

Summer 2023 MING (Membership Involvement Group) Update

Hello Everyone,

I wanted to let you know about some of the happenings over the summer in which MING and CWLP members have been actively connected.

- A Members Information Meeting, jointly planned with the Centre's Board and the MING, was held on June 20th. Over 80 people attended and we learned more about the proposed three year Renewal Plan and the Municipality of La Peche (MLP) offer to the Cooperative.
- Out of the June 20th meeting came a strong interest in developing other options/scenarios our cooperative can pursue to achieve sustainability and stability complementary to or instead of the possible transfer of ownership and mortgage, etc. to the MLP. A small group of MING members is working on a template for submissions from the community and with CDROL (*Cooperative de developpement regional Outaouais-Laurentides*) to provide other approaches or directions for consideration.

Fun fact: Roughly 20% of those attending the June 20th meeting were on our MING list.

- The MLP offer, which was shared with the Membership last spring, is being considered by the CWLP Ownership Transfer Committee, a group made up of Board members, partner organizations, some founding members and members from our group. The Chair is Pam Ross (Municipal Councillor, Board Member, and Coop Member). The Committee is reviewing the offer and putting forward a Cooperative's response containing what is thought would build on partnership with the Municipality, maintain the Centre's autonomy in line with our mission and values, and offer one path to sustainability and stability to the cooperative and community.

Fun fact: Of our calculated 1971 members, 82% are La Peche residents.

- Our Governance Circle has been hard at work reviewing our By-Laws. The focus has been clarity, updating expired information, adjustments to support better governance, and coming into compliance with the Quebec Cooperative Charter - C-67.2 It is clear that our cornerstone document needed work and along with its revisions, better governance guidelines. Our finalized work is being submitted to the Board for their review and approval and then on to the membership for input and vote.

Fun fact: The last year our By-Laws were revised was in 2018.

- The Governance Circle has also developed a Membership Agreement, which our by-laws require in order to become a member. This agreement includes information that will help members understand what a cooperative is and what their rights and obligations are.

Fun fact: Although signing/accepting a Membership Agreement is a requirement to become a member, there was never an actual agreement. Just an application or registration form.

- In order to promote and facilitate good governance, the Board and the MING coordinated a Board Training event held at the Centre on July 17th. The training was offered by Sebastien Carrier and Ignacio Zarate from CDROL. Twenty-six people attended and participants included Board members, members, and members from PAF-FAS (Farrellton's Artist Cooperative.)

Fun fact: CDROL stands for Cooperative de developpement regional Outaouais-Laurentides and serves cooperatives, such as ours, with training, resources, and advice.

- You should have all been informed via an email of the revamp of the Centre's website. Some sections are still work in progress but there is a new look, more information, and new features. Members and MING have had involvement in some of this work.
- A major change for Members is that information about membership, resources, and the MING are no longer on a "Members Only" page which required membership and password to access. This transition is very welcomed as we encourage openness and transparency as well as easy access for all. There is also a Future of the Centre section which contains information and documents which also support the goal of an informed and educated membership.

Fun fact: You can access the website at: centrewakefieldlapeche.ca

So you can see, much and more has been going on over the summer but it's time to regroup, find out more about the above and other news, and perhaps revisit our group's goals and where we are now - about 9 months after our first meeting.

I am proposing we meet the week of **September 11th**. Lenny Prost will send out a meeting poll so we can find the best time for people. The Cooperative's Annual General Meeting is planned for September 21 so it is an excellent opportunity for us to prepare to use our informed participation in constructive ways to select our Board, be informed, make relevant decisions, and more.

I thank you all for your work and interest in our group, our Cooperative, our Centre, and our community. Whether you have been actively engaged in initiatives, supporting the Centre in other ways, and/or making sure you are informed and sharing that information in our community, you are adding to the cooperative and what it is.

Warmly,
Karen Bays

August 22, 2023