

# Brownsville Co-op

## Minutes for February 19, 2007

**Present:** Will Carey, Anne Stein, Susan Richards, Brent Richards, Cheryl Haworth, Jake Jacobsen, Margy Riggs, Mindy Graber, Becky Graber, Patty Linn, and Jenny Duringer

**Minutes:** There were no minutes present from the last meeting, but they were read and approved as corrected on Feb 26.

### **Co-op Legal entity: Steve & Margy**

**Bylaws** Steve Brenner/ Margy Riggs

Reading of Draft- Cheryl and Steve read the proposed bylaws through and a number of additions and edits were made. People with detailed or stylistic editions in mind were encouraged to submit them in writing or electronically on or before Thursday, 2/22.

Election- March 1 Bylaws ballot will go out by mail

March 15 Deadline for ballots to be postmarked for return

**Election process** “ / “

March 1 Invitation for volunteers and nomination to new Board to be sent out with Bylaw Ballots

April 1 Notification of candidates for Board

June 1 Election deadline

July 2 New Board begins

**Current Planning group members** Cheryl Haworth

### **Finances: Steve**

**Treasurer's Report** Steve

We have a total of \$6803. \$2281 is in the Checking account. \$4522 is in the CD.

**Insurance** Patty Linn

The annual cost of liability insurance for the Farmers Market was previously quoted as \$183. It will cover the added insured like the city, Randy's Main Street Coffee and Willow as landowner for no additional cost. Independent Vendors' products are not covered. Our involvement in the Community Booth is covered. It was moved and seconded to purchase it as soon as we can (after we get approved Bylaws). The process include brainstorming potential risks and Patti suggested we take a small committee to Forest Grove for that discussion.

**Bookkeeping and Taxes** Steve

Becky Graber volunteered to take over now that Marlene Logan can no longer do it. Anne moved and it was seconded to employ Pioneer Bookkeeping to do our taxes and consult. The motion was approved.

## **Business Plan** Steve

Steve & Cheryl met with Keith Miller at LBCC to start on creating a Small Business Plan for the Co-op. Steve will develop a grant proposal for a 25% match grant which we can use the donation to cover.

## **Meetings and Conferences attended:**

### Ten Rivers Food Web Meeting in Sweet Home -- Will

Harry McCormack of Ten Rivers met with folks from Brownsville, Lebanon and Sweet Home including people from Periwinkle Foods and Persephone Farms (CSA). Both Periwinkle and Persephone have had difficulty with their past structure and Periwinkle plans to switch to a Co-op format. Most discussion was about ways we can all collaborate. Perhaps with common buying to maximize bulk buying power. There is special interest in developing a distribution web to work on vendor transportation.

### **Executive Summary by Fred Weishaupt**

Meeting held at Sweet Home United Methodist Church on Feb 24 at 1:00 - 3:00 pm. About 20 attended. The following projects were reported upon, mostly by the people heading the group that's doing the work:

**Kids/Mentoring** -- Experienced and interested parties within our group (including producers and consumers) are connecting to create new programs and expand existing ones. Schools are interested in what we're doing and probably in helping us do it.

**Transportation** -- Driver and truck costed out and available. Next step: get some willing producers to try it; work out the kinks; incorporate new producers and drop-offs; repeat.

**Community Garden** -- Some sites, people and donated hardware and storage are available. First dirty hands day is March 3. Additional space is being sought on public and private land. Opportunity abounds.

**The Co-op/Farmer's Market** group is actively looking into opening a Sweet Home farmer's market. Periwinkle's is investigating the path to becoming more of a co-op. We'll be looking for mutual support opportunities with the Brownsville Food Web folks. We see that new jobs will be created as a consequence of some of our projects. We're delighted and not at all surprised.

Next General Meeting due in 4-5 weeks, when and where TBA.

### OSU Extension Direct Marketing Conference --Anne & Will

An excellent conference with really good workshops and excellent networking opportunities. Both will submit written information gleaned for the membership.

Will - attended 3 Policy Workshops

1. **Ten Rivers Food Web discussion** with the keynote speaker, Marion Nestle on how to counteract corporate food processors strategy on getting people to eat too much and the wrong foods.
2. **Organizing community support for local agriculture**
3. **Exploring diverse direct marketing opportunities**

Anne – also attended 3

1. on potentially interesting **niche crops** and how to evaluate new ones,
2. a **Market Managers panel** and
3. one on the new **wireless credit / Food stamp machine program** field tested last year. This was the single potentially most workshop.

Because of the lateness of the hour, Anne suggested that we recess the remainder of the meeting one week to complete the agenda.

### Next Meeting (continuation)

7:15pm, Monday, Feb 26<sup>th</sup> at Brambles

**Remaining Meeting agenda:** the meeting was re-opened by Cheryl at 7:30, Monday, Feb 26th  
**Conferences continued –**

**Present:** Anne Stein, Susan Richards, Brent Richards, Cheryl Haworth, Jake Jacobsen, Margy Riggs, Patty Linn, Gian Mercurio and Jenny Durringer

### Bylaw Ballots Steve

The ballots for Bylaw approval were ready and Steve handed them out to those of us who were present. The rest will be mailed out to the membership with invitations for nominations to the five-person board.

### Committee Reports:

#### Farmer's Market Anne

##### Community Booth canopy, tables & chairs, scales needed

We discussed the need to be compliant with legal regulations this year that we were too ignorant to know about last year. We need certifiable scales, rather than just using kitchen scales like we did last year. Will has given all the information he has gathered on scale manufacturers to Steve. Margy moved and it was seconded to have **Steve** spend up to \$500 **to buy two certifiable scales**. It cost \$20 / year to certify them. The **plastic tables** are available at Costco at about \$50 each. We previously authorized the **purchase of two of them**. Steve will again loan us his fold-up chairs. Anne spoke about the need for a **Community Booth** which can stay in place the whole season to save volunteers for sales and avoid burnout in a longer season. **Jake, Don Lyon and Kevin Schrier will** design, if necessary, and build or assemble a canopy or booth.

##### Wireless Credit / Debit / Food Stamp card access Anne

It may be possible for us to access use of credit/debit and/or Food stamp cards. The Oregon Dept of Human Services and the USDA now have a machine using wireless cell phone technology that was tested last year in eight Farmers' Markets around the state. Markets had a choice of using any or all of the three card types and discovered it brought in 3 to 5% new money depending on their choice. Therefore it is both good for the poor and good business sense. There would be great benefits for us. On the cost side, for Credit/debit cards there would be a \$1.50 transaction fee like banks and gas stations, etc. have, but the customer pays that. Because Food Stamps are a Federal Program, records must be meticulously kept. The test markets found last year that it required about five hours per week in addition to the Market time to administer. The wireless machine for 'swiping' the cards for authorization costs \$1000 plus \$40 for protective case plus the cost of phone service, but there may be grant money for some part of the machine cost. Food Stamp recipients can buy food plants and seeds as well as vegetables so it may even be possible to develop some as 'micro enterprise' vendors. We discussed this further and

authorized **Anne to check out if** it is really **feasible** for us and go ahead if it is. She will **also** check out being authorized for the **WIC program**.

Vendor readiness & cooperation program Anne

She has waited to call a **Vendors Meeting** until the location at Randy's is certain to be available in time for the start of the Market. Randy and Rick Layman have now assured her it will be so she will call them together.

**Anne will write up Kristy Glaser's offer** to our vendors for tomato and pepper plants which she has started in her greenhouse.

Starting Date Anne Vendors will decide between April 28<sup>th</sup> (Arbor Day) and May 5<sup>th</sup>.

Volunteers Anne

We need to do a much more systematic job of scheduling and training volunteers this year with an expanded season. All of us who were in charge of some part of Farmers' Market operations need to **get** our observations and **things people need to be trained for in writing**. We will need 4 volunteers each market to staff the Community booth; for a 26 or 27 week season, with 54 members, people would only need to volunteer twice each season to have it work. Anne will check with Marilyn about whether she wants to coordinate again this year.

Shopping bags Steve

hemp shopping bags at \$5 @ wholesale

Gian said it was also possible to have ones made of recycled plastic at \$1@. She will try to get details.

Seed Swap Cheryl was really enthusiastic about us sponsoring a Seed Swap and sale.

In addition to trading seeds that we have saved ourselves, we could have plant starts for sale. We can get seeds from Seeds of Change in Iowa. We discussed having this event on St Patrick's Day (March 17<sup>th</sup>), but Cheryl will check out the dates and let people know.

**Buyer's Club** Steve

Azure Standard lots of people participated this month. The next order deadline is due at 4 pm 3/7 with the delivery 3/12.

Organically Grown Orders are still only happening sporadically as Donna (**466-3045**) and Penny (**(541) 554-4838**) need things. Call one of them if you would like to participate, however we decided to keep shopping here on the backburner because of the complexities involved.

**Community Garden** Steve

Lease agreement The Eric & Carla Gerber have now signed the lease and we can begin.

Committee J.D Cochrane (**466-3116**) has agreed to lead this committee.

Margy Riggs (**466-3205**), Jake Jacobsen (**401-3990**), Cheryl Haworth (**466-3395**), Laura Holbrook (**466-5150**), Rhonda Horner (**466-3243**) and Carla Gerber (**466-5082**)

have agreed to serve on the committee.

Brownsville Parks Committee Carla Gerber – chair They need city residents to serve on the committee. Before his medical issues forced him to withdraw, Max Peschel was hoping to have Brownsville do the work to make us “*a Tree City*”. What is necessary is a community tree inventory of both public and private land.

Other Garden sites We discussed other additional sites. The best so far discovered would be on city property in Pioneer Park west of the water plant fence (for access to water) and south of Moyer Woods. It has southern exposure for sun, space for an access road and ample land for garden space either parallel to the fence or perpendicular to it on the border of the Moyer Woods slope. To avoid conflict with the Parks Committee or the Rec Board we ought to schedule a joint meeting and strategy session with them.

## **Building Progress      Anne**

Rick has hired folks to remove the remainder of the collapsed roof, concrete, sawdust and redundant building materials. He and Randy assure me that the debris will be gone in March long before the Market is to start. He will call me to meet with him and Randy to discuss design concepts for both the building and outside additions (hopefully) this week some time. Steve also asked to be included.

## **Other**

### Brochures for Welcome Wagon

**Susan, Jenny and Anne will design brochures** for the Co-op, the Buyer’s Club and the Farmers’ Market vendors for Welcome Wagon and other things. They will be meeting Wed.

### Arbor Day Booth or table - April 28<sup>th</sup>

Carla would like us to participate. Ideas are welcome.

**Patty will write an article for the Times** on noxious weeds to be avoided or pulled out.

### Pioneer Picnic - June 16

Kristy Glaser is heading up the Parade this year and has asked us to participate. We discussed ‘float’ ideas

**Next Meeting**      7:15, Monday, April 2 at Brambles