

## Membership Meeting Minutes

### Authored Primarily by Cory Ruegg - Secretary

BoD in Attendance: Donald Cramer, Cory Ruegg, Elena Pierce, Rebecca Nole, Sarah Tybring, Chris Van De Elzen, Ronald Walker

Absent: Laila Mat, Tracey Collins

Member attendance list was physically recorded during check-in.

Worker's Collective Attendance was: Lisa, Harrison, Angie, Kelsey, Tea (bartending)

Meeting Initiated at: 6:12PM

Peyton: Ice-breaker talk.

Donald Cramer: Let's start at 6:15PM and

Don: We are here to inform and tell the membership of what is going on and some backgrounds on some of the newest changes that are going on.

- We have a hard stop at 8 tonight due to an event scheduled later.

History of bar last 6 months:

Elena Pierce: I am a long time member and former board member, re-joined in the last 2 weeks due to a vacancy.

- PH is in a dire place financially, which is why we have been making changes.

Bylaws: Statment of Purpose (from bylaws):

#### *Article II. Statement of purpose*

*The coop has a twofold purpose. First, it seeks to uphold cooperative standards of democracy, equality, selfresponsibility, equity and solidarity and strives to operate in accordance with the values of collective worker management, living wages, strong community involvement, safe environment, responsible drinking and local products. Second, it seeks to uphold and promote the Riverwest neighborhood's historic and current cooperative identity. The coop aims to propagate other cooperatively run businesses and may utilize any and all coop held resources to ensure that future cooperative businesses shall exist in the Riverwest neighborhood of Milwaukee, Wisconsin and the greater Milwaukee area.*

In the beginning, we had a lot of roles that were less formal and based on real needs of the business (inventory/ lead bartender/finance, etc)

We then moved to a front of house/ back of house structure, which then turned into General Manager/Finance Manager.

To Sum, we have always changed with the needs of our environment. We see ourselves in a new situation and are going to change things and keep the bar open.

Q: How were the historical changes in the WC decided? Was it a board/WC/membership choice.

A: The board has taken multiple paths for reorganization, both working with the WC and enacting changes in staff. There is not a single precedent taken during reorganizations.

Audience: (Wendy) it was tasked from the Board to the WC to make a change, and if it failed the Board would make the change.

Audience: Most of the decisions made have been worked

Audience Q: Is a special meeting required 30 days in advance? (No, 7 days minimum, 30 mx)  
Can we have a section of this meeting to have the WC go over their proposal?

Rebecca: We would want to have any discussions during a prescribed time. Then use the Roberts rule of discussions there.

Agenda being read:

- Discuss and tell the membership of the recent changes
- WC presentation of their structure
- Counter-proposal and addendum to the WC proposal.

Don:

Welcome, we first had our special meeting back in March, we took some financial steps and implemented changes based on that money and orders.

We have also had staff (WC, and BoD turnover) during the last 6 months.

BoD put together some plans for Long and Short Term goals to get better.

3 weeks ago, we started having dire finances and speaking more in week to week instead of long term, Considerations for closing.

We did let go an individual earlier this week due to both financial and performance based reasons. The decision made was final, we have made mistakes in proceedings but the choice is final.

## **WC- Would like to give proposals**

Harrison (on behalf of the board):

The proposal was to move the positions: Shift Manager, Events Manager, Finance(?) Manager  
10/hr @ 15hrs a week per position.  $(10 \times 15) \times 3$  (\$450 per week)

Harrison: Verbatim reading a Board response to the WC structure proposal.

Audience: How does the board, implemented accountability?

A: It's been a long term problem on all fronts. The board addendum was to introduce accountability and build towards a sustainable model.

Don: Our intent is to get to that structure, but our current decisions loom with knowing that we are -5,000 in the red on the year.

## **Discussion**

Ronie: Our bar has not been profitable for every year, except one. We don't have many models to look

Audience:

How is hiring someone new going reduce cost?

Donald: We are trying to hail mary by bringing in new blood. There are no good options, because payroll is the last item.

Audience: We should get a trained mediator, between board and WC.

Audience (PROPOSAL) The membership votes on the WC structure. In Lieu of board approval.

Rebecca: We will need another meeting to address this specific issue.

*Note from Secretary:*

*At this point during the meeting I became involved as a participant in my relation to the board. Seeing as I was distracted I was unable to track all conversations or points of interest from all parties. Below I summarized the results and major actions taken place while omitting much of the questions/discussions during the Discussion portion of the meeting.*

A member asked for the numbers on payroll for the WC proposal and the BoD proposal.

The board proposal comes out for a new Transitional General Manager to work 20 hours a week at 15\$/hour. With a 2-3 week transition with existing leadership to ensure no major knowledge was lost. \$300/week in the short term.

WC proposal has a 3 position leadership role of Finance, Events, and Shift paid @ \$10/hr for total hours of 45 per week split between the three people. \$450/week

### **Votes and motions taken on by the membership**

Membership Advisor Vote: To move forward with the WC proposal no modifications from the BoD.

Straw Poll: Mostly Yes.

Membership Straw Poll on removing Chris Van De Elzen:

21 in favor

12 against

3 abstained

Result: 21 / 33 < ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority needed. Chris is not removed from the board

### **Meeting results and actionable items**

- Chris Van De Elzen has vocally resigned from the board
- Elena Pierce has vocally resigned from the Board
- WC passed a petition to hold a Worker's Collective chaired meeting in 2 weeks on Tuesday, September 26th @ 6:00PM