

Woodsworth's Social Audit Objective #3

Living in Harmony

To maintain a co-operative community approach to conflict resolution.

FINDINGS

In assessing our community, 93% found it friendly, ranging from very friendly to somewhat friendly. This compares to 91% in 1989.

Further investigation showed that when we compared the findings to age, location in the co-op and years of residence, we found that there was little difference.

Overall, 90% of members responding thought that we have a good mix of nationalities, cultures and ethnic groups.

When we looked at the 8% of people who reported that they do not always attend general meetings because of language difficulties, we found that three quarters of them thought we had a good mix.

29% of all members reported that they have had a difficult situation or problem with a neighbour and / or a member of staff in the last five years.

42% report that it was solved, and of those, only 5% involved the Grievance Committee. Very few of these actually got help from the committee and only a third of these reported that the Grievance Committee handled the issue in a fair manner. 29% thought that the grievance by-laws and procedures should be revised.

61% of our members called on-call in the last 12 months. Of them, 52% called to get access to a meeting space; 33% called about a maintenance emergency; 16% because they were locked out; and 13% for a security matter. A total of 94% found them very helpful(39%), helpful (40)%, or somewhat helpful (15%). 87% reported they responded quickly or in time.

Since members moved in, 11% feel that co-op spirit is better, 43% feel it is the same and 46% feel it has declined. These numbers are almost identical to the 1989 numbers.

When we looked at location and years of residence, 84% of those who have been here five years or less find that co-op spirit is same or better. More long-term (16+ years) members indicate that co-op spirit has declined. 26% of members who responded to the survey are 0-5 years and 41% of members are 16+ years. Overall 60 out of 222 people think the community spirit is worse.

In the bonus question, 52% said that relations between the young and old should be improved. Of these the youngest and the older members were especially interested.

IMPLICATIONS

The statistics show that the newer members are happy, by and large, and longer term members are less satisfied with community spirit. The number who feel it has declined is about the same as in 1989. The people who feel best about it have moved in during the last 10 years. Given that more longer term members participate on the board of directors, this dissatisfaction is important to address.

There is general dissatisfaction with the grievance procedures. The number of grievances appears to have gone down, but successful resolution has dropped even more dramatically. Furthermore, there are other disquieting numbers reported. One thing that that would help would be to distinguish complaints from grievances, the latter being when the committee is involved.

According to the findings, there is a rift between the younger and the older members which has led to conflicts.

Satisfaction with on-call is high. In spite of this two things might be examined: one, the line between when on-call should be contacted and when the police should be is a little unclear; two, the role of on-call should be reviewed in light of the new fob system.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The current grievance committee is working on revising the grievance procedures. It is recommended that that the word grievance be changed.

Based suggestions from members, it is recommended that persons involved in a dispute should be required to participate in the conflict resolution process.

Disputes should be handled in a more timely manner.

The co-op should look at ways to improve relationships between the generations. Strategies might include mentoring, grandparenting, focus groups, job skills programs and youth representative on the Board.