

KARMA CO-OPERATIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, Dec. 1, 2008, 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Annex Art Centre, 1073 Bathurst St.

Directors present: Donald Altman, Arthur Jacobs, Harry Koster, ahdri mandiola, Reg McQuaid, Sarah Pretty, Kevin Taylor

Absent: Jae Steele

Staff Present: Justin McNabb, G.M. (first part)

Members present: Corey Berman

Minutes recorded by: Sarah Pretty

1) Call to order

- Meeting was called to order at 7pm by Harry Koster.

2) General Manager's report - Justin

- Shannon Waterman has been rehired as grocery clerk.
- The Staff have made some terrific suggestions to finalize and streamline the layout of the store.
- A great deal of junk has been carted away
- The building committee is getting feedback before they finalize the design of the member room, and recruiting member labour to do that work. Harry suggested that burlap could be used to cover the walls.
- Karma was named best organic market in Now Magazine
- Our renovation was covered in the Annex Gleaner.
- The current issue of Eye magazine has an article on Karma.

Staff Christmas Bonus:

In line with past years' practice, the following resolutions were adopted:

Be it resolved that each staff member will receive \$100 as a one time bonus in 2008.

Sarah moved
Harry seconded
Motion carried

Be it resolved that it be clearly communicated to all staff that all Christmas bonuses are equal.

**Moved by Harry
Seconded by Sarah
Reg and Kevin abstained
Motion carried**

Other Issues:

- There is some additional work to be done in the main room of the store. Kevin noted there is also a leak. Art is going to report back about the roof at the January meeting and ask James from the building committee to attend.
- Justin noted that the energy bills have come down by 1/3 or more. Art noted that that is in part due to the fact that we use much more energy in the summer cooling the store than to heat it in the winter.

3) President's report

a) Food Issues Committee: Michelle Szabo is to meet with Michael and Justin, Wed. Dec. 3 at 2pm. Jae has been asked to attend.

b) The need to address outstanding membership fees: Harry notes that 20-25% of all membership fees are outstanding. There was a long discussion on this item, which gave rise to the following resolution:

Be it resolved that all members not in good standing, have their cards marked, and be notified membership fees are due 90 days from that notice, or they will have their Karma membership and shopping privileges suspended. *

**Moved by Kevin
Seconded by Donald
Carried**

*** (See Feb. 02/09 minutes for amended motion in conformity with Karma by –laws.)**

NB: This motion must be communicated to all members via the Chronicle and all cashiers and staff must be trained.

c) Need for clarity on 10% surcharge:

Harry brought up his concern that we have become too lax about charging the 10% surcharge. He suggested that all non-members shopping at Karma should have to pay the 10% fee.

Discussion arose about trial shopping. Sarah feels there are people who are exploiting the system.

MINUTES: December 1, 2008

Kevin feels strongly that the trial shop must be kept, and suggested that we keep a box of index cards that each trial shopper must fill out with contact information. This is so that cashiers can check to see if that person has shopped before, and also so those people can be followed up with by the outreach committee.

Ahdri added that she has no objection to several trial shops.

The following resolution was passed:

Be it resolved that every trial shop person be asked for their name, number and email address.

**Moved by Donald
Seconded by Harry
Motion carried**

d) Staff Liaison and Supervisory Committee

Justin has no objection to Sarah being both Staff Liaison and on the Supervisory Committee

e) Finding a Co-op Lawyer

Harry is getting a list of co-op lawyers, with the help of Ken MacDonald and Michelle Szabo. Donald emphasized that someone specialized in co-op law is needed. He knows of two other co-op lawyers in addition to former member Brian Iler, with whom we have worked for a long time.

We need to have a general talk on board liability with our member lawyer in January or February.

4. Long-term Strategic Planning

- Corey Berman spoke of his idea for working on a strategic plan for Karma. This work would be separate from the Finance Committee. He is prepared to bring an outline for the next meeting, provided he can have an hour at the beginning of the meeting following approval of the minutes to present it.
- Sarah said we should consider where we are going as an organization, what our values are, and what we expect to happen over the next five years.
- The fact that we have no budget yet when we are already halfway through the financial year is a problem.
- A strategic plan would outline the variables (number of members, food prices, interest rates, etc.) and set out a plan which would incorporate them. It would require one hour of each board meeting over the next four months. Corey could provide an outline in advance of what would be discussed each time.

- Donald said a smaller committee for strategic planning would be better than the whole board. Kevin thought the whole board should be involved. Corey feels that strategic planning is the board's duty.

MINUTES: December 1, 2008

- Corey would need the last 5 years financial statement in excel. Donald and Corey will meet about this, and Donald will get Corey the stuff he needs. Corey's presentation on strategic planning will be at the top of next month's agenda.

- We should re-institute our annual membership surveys. The last one was in October 2005. We can use *surveymonkey.com* at a cost of just \$20. Howard Kaplan was involved in the last survey, and has the information.

- We lost 10% of our members in the past year. For the first time a slight majority of members is now non-working.

- We have an information crisis.

5. Finance

- Donald reported that the Finance Committee will bring forward a 2008/09 budget in Jan-Feb, toward the end of our financial year (May 31).

- For FY 09 there was a year-to-date loss of \$16,000 reported in October.

This trend is a cause for concern.

At the end of October we had drawn down just \$2,400 of our Alterna Line Of Credit. We have spent \$222,500 on renovations to date, which is slightly under budget. The original analysis called for \$160,000, but we incorporated some new elements not included in that budget.

- We have \$52,000 in big-buck loans. We should ask ourselves if it is worth the effort of chasing big-buck loans, as it amounts to a saving of just \$450 in annual interest.

6. Committees

Reg has been in touch with Stephanie Brown of the Events Committee. They are planning a cookie baking session at St. Alban's Boys & Girls Club. There are only two members active on the committee, and they are looking for new energy.

Reg notes that he has sent some things to the Web committee that haven't appeared on the website. It was agreed that the website needs to be updated.

Donald- Finance Committee has been agonizing about putting its minutes on the web. The consensus thus far is not to do so.

Ahdri requested that in all board email communication the subject line include Karma-reports

Sarah & Kevin are trying to get an outreach committee together.

7. Adjournment

- Kevin moved to adjourn, seconded by ahdri. Meeting was adjourned at 9.30 pm.

Next meeting, Monday, January 5, 7.00 pm, at the Annex Art Centre, 1073 Bathurst St.