

Board Members in Attendance: Tommasina, Jill, Ned, Debbie, Karen, Mark, Wendy, Quinn

Others in Attendance: Shannon, Juniper, Mimi, Diana, Eric

Note Taker: Tommasina

Facilitator: Debbie

Timekeeper:

#### **NOTE: WE WILL START CHECK INS AT 6:30 SHARP**

- Introductions, pronouns, check-ins, and firestarter (10 minutes)
  - Review facilitation style and hand signals
  - Take pause and speak up – accountability and inclusion
  
- Introductions and info for collaborating on pricing & whatnot (10 minutes)
  - Eric Struve (Director of IT, Outpost): 20 years experience at Outpost and oversees the POS team. Not an expert but does work in it. Copos seems like the perfect fit for us.
  - Diana Schmidt (Store Manager of Capital Drive, Outpost)
    - Mimi: in Copos we're switching over from markups to margins. We're also switching to use labels on the shelves, do you all update pricing regularly on the shelves?
    - Eric: our process is to update the pricing based on invoices as they come up. If a cost is higher, we raise, if not, we keep it the same unless it goes past a threshold.
    - Quinn: maybe this conversation would be great with a smaller group.
    - Mimi: I think we need a better system to report changes in pricing, and how to figure out how to increase our sales. What does Outpost do that we could do? How to increase membership and diversify? Those are the questions I have personally.
    - Wendy: one of the biggest differences is we don't have any storage space. We have to do that analysis right away.
    - Eric: is a goal to order through Copos at this point?
    - Mimi: we upload our invoices to Copos, so it does the pricing automatically overnight when a new shipment comes in, but we use a lot of smaller distributors so we can't do that with them. Our biggest orders are from UNFI and \_\_\_\_.
    - Juniper: the past 21 years has been a more intuitive ordering system like looking at the shelves but they didn't really know what pars were.
    - Eric: that's not a terrible strategy honestly, we did that too.
    - Diana: I look at it like is it a problem or what should the par be on this? Or I want to see what are my top 25 sellers. We can incorporate what's been done, Eric will know how to use Copos
    - Quinn: let's follow up and we can go deeper. Any coordinators can fit in some help.
    - Diana: yes please reach out to both of us to see what we can share. How did we get cash flow up, then how did we evolve?
    - **Action item:** coordinators will reach out to schedule a meeting with Eric and Diana.
  
- Communication check-in (5 minutes)

- Shannon: let's get rid of the old social media calendar because I posted over someone. In other news, I've appreciated the increase in Comm Comm communication lately.
- Quinn: I already apologized to Wendy but I apologize to the board for singling her out in an inappropriate way at the last board meeting.
- Coordinator reports / strategy / 30/60/90 Day Plans (15 minutes)
  - Grocery Coordinator (3 minutes): Mimi didn't get to write much this month. Bad weather seems to have contributed to poor sales. Looking forward to the café pop-ups. Cooler is looking better these days, haven't spoiled out broccoli in some time. Also implemented a 50% off spoiled produce shelf that's been selling as well.
    - Debbie: any updates on the switch to markups to margins?
      - Mimi: spraying the produce has been good but not sure if everyone knows how to use it. I had to look up the specific bottles that are safe to use in the store. It was a big purchase with the containers last month, almost \$500, but I'll order the misting bottles this week. We'll have to train staff and volunteers on that.
    - Debbie: I know we discussed having one coordinator who's the point person on things, and that was something that was stressed in Wynston's report.
      - Mimi: I don't think we could have a point person for anything because we're still stepping on each other's toes. I don't think it's realistic for the co-op.
    - Shannon: I have kind of taken on the drinks and Mimi has taken on the produce, so that's kind of happened. But it's going to be whoever is in the store at the time.
    - Wendy: it's more who's checking on the margins and accountability, not like you're the only person misting the produce or answering questions about it, but particularly who's responsible for the produce staying fresh? Have there been conversations at the coordinator level about more accountability and who's the go-to?
    - Quinn: are you asking if it's about reducing our waste?
    - Debbie: role clarity and the person who's in charge of thinking through those things. An accountable point person.
    - Karen: in the coordinator minutes, I saw that Jill suggested that Mimi be on the finance committee. I had thought that was a thing already, because of inventory and budgeting, has that happened?
    - Shannon- it's that each of us should be on a committee.
    - Jill: I defer to the coordinators to determine who should attend finance committee meetings.
    - **Action item:** Ned offered to review the data from café with Shannon
  - Café Coordinator (3 minutes):
    - Debbie: we've had worse café sales even since we've had the brunch... I don't know how realistic it is to guess \$5,000/week in brunch revenue in 2024 Q, because that averages more than the brunches we had in September, and that was with a lot of excitement drummed up. We might want to address that in our proforma projections.
    - Wendy: the brunches in September had limited hours, so if we have more hours and a bigger menu, it might be better.
    - Karen: we'd have regular cafe staff too, so less labor cost.

- Debbie: we need to really analyze what happened in September to make less in the cafe than in the previous month. Maybe worth having someone in to look at the numbers. Lots of pieces to it, but that number should be a warning to us.
    - Shannon: I was surprised to see those numbers too. No increase in sales, about the same as August. Buying more supplies so overall we lost. I would need help diving in to see why.
    - Quinn: It's still expanding our rate of serving, people are still coming.
    - Karen: How's the philly stuff going? Great that you had a bahn mi too.
    - Shannon: the first two with the millies, phillies and the soup were slow. Tee last one with the bahn mi was better, and we'll try again this Friday. Lots of less labor with Friday night ones than on brunches. Wendy did a great job getting volunteers for Friday night and we still got stuff into the case too.
    - Karen: do you know if we can get the special advertised?
    - Shannon: I'll do the reuben this Friday!
    - Ned: thank you Shannon for your hard work this week. We've put a lot of pressure on you and appreciate your hard work on it. The food has been delicious. Debbie, was your concern that the sales were less overall, or during the popup dates?
    - Debbie: was it grab 'n' go that caused it to go down? Was it that volunteers didn't advertise the brunches with every shopper? Are there ways we can trim or better use labor or volunteer hours? September and October are good months to dive into the data. What's going on there to know how it might go if we reopen fully?
    - Wendy: I think most people will say 4 weeks isn't enough time to assess how things are going. Everything we've done in the cafe has been too short for 6 months to mean anything. But analyzing the data together could be good. If we don't have one employee coming in, it shows so quickly that we're not selling the way we normally do. It's from Elton getting sick one shift. Getting a loan to have enough staff that we have someone who can cover.
    - Quinn: Diana's advice was to open the cafe more to increase sales.
    - Jill: any pop ups we have need to have consistent social media advertising with enough time, a week out, to get people to plan their visit to us. We need to plan a few weeks out. As much notice as possible and keep reminding.
    - Debbie: let's move this to a comm comm communication
      - Admin Coordinator (3 minutes): Juniper: lots of little things. At the end of October, we'll have 3 months of data of categories for the margins data. That'll be helpful.
      - Volunteer Coordinator (3 minutes): Wendy: spent time in the cafe, at events (book club), most volunteer orientations have had people that show up and we've had a few great people who've started. Lot of new families came by.
        - Debbie: what does volunteer committee meeting in January mean?
        - Wendy: there isn't a committee yet
  - Birthday party is a potluck with sausages.
- Committee reports (10 minutes)
  - Finance (4 minutes): we're still losing money. Our employee expenses are going up. Our gross profit percentage keeps going down (35% and now down to 31% for September). Just looking at our expenses related to COGS - payroll as a percentage of sales. We either need to increase sales, managing the COGS budget

- Debbie: more oversight looking at the budget. So we're not waiting 3 months to see that we're continuing those losses. With the transition to margins, we want to keep a tight eye on that right now.
    - Wendy: so, looking for sales for the week and the COGS, we don't sell things that quickly so it's not going to match exactly. Looking at what our COGS is would be hard. As far as the budget goes, yes. I don't think we're spending more than we have been.
    - Jill: we're just not in a position to be loose with our estimates, we need to have things on the shelves being planful and monitor our daily sales and whether we're meeting our goals or not. If we're not selling enough in the store, we need to treat the budget like it's our own personal budget. Make more pragmatic decisions around that stuff.
    - Debbie: I imagine we can use Copos better to manage more tightly.
    - Juniper: part of it is looking at the actual margins that we have is to figure these out by category, we are basically not selling enough which could be either not enough volume of the sales or not having things to sell. Could be questions we ask of Eric and Diana. We're making some progress on this, but we're also caught in this place where we don't know when and how much to buy.
  - Communications (3 minutes): Karen: We rely on volunteers for social media so there are times when it doesn't happen because of their life things. Also, I sent an email today –I'm stepping down as committee chair.
    - Quinn: you've done a great job.
    - Debbie: we appreciate all you've done, and thank you for your honesty.
  - Membership (3 minutes): Quinn: we're fine on membership, it's standard.
    - Wendy: I met with Amy, we talked about scheduling a meeting and talked about a membership drive.
    - Mimi: when can we put in members in Copos? It's been an issue lately.
    - Wendy: it's been two weeks so it can't be that many.
    - Karen: are there concern forms still when there are issues with memberships?
    - Wendy: one thing I talked with Amy about was making sure that we're on top of the forms. The process that Copos needs is different from our form, so that's a new data
- Schedule December Board meeting (5 minutes)
  - November 27 at 5:30pm
  - December 19 at 5:30pm
- Break (10 minutes)
- Columinate feasibility study / Shared Capital loan check in (10 minutes)
  - Feasibility Study is all wrapped up and all paid up. Don's contract was for coming back a few times this year. Wynston has also offered to have conversations with us depending on her capacity. There will be a report due in January to the WEDC. Wendy is the point person on that. Not extensive. No need to have Wynston in meetings with Diana and Eric in the beginning.
  - Loan has been submitted and received. No other updates.



- Fundraising
- Role clarity

· Action items / future discussion

**§ Volunteer Liaison Positions / Volunteer Committee**

- v Events / Networking / Sports
- v Board & Committee Recruitment
- v Volunteer Appreciation

**§ Communications Policy**

**§ Board role in staff and coordinator on-boarding**

- v Draft talking points including:
  - State of the Co-Op
  - Role of Board /Coordinators/Staff
  - How to communicate with the board
- v All new staff meets with a board member within first 2-3 weeks
- v What is the process for assigning a board member to the new staff member

- Community Contacts List
- Retreat Garden Plot Items

Next Board Meeting: November 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm