

WHOLE FOODS COMMUNITY CO-OP, INC.  
Minutes of 2023 Annual Owners Meeting  
at Clyde Iron Works, Duluth, MN  
on October 16 2023  
*as approved by Whole Foods Co-op Owners during the 2024 Annual Election*

**BUSINESS MEETING:**

**Welcome and Introduction**

WFC Board President, Maria Isley, called business meeting to order at 6:23pm.

Maria invited General Manager, Sarah Hannigan to the stage.

Sarah described the WFC ENDS Statement, the guiding path for our work and our business. Whole Foods Co-op is more than just a grocery store.

**State of the Co-op Reports**

**Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report**

Sarah explained the unaudited financials in the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report document. She stated that while budgeting for FY2023, WFC planned to run a steady ship, did not plan for profit or loss. FY2023 ended with only \$11k loss under a \$22mil profit. This is something to be proud of. Sarah thanked all employees, owners, and shoppers for making that happen.

Sarah explained that WFC has a strong balance sheet and is in a strong cash position. This puts WFC in a strong position for years ahead.

The FY2023 Annual Report outlines our financials, but also our impact, which goes above and beyond just selling groceries. Different ways that WFC makes an impact in our community are:

- Food Accessibility & Access Discounts
- Investing in staff
- Donations
- GIVE Program: Non-Profit Recipients and Grow Local Food Fund
- Education & Outreach
- Local Inventory Purchases and Bioregion Inventory Purchases

**Current & Upcoming Strategic Priorities**

Sarah described a multi-year strategic plan that was developed by WFC Leadership a couple years ago. It was created to figure out how WFC can stretch our impact within our community even more. Each year, the strategic plan is reviewed and tweaked as needed for the coming fiscal year. Sarah described the five strategic pillars of the strategic plan:

- Co-op Community Impact
- Customer Experience
- Staff Experience

- Co-op Infrastructure
- Finance & Systems

Sarah invited attendees to reach out to her after the meeting to answer any questions they may have.

Maria explained that the Board of Directors gets monthly updates, so it is exciting to see how those updates come together each month in the Annual Report.

Maria asked everyone to look around and take a look at our community. This is more than just a grocery store.

### **Election Results**

Maria stated that everyone's vote matters and thanked everyone who voted in the most recent Owner Elections. Maria announced the results of the Owner Elections.

### **2022 Annual Meeting Minutes**

2022 Annual Owner Meeting Minutes were approved.

### **Board of Directors Election Results**

1. Susan Darley-Hill – 3-year term
2. Chris Lee – 3-year term
3. Holly Wolfe (incumbent) – 3-year term
4. Tristen Eberling – 1-year term

### **GIVE! 2024 Non-Profit Support Recipients:**

During check-out, customers have the option to round-up and donate their spare change. Through the round up, half of the funds are given to GIVE! Non-Profit recipients and the other half are allocated to the Grow Local Food Fund. This year, over 40 non-profits applied to be GIVE! Non-Profit Support Program recipients in 2024. Through a staff survey, and Owner election, the applicant list was whittled down to 10 finalists.

The 2024 GIVE! Non-Profit Recipients are:

- Life House
- American Indian Community Housing Organization (AICHO)
- Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault (PAVSA)
- Planned Parenthood Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota
- Friends of the Duluth Public Library
- Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs (DAIP)
- Wildwoods
- Lake Superior Community Health Center
- Friends of Sax-Zim Bog
- Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness (Save the Boundary Waters)

### **Thank you to Outgoing Board Members**

Maria shared her thanks to the three outgoing board members who are leaving WFC Board of Directors: LeAnn Littlewolf, Lynn Kalnbach, and Jamie Harvie. Being a board member is a lot of work, a lot of fun, and a lot of learning. Thank you for your time. Maria shared additional gratitude to Jamie Harvie, who fulfilled three full terms, which is 9 years of service in the WFC Board. Jamie provided heart and wisdom during his time with the Board.

Sarah remarked that Jamie has been an owner at WFC since 1/1/1990, almost 33 years. Jamie has been a board member for 9 years. Sarah shared some areas of change that Jamie has been a part of during his Board tenure including, the Denfeld expansion, hiring WFC's 2nd General Manager, the unionization of staff, the global pandemic, and recession/inflation. While not part of Jamie's board service he also spearheaded the Bag It Duluth campaign which has a lasting positive impact on retail operations in Duluth. Sarah presented Jamie with a framed Co+op Branded plastic bag. One of the last bags of its kind to exist in the world. Sarah shared that while WFC never opted to use these Co+op branded plastic bags, the gift is a token of the intersection of Jamie's positive impact in our community. Jamie accepted the gift and shared "Community is important and it has been a joy to connect with everyone. Thank you so much."

### **Remarks for the Good and Welfare of the Co-op**

Maria invited owners at the meeting to share their questions and comments about Whole Foods Co-op. Questions are not answered at this time. Owner's questions will be answered at a later date by the Board of Directors.

Maria expressed that this is owner's opportunity to share with us, the good and bad, and that the Board is here to listen. We will not respond at this time.

1. Jeanne Marie Tondryk – Is really excited to see all solar panels. Are there solar panels on Hillside store?
  - a. Sarah: there are a few solar panels on a pole in the employee parking lot.
  - b. Jeanne: It would be wonderful if every commercial building had solar panels on them
2. Delores Wold – Has an issue, a lot of members you get one card and then you get a family member with 1 card, but if you go as guest, you have to pay both cards, but can't get reimbursed. It would be nice so the other person is on your card or discounted a little bit. Her husband didn't come because he has a card, but he was listed as a guest. The other person holding the other person could come.
3. Gwen Saari -- Thanks everyone that voted for Lake Superior Community Health Center, Gwen is the outreach coordinator. We appreciate your support!
4. Deana Erickson -- Seconds the appreciation for voting for Lake Superior Community Health Center. Also in regards to solar panels, business and climate consideration, she is curious about the management of water on site. Water management is a big deal, and she has noticed lots of changes at at the Denfeld store. It looks like they're digging out the storm waters. What are the business considerations to manage storm water as we see more intense storms?
5. Wayne Pulford – As there are more electric vehicle hybrids, are we considering installing a couple EV charges?
  - a. Sarah: We like that vision of the future too
6. Lisa Fitzpatrick – Thinks that EV chargers should be the chargers that charge fast.
7. Jason Paulson – That the round up number is incredible. He had no idea. He individually rounds up, but if we could tell people what their individual impact is. Whoever came up with that idea to round up, thank you!

8. Wendy Grethen – Appreciates the Co-op Deli. It has good food you can't find anywhere else, and all the meatless alternatives are really helpful.
9. Did not say name – Asked if it's possible to serve hot breakfasts and buffets at Denfeld store.

Maria thanked everyone for sharing.

Maria announced that up next is a panel with three past Grow Local Food Fund (GLFF) recipients. During round-up at the registers, half the donated money goes to the GLFF. The money is awarded as grants for local farms and food producers. Maria is excited to hear their stories. Maria also welcomed Dan Kraker, from Minnesota Public Radio to facilitate the panel discussion.

Business meeting adjourned at 6:58pm

### **GROW LOCAL FOOD FUND PANEL**

Facilitated by Dan Kraker of Minnesota Public Radio and joined by three past recipients of WFC's Grow Local Food Fund.

- Brit Johnson - Polish Farmer
- Julianne Motis - Midway Meadow Farms
- Heather-Marie Bloom - Rising Phoenix Community Farm

Dan asked Brit, Julianne, and Heather-Marie questions about their farms and their stories. Brit, Julianne, and Heather-Marie also shared their "why" and the positive impact of receiving the Grow Local Food Fund grants. A video recording of the panel discussion will be available at a later date.

### **DOOR PRIZES**

Raffle prizes were distributed.