



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

June 6, 2024 • 6 – 8pm

Zoom

Present at meeting:

Board Members: Brenda Harper (President), Laura Jones (Director), Roger (Vice President), George WinterSun (Secretary), Mimi Smith (Employee Director), Mike Connors (Treasurer), Ellis Smith (Employee Director)

Absent Board Members:

Co-op Employees: Sean Nolan, Jessica Correa

Member-owners: Kathleen Pelley, Holly Vetter, Tamar Krigel

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 by Brenda and introductions were made.

2. Agenda Review and Approval

Agenda approved by consensus.

3. Member Comment Period

- Ellis – a shopper wanted me to let you know they don't like the placement of the aisle signs in Eureka.
- Holly – Samplefest at the Eureka store was fantastic. I'm concerned about the viability of the Co-op. I went early and there was a really long line that wanted to get into the store and get a bag of free goodies, which is great. It was upsetting that the Board table was empty at 10am. Heather did a great job in bulk while some of the other departments were not ready at 10am.
 - o Mimi – I'm disappointed that more department heads weren't there for Samplefest and I think that was due to miscommunication to staff about expectations.
 - o Roger – Sounds like there are things to work out but that the event was a success overall.
- Laura – I got a thank you from a member that is happy that there are veggie burritos in the hot case.
- Roger – I would like the Co-op to be more supportive and proactive in selling products that don't come in plastic. The Co-op sells a large variety of peanut butter, why can't we sell fewer options and eliminate the peanut butter in plastic.
- Tamar – I talked to the store manager about the selection of the books in the store. The response is that Eureka Books chooses the books sold and the Co-op has no say in the topics. I'm concerned that there is a book being sold in the store that is politically one-sided for Palestinians. The Co-op is only representing one side. Why is there no Co-op standard for books being sold in the store? I know Co-op members have a wide array of political interests and backgrounds. Is this representing the values of the Co-op? When I see this book, it makes me uncomfortable. I would like the Co-op to be a hostile free environment.
 - o Roger – I was surprised that the Co-op is carrying this book. I believe the Co-op has been careful in the past to stay out of politics.
 - o Barney – I believe that we need to look at the Co-op's contract with Eureka Books and see what kind of adjustments we can make. We don't want to make any kind of political stance on one side or the other.
 - o Mike – I appreciate the member input. We want all members of the community to feel welcome at the Co-op.

4. Approve May 2024 Board Minutes

<p>Motion: Approve the May 2024 board minutes. Approved by consensus.</p>
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5. Board Correspondence – reported by Brenda

We have received a couple of correspondences from members that are upset about the Co-op selling a booked

titled The Hundreds' Year War on Palestine.

- Brenda – My opinion is that there are all kinds of books that the Co-op sells. I choose the books I want to read and those that I don't.
 - o George – We've received a small number of complaints. I'm not sure we need to make big changes on our products based on a few complaints.
 - o Sean – I don't think we should be moderating the book selection. I think we can make clear that these books don't represent the Co-op. We haven't read or vetted any of the books we sell. We could tell Eureka Books that we don't want any books that offend anyone, which is pretty tricky. Or just lean into letting Eureka Books do the curation, like they are their own mini bookstore within the Co-op.
 - o Ellis – I think it's a fools errand to chase down what isn't political. It's a slippery slope.
 - o Roger – Striving for balance in content would be good. What stands out is that it's not the norm to have such a strongly associated political content.
 - o Jessica – If we didn't have that book, we wouldn't have these complaints. We keep the book, and we lose customers.

6. Finance Committee – reported by Mike

The Finance Committee reviewed and recommended to the Board to accept the FY24 Q4 financials.

Motion: Accept the Fiscal Year 2024 Quarter 3 Financials as presented at the February Finance Committee meeting.

Motion by Ellis, 2nd from George. Motion Passes (7/0/0).

- Barney – Everything is moving forward with the audit. We have handed over all the documents they have requested.

ACTION: Barney will email the auditors to introduce them to Mike.

7. Securities Permit Renewal – reported by Alex

We are in the process of updating and renewing our Securities Permit like we do every year. The shareholders disclosure is handed out with every new membership. There are no changes to the document itself, aside from some of the Board members. We need up to date Board signatures for the State.

ACTION: Alex will correct Mimi's name on the document.

8. Board Meeting Location – reported by Brenda

We've tried to hold in person meetings with little attendance. I'm proposing our August meeting continue being via Zoom and would like to open this up for discussion.

- Roger – We've never tried holding a meeting in a store. I think it would be more inspirational and showcase that we are a co-op and we hold Board meetings that members can attend. I don't want to see the idea of in person meetings being buried. I think we're already compromising by only doing quarterly meetings.
- Mike – Personally I prefer zoom, but I think only holding zoom meetings would be less community oriented. I think we need to think about what is best for the Co-op and not ourselves individually.
- Kathleen – I think everything has changed since Covid and I go to many meetings via Zoom now. Things have changed.
- Mike – At the conference for co-ops that I recently attended most of the Co-ops there were now back to in person meetings. Attendance at their meetings were low.
- Ellis – I wonder if before we try to increase member interest in attending meetings that we first increase member interest of the Co-op in general. I feel like we need to start with education about the Co-op that I would hope will lead to increase interest to attending Co-op meetings.
- Sean – I suggest that we continue with quarterly in person meetings and assess that after a year.

9. CCMA Conference – reported by Mike

I recently attended the Consumer Cooperative Management Association conference in Portland, Maine. There were close to 400 cooperatives representative at the conference. The conference was inspiring and I learned how other co-ops operate. I was struck by how we aren't unique. What we are experiencing is the similar to what other co-ops are experiencing.

I had three major takeaways:

- 1) How co-ops are governed and how boards operate. In this governance space it seemed well more than half of the co-ops use a technique called policy governance where the board on whole set up policies for the General Manager to follow and reports follow from that. It seems a way for the board to establish things we want done at a policy level.
- 2) I heard a lot of information about community outreach. I think there were a lot of ideas presented that we could use. This includes structing internal and external communication.
- 3) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) efforts amongst co-ops. Adding SKUS for shoppers of different economic, culture and ethnic backgrounds to find products they want. Ways that we can be more inclusive of those on a neurodivergent spectrum.

I would like to do a deeper dive on any or all of these three topics for those that are interested.

10. GM Report – reported by Sean

Samplefest happened on June 18 at the Eureka store. Overall, it was successful and well attended. The Arcata backup generator was installed and we're waiting for the transfer switch to arrive in the next week or so. We are waiting for some permits from the City of Eureka to be able to install the backup generator in Eureka. We should have both generators up and ready by the end of the summer. It's pride month in June as well as our Member drive.

- Brenda – Are we doing anything for plastic free July.
 - o Kiya – We'll be doing some tabling with Zero Waste Humboldt.

11. Member Comment

- Mike – We use the term member but most of the people at CCMA use the term “member owners” to differentiate between being an owner and not just a member. Membership at other Co-ops costs a lot more than our \$25 membership.

12. New Business (items for next agenda):

- Strategic Planning

Consensus reached to adjourn the May 2, 2024, meeting at 7:35pm and move into Executive Session.

**North Coast Co-op
Board of Directors Executive Session Minutes
May 2, 2024**

Present at meeting:

Board Members: Brenda Harper (President), Laura Jones (Director), Roger (Vice President), George WinterSun (Secretary), Mimi Smith (Employee Director), Mike Connors (Treasurer), Ellis Smith (Employee Director)

Absent Board Members:

Co-op Employees: Sean Nolan

No reportable action.

Executive Session ended at 8:12pm

Minutes by Emily Walter