, and MMFC farmers come to meetings as guest speakers.

- b. Supervise General Manager. Board's only link to operations in the store. Crystal is a capable leader and knows what she's doing - doesn't need much supervision.
 - i. Crystal surrounds herself with great folks, from management team to all staff.
- c. Monitor co-op and Board performance through Policy Governance.
- d. Represent YOU, our owners. This is most important. Every time we make a big decision, we ask "what would our owners think? Is this in their best interest?"
- 5. Summarizing the last year is difficult. We started off the year with a bang and were doing well. Board came up with a long list of strengths, and a shortlist of threats. One of those threats was coronavirus.
 - a. COVID 19 means the Board has met virtually since March.
- 6. About a year and a half ago, the Board directed Crystal to find ways to cooperate with other organizations in the Chippewa Valley. Just Local Food was a co-op that came up, and it made sense to continue the conversation. They share our values, vendors, and some customers.
 - a. Crystal has stepped in to the interim General Manager role at Just Local after the loss of some admin staff.
 - b. Crystal is still the GM at Menomonie Market - meaning she provides GM services for two co-ops during the middle of a pandemic.
 - c. Some of our admin staff have helped Just Local with marketing, bookkeeping, and HR, and Nik has provided some meat services and training to Menomonie Market.
 - d. We're excited to be working alongside them - we are truly stronger together.
- 7. Thanks to our owners. It's YOU who make Menomonie Market Food Co-op what it is.

General Manager's Report (Crystal Halvorson)

- 1. As I was getting ready to tell you about the last year, I find I couldn't remember anything between the last annual meeting and the start of the pandemic.
 - a. This is because things were finally starting to feel easy - we were setting goals and hitting our stride.
 - b. Grateful for the work of all staff throughout the years which has allowed us to thrive, and to be a helper during this time.
- 2. We've received so much help! Thank you for sending donuts, cards, friendly comments on Facebook, and smiling through your masks. Thank you for shopping with us! Many small businesses will not survive this, but our operations are strong! Your support and ownership lend us resilience.
 - a. We have welcomed 65 new owners since the beginning of COVID and the economic downturn.
- 3. Our usual biggest times are Owner Appreciation Days and the week leading up to Thanksgiving. This year, we had two very busy weeks in mid-March when we received notice that the Safer at Home order was coming.
 - a. Our staff did wonderfully even though there was no notice or planning for sales weeks nearly as high as Thanksgiving.
 - b. Deli was down 75%, but frozen, produce, and meat are growing faster than ever. Eating habits have changed, and folks are eating more single-ingredient foods at

home.

- c. Our sales have passed \$4 million, and about a third of that is sales of local products.
4. Notable things from last year:
 - a. Relaunched the Morsel with a new format. Comes out every two months with a deeper dive into one theme.
 - b. \$4 Dinners were popular. We can't wait to bring them back!
 - c. Reimagined classroom calendar was a success. It was tough to cancel classes in spring, but we're ready to start again when it's safe.
 - d. The deli was ready to go with a catering program. We had 4-5 great event successes. We're ready to go again when the time is right.
 - e. We were going to take 2020 to research online shopping, with a launch planned in 2022 or 2023. Then COVID came and Kendall and her team launched WebCart in six weeks.
 - i. They took pictures, cleaned up data, developed a look that matches our brand.
 - ii. Our biggest accomplishment of the year! Kudos to Kendall, Isabelle, Calvin, Becca, Joe.
 - iii. Our online sales have been about 5% of sales. It was closer to 15% during the shutdown in April. We anticipate it will spike again this fall.
 - f. We won a Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant to increase sales of local food and money spent with local vendors.
 - i. First product was Racing Heart pesto, made with basil from their farm.
 - ii. Watch for updates as we get rolling on this multi-year project.
 - g. Rick did a great job describing what's been happening with Menomonie Market and Just Local.
 - i. It's been a pleasure to work with the staff and Board of Just Local Food.
 - ii. It's tough to work in a store that's too small!
 - h. In 2017, we started participating in the Co-op Community Fund. Our money is invested, interest comes back to us, and we use it to give an award to a local organization.
 - i. This is our first award! This year's winner is the Dunn County Chapter of the Wisconsin Farmers Union.
 - ii. Many of our vendors are members of the Farmers Union.
 - iii. They will use funds to help solve marketing and profitability issues faced by small-sized farms.
 - iv. Thanks to them for lending us their Zoom account for this meeting.
 - i. We didn't do a full Fund our Foodshed grant this year, instead asking past applicants to reapply. Three winners were chosen, and all won \$1,500.
 - i. Sacred Blossom Tea - They are rebranding their line, using the grant money to help with marketing, new packaging, more flavors. We were the second store ever to carry their tea!
 - ii. Harvest Moon Organics - They are using the grant to increase their batch sizes and scale up their operation.
 - iii. LTD Farm - Khaiti is living the dream. She's using the grant to expand her orchard and build a pack shed.
 - iv. We are also supporting local through our upcoming local sale. 1,250 local products will be on sale next weekend, Friday through Sunday. Also

available for curbside pickup, if you don't want to come into the store. Samples will be outside - meet our new vendors (and eat custard). There will also be a sale of things from our shed.

- j. One last slide - pictures of new folks so we can see their full faces. Welcome Cicely, Grace, Kenzie, Kaine, and Liz.

Rick Remington, Susan Krahn, and Sarah Paquette were elected or reelected to the Board. Welcome Sarah!

Celebrating MMFC Staff (Susan Krahn)

1. My name is Susan. I was nominated to the board in 2019.
2. Many people have been working diligently in our community to help keep us all safe. Thanks to all essential workers for everything you do.
3. I have the honor to thank the MMFC staff. I have no involvement in operations, but these reports have been shared with us in board meetings.
4. We acted fast in the early months. Crystal worked with the management team to react and keep staff safe. They hung plexiglass, added a sanitizing lap twice per day - takes hours!, pulled samples off of the floor, found new sources of safety products, kept staff up-to-date with COVID 19 postings, wrapped produce and bulk, and more.
 - a. Kudos to Felicia and Fresh team for wrapping all produce!
 - b. Kudos to our buyers - Jenn, Margaret, Tanya, Ann, and Joe - who searched high and low to keep products in stock. Joe ordered 15 different brands of toilet paper just to get one in stock!
 - c. We made the seating area into a bulk repack station. Deli staff were able to flex into bulk repack, shopping, and so on. We were able to avoid layoffs because of this.
 - d. Thank you to all the folks who made cloth masks for staff!
 - e. Our policy requiring masks is keeping us safer. Some customers have not been polite about it, but kudos to Hannah and Jay for having some tough conversations.
 - f. So many steps had to happen for our new curbside pickup service, from scheduling to storage. Customers love it, and report it's the best one in our area - even better than Wal*Mart!
 - g. We learned new safety laws, new sick-leave benefits, new tax rules, and reorganized schedules and workspaces to keep folks safe.
 - h. Sales plummeted in Deli, previously our fastest-growing department. They jumped into action, deep cleaned the whole kitchen, moved into other departments, started making more take-and-bake food, and found new uses for the hot bar.
5. Throughout the pandemic, the co-op staff were the loon - calm above the water, but paddling hard beneath the surface to get work done.
6. Special announcement: The Board of Directors did not attend in-person training or spend money feeding folks at the Annual Meeting this year, meaning they are \$2,000 under budget. The Board is using its budget surplus to award bonuses to hardworking staff, based on hours worked since early March.
7. Thank you to all staff members for keeping us well fed and making us feel like part of a

community!

Public Comments, gathered through the Zoom chat panel:

1. Well, isn't this slick!!! Crystal is BATHED in high functioning and caring staff that make everything look so easy! She is a LUCKY DUCK.
2. Wonderful work during the pandemic. MMFC is the safest grocery in Menomonie. The online ordering/curbside pickup is excellent. Staff have continued with friendly, gracious service. Thank you! - Patrick
3. What's going on with the wine and spirits options? I was in the store recently and the selection was significantly lacking. Is the coop getting out of selling these products?
4. Great idea to award the surplus to the staff (the "front-liners")
5. Online ordering website is beautiful! Very well done. Drop the fee and I think you'll see more use.
6. I never expected to get teary-eyed at an annual meeting but had moist eyes several times tonight, hearing these awesome stories. You are all lights in a dark time. Thank you so much.
7. Thank you for sooo much hard work and dedication. You are a lifeline, Great job.

This concludes our formal time together. We will send a link to a survey about how you liked the meeting; if you fill it out, you'll get a coupon.

Thanks again for being here. We hope to meet in person next year.

Meeting adjourned at (7:18)

(A short, informal chat with board members took place after the meeting's end.)