



Annual Owner Meeting Minutes October 22, 2019

Call to Order and Welcome

Migdalia Loyola, Vice-president of Seward Co-op's Board of Directors, called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. and welcomed co-op owners in attendance.

Board Election and Verification of Quorum

Migdalia made a final call for ballots for the board of directors election, and then confirmed quorum was established. According to the co-op's bylaws, 50 owners must be in attendance to qualify as a quorum; more than 200 owners were present at the meeting.

Approval of the Meeting Agenda

There was a motion to approve the annual meeting agenda. Motioned seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes

There was a motion to approve the minutes from the Oct. 30, 2018 annual meeting. Motion seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Board of Directors Report

Migdalia Loyola shared words of celebration about various accomplishments in the last year and commended co-op owners in attendance for being the people who make Seward Co-op happen.

General Manager's Report

Sean Doyle, General Manager, thanked Matt Kappra and Creamery staff for providing a great meal, and Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA) for the delicious produce. Additionally he thanked interpreters, childcare providers, Wedge and Peace Coffee, Hire a Host, and all in attendance. Sean then offered gratitude to the board in a year of transition, in particular to outgoing vice-president Migdalia Loyola, and also recognized Liz Wozniak upon her 20 years of work at the co-op.

Recognition of 2020 SEED Community Choice Recipients

Equity and Community Engagement Manager Abby Rogosheske and Aaneesah Amatullah, SEED Advisory Team representative, announced the names of local organizations who won the SEED Community Choice vote (more than 1,600 cast by community members) and will be recipients in 2020.

Spoken Word Performance

TouSaiko Lee shared the traditional art of kwv txhiaj, or Hmong poetry chanting.

Introduction of Keynote Speaker

Abby Rogosheske introduced keynote speaker Pakou Hang, co-founder of Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA). Pakou returned to her family agricultural work after a long and distinguished career as a community activist and advocate.

Keynote Address

Pakou Hang shared about her family, early career, and HAFA's origin story as one of self-determination. A just and equitable food system demands a shift in power and HAFA was created to foster equity in food and farming. That is realized in land access, alternative markets, business development, capital, training and research. Pakou celebrated that Seward Co-op was HAFA's number one buyer of produce in the last year, and that the HAFA Farm operates very much like a land cooperative in cultivating a democratic exchange of knowledge, and a bi-lingual and bi-cultural curriculum. Research is very important for HAFA farmers, many are excited and curious for trainings and annual gatherings. The organization is intentional about building a pipeline for young Hmong farmers, as well as growing intergenerational wealth and changing the way people think about farmers and how they treat immigrants.

Election Results

Sally Nixon thanked candidates in the board of directors election and thanked those who voted. A total of 1,328 votes were cast, which elected LaDonna Sanders Redmond, Shiranthi Goonathilaka and Jill Krueger to three-year terms. Me'Lea Connelly was also elected to a one-year term and Roderick McCulloch was elected to a one-year term as the Designated Employee Director.

Meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Allison Meyer, Advocacy and Governance Specialist, Nov. 2019.