

THE SKINNY (LONG OVERDUE) ON THE WORK OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
by chris tower, secretary

Some of you may have been immediately drawn to this article with the burning question: "wait a minute, the co-op has a board of directors? I thought it was just a grocery store."

Others may be drawn here thinking "yeah, what has the board been up to lately? I don't remember seeing a summary in the Coop Scoop in... well, I think Nixon was still in office..."

Ha, ha. Seriously, there's been no "board report" in the Scoop since at least the fourth quarter of 2006. Oops. But the board's not idle, and there have been board reports. Some of you more techno-minded folks have received the People's Food Co-Op's E-News, which, since the end of 2006 has featured a grand total of THREE board summaries. (BTW, if you want to receive these exciting co-op enews updates, just send your email to.....)

The infrequent summary reporting does not indicate that the board has failed in its legal duty to keep its ownership informed. The minutes of each board meeting are posted on the Co-op bulletin board each month and later archived in a binder available at the counter. For those looking to spend two hours watching noses to grindstones, board meetings still happen monthly. Also, there's the annual meeting, member forums, and other times and places, in which the board has shared its hard work with the co-op ownership.

All of this reporting is important. The Co-op employs a unique business model, especially now that the new membership structure is underway. The Co-op has always been a business that shares ownership among its paid members. Now, unlike the old annual fee system, you owners invest your money in the Co-op. Since your investment makes you a part owner in the business, you may participate in the decisions the business makes.

Since there are so many decisions to govern the PFC, you owners elect a board of directors. In turn, the board hires a General Manager to run the business. The board maintains policies and by-laws to govern its work but also to govern the work of its executive, GM Chris Dilley.

The governing of these policies constitutes only a portion of the board's work though it comprises the majority of what you will find in the monthly minutes. The rest of the board's work involves maintaining and supporting "ends," which are larger and loftier goals, the principles and ethics for which the People's Food Co-Op stands, its mission.

The central work of the ends for the last year has been ramping up the expansion project. The PFC is working to find a new location, ushering in a bigger and brighter future for the business you own. Chris Dilley and his dedicated and super-powered team do much of the work for expansion. They have installed the new POS (Point of Sale) system last year, part of maintaining the new ownership structure. Much of the contact with

the 465 owners under the old system also fell on the staff, but the board made a round of phone calls in November to answer any questions or concerns personally.

The board of directors will continue its work supporting the PFC team this year. Not only does the PFC need its old member-owners back, but it needs new owners as well. The equity created by ownership shares is necessary if the expansion project is going to get off the ground.

The board of directors has formed two task forces to achieve these goals. The Membership Drive task force will continue to work throughout 2008 to retain its member-owners and to recruit new ones. Additionally, the Member Loan task force will strive to raise the additional capital necessary to procure the bank loans needed to make the expansion project a success. You don't have to become a board member to participate! Any owners interested in volunteering your time and expertise to either of these task forces should email ..... or call .....

So far, the board of directors is thrilled with the surging ownership sign ups. As of this writing, the PFC has X#225# current owners who have invested their money with more committing every day.

The board needs new directors. Since the new year, the board has lost some of its members and needs to replace them. Already, one concerned owner (David Hyde) has stepped forward and has been appointed. But other terms will expire this year, and new elections are to be held at the annual meeting March 16 at Bronson's Gilmore Center.

If you want to participate in the stewardship of the PFC during the most exciting time in its history, email..... or call..... or ask for a nomination sheet in the store.

As you can see from the tone of this report, we have a lot of fun working on the PFC's board of directors, but we also take our jobs very seriously. There is still much work to be done. From the board's monthly policy governance work to developing and supporting its ends to shepherding the expansion project to completion, the board of directors has exciting and important tasks ahead. Be part of the People's Food Co-Op's future. Help us issue in the dawn of a new era for the PFC. Like the food the store sells, volunteering to direct the PFC forward is organic and natural. (Okay, that was goofy, possibly extra corny and cheesy, but like I said, we have fun while we work hard.)

Thanks for reading!! Peace - chris tower

#### NEXT BOARD MEETINGS

February 26 - 7 p.m. - Gimore Center Classroom 6

March 25 - 7 p.m. - Gimore Center Classroom 6

.....EDITED.....

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ANNUAL MEETING - March 16 - 4 p.m. - Gilmore Center  
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