**THE ROWLAND COOPERATIVE**

**Community Meeting Minutes**

**March 31, 2019**

**Rowland Cafe**

Attending: Karin Anderson, Bruce Bentley, Ed Carrano, Caryn Christianson, Kenny Christianson, Chip Devega, Wendy Fitchner, Karen Havens, Michael Hill, Linda Hill, Robin Hoose, Marian Keegan, Carl Magnussen, Karen Meneghin, Carol Olafsen, Diana Potts, Todd Pletnick, Carol Pletnick, Laurie Scigliano, Joann Scola, Mike Sorce, Brian Thompson, Charlie Weissman

The meeting began at 2:07 pm.

Kenny started the meeting by apologizing for failing to notify everyone about the March 16 meeting. He had prepared the email but forgot to hit the send button. This meeting is being held as a supplement to the March 16 meeting for those who didn’t see the announcement on the website.

Kenny repeated the announcements from the March 16 meeting:

“On March 12 Kenny met with Mary Ann Seese, the Sanitarian for the Pennsylavania Department of Environmental Protection. The current water supply comes from an artesian well across the street that is rusting and is not part of the property. We agreed that the best option may be to dig a well on the property. If the pipe broke under the highway we would have to dig up Route 590.

On March 12 Kenny also met with Rich Tussel of the Lackawaxen Township Building Department, Jay of the Highway Department, and Ryan and Mitch from Kiley Associates, the consultants retained for the project. Rich said that the township is willing to grandfather the current use of the building as a grocery and restaurant. Expanding into the back of the store will present different issues, especially with parking and sewers. Obstacles that must be dealt with before the store is open include parking, locating the well, sewage, parking access, and handicapped access. The property only goes to the berm of the old canal, so PENNDOT owns a section of the parking lot closest to the road. This cannot be used for parking. The township has an old survey map that includes 12 parking spaces.

On March 15 Kenny met with Cassie Spencer of Binghamton University to discuss possibilities for an internship Program in Cooperative Development. We can devise a program where interns would receive academic credit for a summer position, as well as a small stipend and partial room and board.”

Sunpulse Solar has installed the solar panels on the roof. They have to be inspected by PPL and the Township before they can be turned on.

Discussion ensued on the following issues:

Handicapped access - Kiley Associates is working on handicapped access to the building, but then we need to provide access to a bathroom. The front bathroom can become accessible if the counter is moved to the left. Gaining access to the back bathrooms will require more renovations than allowable at the moment.

Committee structure – The attached committee structure and assignments were distributed, along with the Seven Principles of Cooperatives. The following people signed up for committees:

Public Relations – Marian Keegan, Michael Sorce, Diana Potts, Robin Hoose, Kenny Christianson

Finance - Kenny Christianson, Laurel Mason

Human Resources – Wendy Fitchner, Kenny Christianson

Operations – Randy Nilsen (kitchen), Karen Havens, Caryn Christianson, Michael Sorce, Joann

Scola, Michael Hill, Linda Hill

Coop Committee - Kenny Christianson, Winnie Olsen, Lorraine Bentley, Christine Foland, Laurel

Mason, Elsie Andersen

Community calendar – The need for a community calendar was discussed. The website, Rowlandcoop.com, can be used to post community announcements. There are many groups in the area with events that sometimes conflict.

Consignment issues - When we sell local crafts and produce, we need to decide on a policy of consignment. Do we pay for the items up front and then take the profits when they are sold, or do we sell them on consignment? What percentage do we pay to the vendor? The policy may differ according to the needs of the partners.

The toll house – it was suggested that it may be more prudent to start as a gift shop for local crafts, rather than ice cream. The use of the building will depend on the interpretation of local laws.

Meeting time – It was agreed that the best meeting time for the group was the last Sunday of the month at 2:00 pm. The next meeting will be on Sunday, April 28 at 2:00 pm at the Rowland Café.

Community meeting of March 31, 2019 -- List of tentative committees and potential tasks

1. PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMON TASKS

Brochure name

Website chairperson

Recruiting meeting times

Marketing priorities

Telephone list of members

Politics

1. HUMAN RESOURCES

Hiring process

Job descriptions

Income taxes

Workmen’s compensation

Benefits

Wage rates

Confidentiality policy

1. FINANCE

Point of Sale systems

Business taxes

Budgeting

Financial statements

Auditing

Banking

Donations

1. OPERATIONS

Insurance

Vendors

Space management

Product selection

Groceries

Breakfast

Pizza

Kitchen

1. COOP COMMITTEE

Bylaws

Membership

Incorporation & 501 c(3) status

Seven Cooperative Principles

Cooperatives around the world generally operate according to the same core principles and values, adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance in 1995. Cooperatives trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England in 1844.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all people able to use its services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2. Democratic Member Control
Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members—those who buy the goods or use the services of the cooperative—who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions.

3. Members' Economic Participation
Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of the cooperative. This benefits members in proportion to the business they conduct with the cooperative rather than on the capital invested.

4. Autonomy and Independence
Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If the co-op enters into agreements with other organizations or raises capital from external sources, it is done so based on terms that ensure democratic control by the members and maintains the cooperative's autonomy.

5. Education, Training and Information
Cooperatives provide education and training for members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. Members also inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperatives.

6. Cooperation among Cooperatives
Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7. Concern for Community
While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of communities through policies and programs accepted by the members.