



New Deal Cafe Cooperative General Manager's Report July 2013

Overall Summary

This month was filled with facility repairs and research, many financial calculations, a rescheduled art installation, and extra load on our a/c units due to extremely hot and humid weather.

Projects and Special Events

APHIS Happy Hour

Sound and bartender volunteer extraordinaire Bill Doley brought his co-workers to the café for a weekday happy hour, so we had a nice group of 25 or so on what would normally have been a slow time for the bar. Events like these obviously help by introducing new customers to the cafe, and are particularly welcome during these slow summer months.

Greenbelt City Kitchen

I met with Di Quynn-Reno, the Community Center Supervisor, to discuss the balance of the café's debt, since we were recently presented with a larger balance than we were previously told we owed. She answered some questions about the discrepancies and presented some current reports. I've now completed research on this issue and plan to meet with Di again on Monday, as she has been on vacation for the last 10 days. I expect that our debt to the City will be paid off then.

Member Loans

Member Mike Stark requested immediate repayment of his member loan, though he hadn't responded to our collective inquiry at the end of the year. He has been paid off, leaving our member loan debt at \$8000, plus interest of approximately \$2500. We will continue to pay off member loans throughout the year.

Bar Operations

The replacement keg cart arrived and I sent the broken one back to the company. It is nice to have the working one again, as it really does make carting the kegs much easier! I was pleased with the company's prompt response, though they were quite surprised by the problem.

Handy volunteer Maia Tooley chained the CO2 cartridges behind the bar to prevent them from tipping over, after we were cited by the Health Department last month.

I discovered that the condensate drain fitting in the kegerator had broken again last week, so I repaired it with a sturdier attachment which will hopefully be less prone to the jostling of kegs. The fitting is in the middle back wall of the kegerator, and can become damaged when kegs are pushed up against it. The temperature had also been set too low, causing ice to form and possibly clog the lines, so I reset it.

Amethyst requested that we proceed to hire bartenders now, instead of using volunteers. I have been a strong proponent of hiring employees for many years now, and agree that we should move in that direction. However, since the budget didn't include paying bartenders specifically, I've asked for the Board's approval before moving forward. She also proposed shorter hours for the weekday shifts. There are considerations regarding filling the positions and changing the shifts that deserve more discussion. I have sent an email to the Board outlining how I propose to proceed.

FONDCA

The July art installation was aborted at the last minute on its regular Monday night when the power went out in the Center. Julia handled everything very professionally (and was waiting in the dark for anyone who might show up), though it was clearly frustrating (particularly after the power came on at 8pm once the artists had already been cancelled!), and a not-insignificant task to reschedule. All of the artists' work (Nora Simon's screen prints, Zsundayka Nzinga's paintings and Susan DePlatchett's altered cigar boxes) were put up 2 days later instead, and the group show came down then as well. The Artists' Reception will be held on Sunday, August 11.

Restaurant Contract and Facilities

Met with Karim many times regarding repairs to the facility and operations. There are several areas in the café that need repair. Particularly, it appears that the front a/c has a small and hard to locate Freon leak and is again leaking condensate onto the ceiling tiles. It may be time to look into purchasing a unit for the front room. I plan to get some estimates on a new one as soon as possible.

The cafe was cited for the grease removal system not being in working condition, and I've been researching the solution. I've gotten one estimate for replacing the grease removal system and am waiting receipt of another. A volunteer is looking into the feasibility of simply replacing the failed motor and repairing the other parts.

GM Action Items and other matters

Clean Currents

The switch to Clean Currents has taken place – we are now 100% wind powered!

Extended Hours Consideration

I conducted a bit of research into how other establishments sell food during their latest hours. However, as has been explained before, the requirements for our Class B Beer and Wine license state “The restaurant must be open and food must be available when alcoholic beverages are being served..., and there should be a menu which lists all food available at all times in which the restaurant is open.” Our license is further described by “On sale consumption of beer and wine only from 6:00am to 2:00 am, seven (7) days a week with meals available at all times.”

Energy Audit

Tom Moran implemented a few of the least expensive recommendations from the Energy Audit he performed – he covered the pipes to the hot water heater in insulating foam, he cleaned the air conditioner coils on the old backroom a/c unit, and he covered the duct that he discovered was open above the ceiling with insulating material. Tom is away for the summer, but may be available to do more work when he returns.

Special Entertainment Permit

The application for exemption from Prince George’s County’s Special Entertainment Permit is in process.

Recommendations on Management Agreement

The working group had our first meeting with Karim and Maria to discuss possible changes to the current management agreement. Further details will be discussed in executive session.

Meetings

Board Meetings = 1

Management Agreement Meeting = 1

Bar Manager Meeting = 1

Committee Meetings = 2

Upcoming Activities

The next specialevent will be the Labor Day Festival on August 30, followed by the Blues Festival on September 14.

Terri Rutledge
NDC Cooperative General Manager
July 19, 2013