

Minutes of the Tuesday, March 28, 2023 Park Slope Food Coop General Meeting

The monthly General Meeting of the Park Slope Food Coop was held on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, beginning at 7:08 p.m., and was conducted using the internet communications platform Zoom. Several weeks beforehand, an announcement about the scheduled meeting and the agenda were posted on the PSFC website, foodcoop.com, inviting members to sign up to attend and participate. A Zoom link to the meeting, along with the meeting materials, and a separate Zoom link to the Simply Voting website were sent by email to members prior to the meeting. Chair Committee members David Moss and Charlie Rogers acted as chair and chair secretary. At 7:59 p.m., when discussion of agenda item #1 began, 116 members were in attendance.

Open Forum

Topics of discussion during open forum included assisting other food coops by sharing PSFC's member labor, perspectives on the recently lifted mask requirement at the store, and whether Coop staff members or members working on certain Coop committees are eligible to run for a seat on the board of directors.

Financial Report and General Coordinators Reports

General Manager and treasurer Joe Holtz presented a financial report, referring to notes and preliminary statements for the 4-week period ending 2/26/23, which had been distributed before the meeting. The meeting discussed the report. General Coordinator Elinoar Astrinsky made a report which included information on staff efforts to prepare for stocking the store with holiday items despite market shortages.

Committee Reports

Second Location Study Committee member Jonathan Farber announced two April Zoom meetings open to all members concerning an upcoming General Meeting proposal to create a member referendum. Teresa Santamaria of the Hudson Valley Farm Coop Committee made an announcement concerning their search for Coop members who are attorneys. The meeting discussed the reports.

Agenda item 1 – Election – Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC)

DRC member Daniel Weiss introduced the item, summarizing the purpose of the committee. Member Christopher Cox addressed the meeting, seeking a seat on the committee. Current DRC members Helen Koh, Michael Szeto and Daniel Weiss all addressed the meeting, seeking reelection. Daniel Weiss read DRC member Karen Kramer's statement seeking reelection, as she was not in attendance. The meeting voted in the election using the Simply Voting website. All DRC candidates were elected to a 3-year seat. Election results:

Christopher Cox, 59 yes, 13 no

Helen Koh, 73 yes, 2 no

Karen Kramer, 68 yes, 4 no

Michael Szeto, 70 yes, 2 no

Daniel Weiss, 70 yes, 3 no

Agenda item 2 – Presentation of Board of Directors Candidates

Coop Board of Directors candidate Timothy Hospodar addressed the meeting and attendees questioned him.

Agenda item 3 – Proposal: Coop Markup

General Coordinators Joe Holtz and Joe Szladek co-presented the proposal, which had been distributed to the members before the meeting. They referred to a slide show projected on Zoom. The meeting discussed the proposal. Joe Holtz made a motion to bring the proposal to the floor for a vote, which was seconded. Member George Olken made a motion to amend the proposal with these words, “At the end of the fiscal year 2024 (1) that the markup will revert to 21% unless otherwise authorized by the GM (2) the former 2003 rule that gives coordinators authority to raise the markup to 22% be voided. So that the GM has final authority on the level of the markup.” The meeting debated the amendment. By a show of hands taken by the chair, the amendment failed with 26 in favor and 46 against. Member Elizabeth Tobier made a motion to amend the proposal by adding a line at the end, “Further, any future decision by the General Coordinators to suspend member labor for any reason must be ratified by a vote of the General Meeting before implementation,” which the chair would not recognize, stating that “it is not relevant to the question,”... “It’s a completely new issue.” At the chair’s invitation, Elizabeth made a motion to overrule the chair, which was seconded. Elizabeth argued why the motion was relevant; the chair argued why the motion was out of order. A hand vote on “shall the ruling of the chair be upheld?” resulted in 56 hands in favor. The chair secretary stated “the people that voted to uphold were more than half the attendance;” thus the motion to overrule the chair failed. The meeting debated the proposal. Using the Simply Voting website, the meeting voted in favor of the proposal that appears below, with 63 in favor and 27 against.

The General Coordinators propose changing the Coop’s markup and the procedure for setting the markup in the following ways:

- ***Part 1: Maintain the base markup of 25% through Fiscal Year 2024 which begins on 01/30/2023, except as outlined below in Parts 2 & 3.***
- ***Part 2: Starting on 05/01/2023 a lower base markup of 21% will only be available to those members who qualify for the reduced Member/Owner Equity Investment (MOEI). Members who qualify for the reduced MOEI but are not currently enrolled will need to provide valid proof of eligibility in order to pay prices based on the 21% base markup. Information about reduced MOEI is available on foodcoop.com or in the Membership Office.***
- ***Part 3: Each year at the October General Meeting, the GCs shall report on plans to lower or maintain the 25% base markup for the next fiscal year based on the state of the Coop’s finances. The GCs shall have the authority to set the base markup no higher than 25% and require GM approval to increase the markup above 25%.***
- ***Part 4: Passage of this proposal makes void the August 2020 decision regarding the markup.***

Presentation of Minutes

Coop secretary Elizabeth Tobier presented the minutes of the February 28, 2023 General Meeting, which had been distributed to members before the meeting. The meeting approved the minutes by general consent.

Board of Directors' Meeting

The Board of Directors' meeting was chaired by Imani Q'ryn. Five board members were present: Joe Holtz, Shayna Moliver, Bill Penner, Imani Q'ryn and Brandon West. Viren Mehta was not in attendance. All members of the board present voted in favor of accepting the advice of the members on the minutes of the February 28, 2023 General Meeting. All members of the board present voted in favor of accepting the advice of the members on agenda item 1, Dispute Resolution Committee Election. All board members present voted in favor of accepting the advice of the members on agenda item 3, Coop Markup.

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 p.m.



Elizabeth Tobier, Secretary
Park Slope Food Coop
Brooklyn, NY
April 3, 2023
(Approved by the April 25, 2023 PSFC GM)