

## KARMA CO-OPERATIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, April 6, 2009, 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm

Annex Art Centre, 1073 Bathurst St.

**Directors present:** Donald Altman, Arthur Jacobs, Harry Koster, Sarah Pretty, Jae Steele, Kevin Taylor

**Regrets:** Corey Berman, ahdri mandiola, Reg McQuaid

**Staff Present:** Justin McNabb, G.M.

**Minutes recorded by:** Aislinn Clancy

### 1) Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes were approved.

### 2) Manager's report

- a. We lost a second main freezer unit, which could have been a result of the move. It is not fixable, though could act as a backup freezer in future. Recommendation given to get a new freezer, as there is no market for this freezer, and buying used is not ideal or possible. To replace the freezer it will take about \$8,000.00 (conservative estimate including tax and delivery etc.) and up to four weeks. Art will look into leasing.

<p><b>Don moved to approve the motion to spend up to \$8,500.00 for the purchase, delivery and installation of a new freezer. Harry seconded the motion. All voted in favour, with one abstention (Art).</b></p>
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- b. Debate was had about closures (Easter holiday closures – Friday and Sunday). Most agreed that the closures were in line with last year's closures and with those of other businesses.
- c. Roof – there was a discussion about the current issue of the winning bidder's credibility. The building committee is discussing the project with another

contractor. It is said that this competitor will do the job at the same price quoted by the original contractor. The name of this competitor is not available.

- d. Members' room – a sign has gone up to generate design input from members, which will be gathered by April 16<sup>th</sup>.
- e. A suggestion was made to adjust the wording in the orientation manual re postdated cheques to be less aggressive or threatening (e.g.. mentioning once in a diplomatic way that shopping privileges can be revoked). This might be more appealing to new members.
- f. The change in the internet server is going well. Staff is experiencing faster service and fewer interruptions.
- g. University of Toronto housing coop students are hoping to promote Karma within their residences. Justin will give contact info to the outreach committee.
- h. Supervisory meeting took place recently where board and staff discussed coop best practices. Considerations are being made to creating a student membership.
- i. Justin is working with Margaret about details related to the unionization process.
- j. Staffing issues – finding a replacement for Rachel's maternity leave, cutting two shifts, and more shift cuts upon her leave.

### **3) Building Committee Report**

Discussions mentioned earlier in manager's report.

### **4) Outreach Committee Report**

On the 15<sup>th</sup>, the outreach committee will host their first meeting.

- a. Two organizations have approached Karma about speaking to their staff (Centre for Social Innovation and Summerhill). Invitations were also received from St. Paul's church and U of T.
- b. Outreach committee is hoping to work more closely with the events and orientation committee.
- c. Hope to host an "invite a friend to Karma" event.
- d. The committee hopes to submit an article to the Chronicle about the issue of declining membership.
- e. The committee hopes to see if policy can be changed to accommodate adjustments like a student membership

## **5) Survey**

Feedback was collected around the issue of creating an electronic survey using internet based services. A survey with 200 items can be created for \$20.00 per month. Hopes are that the survey can be built in May and launched at the beginning of June. The responses will be collected in July. Comments should be received before the end of April. A prize of a \$50.00 gift certificate will be offered to families who participate. Paper copies will be available on an as-need basis. Kevin will submit an article in the May/June issue of the Chronicle.

## **6) Chronicle Committee**

This month they received enough submissions to bank some for future issues. There are editorial rotations and flexible format, allowing for creativity of the editor. A

suggestion was made to have the committees submit more articles. This might encourage more Karma members to get involved in committees.

## 7) Food Issues Committee

A suggestion box was put in the members' room to collect ideas on making Karma's product line more local, cheaper and greener. The food issues committee will then investigate the suggested product changes. A form has been developed to approve products and was sent to management for feedback.

## 8) Finance Committee

- a. Membership is now 868, down 9 from last month. The decrease was not as big as in previous months.
  
- b. The committee is concerned about sharing discounts given by suppliers. Most agreed that they should be shared evenly between Karma and members (at present Karma members get the full discount).

The following motion was approved:

**Discounts given by suppliers should be shared evenly between Karma and members.**

**Donald moved, Sarah seconded. All voted in favour, with one abstention (Kevin).**

- c. The IOU system was discussed. The finance committee would like to cut down on the amount of credit offered. They hope that by staying on top of the matter, there will be less to administer. Postdated cheques are now treated like an IOU. There will still be the \$0.50 surcharge for using a postdated cheque. Justin and Donald will look at the wording of the policy to adjust unnecessarily aggressive wording.

d. A discussion was had about membership revocation and how that might not work to get back money owing. There were no examples found of a membership being revoked, but it can be done by the board. Finance committee is concerned about giving credit to those who are not credit-worthy. The following resolution regarding postdated cheques was approved:

**The policy re postdated cheques will be amended so that henceforth they will be treated in a similar manner to IOUs. Moved by Donald, and seconded by Sarah. All were in favour.**

e. The 2009-10 budget is being prepared. The finance committee would like to get a sense from committees about their needs in the coming year, and consequences of reducing expenses in this area. Chronicle is the largest expense, and the committee has recently lost paper donations. Jae will follow up on this issue. A preliminary budget will be brought to the May meeting, so that hopefully it can be moved and ready for use in June. July variance will be checked.

## **9) Other Business.**

The Annual General Meeting of the Ontario Network of Food Coops is to be held on Sunday April 26<sup>th</sup> at 9 am, and Karma is entitled to send 2 representatives. Sarah plans to attend. Jae will go if Sarah cannot, and Harry will go in their place if they aren't able to attend.

## **10) Adjournment**

The public meeting adjourned at 8.30 pm, followed by an in camera session.

**Next meeting: Monday, May 4th, 7.00 pm, at the Annex Art Centre.**