



Florida Certified Organic Growers & Consumers, Inc.
P.O. Box 12311 Gainesville, FL 32604
352-377-6345 phone, 352-377-8363 fax
Opscoordinator@foginfo.org
www.foginfo.org

Board of Directors Meeting

March 22, 2024

Attendees

Logan Petrey (LP), President

Jesse Haskins (JH)-Secretary

Teresea Pemberton (TP)-

Franklin Quarcoo (FQ)

Ramkrishnan Balasubramanian (CEO)

Veronica Morrison (Finance Director FD)

Beth Rota (QCS Program Director (QCS PD))

Kyndra Love (OTI Project Coordinator (SE TOPP PC))

Lana Chehabeddine (E&O Interim Program Manager (E&O IPD)) and Alicia O'Meara (Marketing Specialist (MS))

11:04 AM Review and finalize agenda, approval of board meeting.

JH- Motioned to approve agenda.

LP- seconded the motion.

Vote Record (4-0-0)

JH Motioned to approve the Feb 24, 2024, Board meeting minutes. LP Seconded.

Vote Record (4-0-0)

11:15 AM Summit Update.

MS presented the status of the FOG 2024 summit and provided the number of participants and update on speakers.

11:30 AM OTI-SE TOPP Update.

SE TOPP PC provided updates on SE-TOPP and discussed the future. Key updates included but were not limited to

- 1) Many success stories published by USDA are from SE TOPP.
- 2) FOG now has dedicated staff to assist growers with technical assistance.
- 3) FOG technical assistance staff will now have dedicated office hours for growers.
- 4) SE TOPP will have its own track during FOG summit with emphasis on Organic Integrity and fraud prevention.

11:55 PM QCS Update, Review of Management Report, and Impartiality.

QCS PD and CEO presented the QCS program updates. QCS PD & CEO listed the accomplishments during the first quarter of 2024. Some key QCS achievements presented were:

- 1) Successfully completing the USDA midterm audit.
- 2) QCS receives its award from USDA National Organic Program for Integrity, data quality and cooperation.
- 3) QCS continues to maintain its # 1 status in North America and top ten in the world for its Food safety Program based on GLOBAL G.A.P Key performance indices.

QCS PD presented to the board challenges and opportunities for improvement.

The Management Report is an ISO requirement, and this report is produced annually by management and reviewed by the Board as an additional oversight. However, as part of the Management Review Report, it remains that the Board is still the mechanism to safeguarding impartiality and as such, the Board is required to review the Impartiality section of the Management Review Report; along with the Risk to Impartiality Analysis and provide feedback to Management for their next Management Review report.

QCS PD gave an elaborate presentation on management report and the mechanism of how QCS safeguards impartiality. CEO went through the impartiality training memo and pointed out documents necessary for reviewing impartiality has already been sent. FOG Board then reviewed the management report. The Board discussed any potential bias that may affect impartiality and what has been done by QCS Management to prevent it. The Board concluded that the reporting from Management is more effective and as feedback indicated the tools in place to safeguard impartiality appear to be effective and proposed that no changes be made at this time.

12:35 AM

E&O updates

- i. E&O IPD presented an update on the program. Key updates include but not limited to:
- ii. FOG has served over 645 customers through its FAB program since Jan 1, 2024.
- iii. FOG's podcast has reached 1.2 million.
- iv. Our LFPP program has now 230 members in database from 30+ cities across FL
- v. Our Virtual Farmers Market is currently open for orders in two locations: West Palm Beach and Tampa.
- vi. FOG's face book had 50% increase, 43% increase in Instagram visits, 34% increase in FB followers.

12:45 AM

Financial Updates

FD presented the financial statements for Jan and Feb. The Board discussed the cashflows.

Other business

MS left at 11:30, SE TOPP PC left at 11:45 PM, E&O IBD joined at 12:15 pm. LP left at 12:30 pm. Next Quarterly Board meeting is set for June 28, 2024.

1:00 PM Meeting adjourned by CEO.