

## **General Manager Report to the Board**

Amy Andre

October 3, 2011

### **Introduction:**

I'm going to try this new format to the reports, following the major areas of focus listed in my job description. I feel that this provides a great framework for covering all the types of information you might be interested in getting from me. Please let me know if the Board would like me to change.

### **Board:**

Thanks for the great discussion at last month's Board meeting, about the difference between operations and governance. It gave me a lot of clarity on my role here, and I appreciate that.

### **Budget & Financial Accountability:**

Denise and I will be meeting tomorrow to work on the budget.

At the recent Finance Committee meeting, the committee gave me two great ideas for sales and marketing: create an e-newsletter; send an email each time someone new joins the co-op. I put both of these on my to-do list.

As I'll discuss at the AGM, sales is at the top of my radar, and I continue to look for ways to improve them. I think that increasing membership numbers will be a key piece of that. See the Marketing section for details.

### **Operations & Maintenance:**

Our mid-fiscal-year inventory will be on November 1<sup>st</sup>. I'll spend time this month prepping for that. My hope is that, now that I've done one inventory, the next one will go much faster and more smoothly.

Tomorrow, I'm meeting with Brenda Glover, to learn about labour law. Thank you to Arel for setting up this training!

### **Information Systems:**

Howard and I began the transition of his IT projects to my plate, starting with moving the server from his basement to Karma.

The staff computer had been running extremely slowly, so I took some applications off of it that the staff didn't want. It seems to be a little faster now.

### **Planning:**

This month and next, I'll be attending the CHFA and the ONFC-organized Co-op Conference. I'm looking forward to both opportunities to network, learn more about the industry, and maybe even find opportunities for mutually-beneficial collaborations with our community partners.

**Marketing:**

I had an amazing and inspirational meeting with the CDC last week; the committee spent 5 hours brainstorming on the website, and out of that came a number of other ideas. Natalie and I will be meeting tomorrow to work on a brochure for prospective members. This would be an item that we could pass out at events, such as films that we co-sponsor or co-present and such as farmer's markets, as well as have in the store.

Since the last Board meeting, Howard and I have not yet had a chance to meet to transition the sales reporting from him to me. My hope is that, after the AGM, we'll both have more time, and will be able to do that in time for the November Board meeting.

Another key to increasing sales is increasing visibility of Karma in the media. I brought up to the CDC the need to make sure that the website is media-friendly, as well as prospective-member-friendly. They were very receptive to the idea. I'll continue to talk with them and others about a media strategy, as well as pursue media outreach. Please stay tuned, and continue to ask me about this one at future Board meetings...

**Membership:**

The staff and I have been signing up members and passing out AGM notices left and right!

**Purchasing & Merchandising:**

Buyers have been meeting regularly with the Food Issues Committee.

I'm waiting to hear back if we received the Traceability Foundations Initiative grant. The decision should be announced about 45 days after the application deadline, which was in mid-September. This grant would cover most of the costs of an inventory management system, which will help us exponentially when it comes to making purchasing decisions.

**Human Resources:**

Annette gave notice, so we are currently hiring for a new HaBA buyer. Specifically, we're doing outreach among nutritionists and nutrition students. The application deadline is this Thursday.

We have a staff member going on maternity leave starting in February, and another staff member going on a leave for the month of January. Closer to those dates, I'll be working on a game plan for scheduling in their absences.

**Other:**

A huge group of students from George Brown College visited Karma for last week, for a store tour and information session. Thank you to members Paul DeCampo and Tracey TieF for leading this very packed event!