



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes October 3, 2024 • 6 – 8pm

Zoom

Present at meeting:

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

Absent Board Members:

Co-op Employees: Sean Nolan, Emily Walter

Member-owners: Fhyre Phoenix, Kathleen Pelley, Layla Richardson

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 by Brenda and introductions were made.

2. Agenda Review and Approval

- Roger – If there is time, I would like to discuss reinstating employee discounts for employees that retire. I would also like to discuss signage in stores about plastics, recyclability and nutrition.

Agenda approved by consensus.

3. Member Comment Period

- George – A member said they want more bike parking at the Arcata store. I've heard this come up before from other cyclists about the Arcata store.

4. Approve September 5, 2024, Board Minutes

Motion: Approve the September 5, 2024, board minutes.

Motion by George, 2nd from Laura, all in favor, motion passes. (6/0/0)

5. Board Correspondence

- Brenda - There was a member who had questions about the Arcata parking lot.
 - o Sean will follow-up with this.
- Mike – With recent escalations in the Middle East are we expecting increased correspondence on this and should we plan to be prepared for this?
 - o Laura – I like the message we have already been using for our response. The Co-op is about food.
 - o Sean – My recommendation is that if this type of correspondence takes place at a meeting that the Board doesn't immediately respond, but let's anyone know we will get back to them.

6. Election Update – reported by Emily

Employee Elections

The Nominating Committee met this past Tuesday to review Employee applications. There was only one application submitted by Elizabeth Gahm. The committee approved the application.

Additionally, because there was only one application, and because the board is filling an employee seat that was vacated, the Nominating Committee is recommending to the Board that there not be an employee vote and that Elizabeth be appointed to fulfill Ellis's term starting November 1. The Committee is aware that technically if there was an employee election there could be a write-in candidate.

- Roger – Mimi, do you have a sense from employees of how staff would feel if there was no vote?
 - o Mimi – I feel like there would be some strong feelings if we didn't get to vote.
 - o Sean – I think we might as well go through the process of voting.

Motion: Appoint Elizabeth Gahm as an Employee Director starting November 1.
Motion by Brenda, 2nd from George, motion fails (2/0/4). Mimi, Mike, Laura, Roger all against.

Ballot Counting for the General Election will take place Saturday, October 19 at the D Street Neighborhood Center at 10am. We need all the help we can get. It's expected that all Board members participate, except those on the ballot.

Board Orientation

Orientation will take place on Thursday, October 24 at 6pm.

- Roger – I would like to see us move more towards making the elections more significant if we are to remain a co-op. Maybe we should create a new committee to see if we should have some minimum standards of what's considered whether we're a co-op. Our turnout for the general election is below what anyone would consider democratic behavior. I think there may be a way to make it different.
- Brenda – More messaging about what makes the Co-op different from other stores could be helpful.

7. Annual Membership Meeting – reported by Sean

The Annual Membership Meeting will take place Sunday, Oct. 13, 1-3pm at the D Street Neighborhood Center in Arcata. We have our activities planned for the Strategic Plan. There will be displays in the room about strategic planning with the ability for members to participate by writing things down. It will be a kick-off for starting the strategic planning process. There is time towards the end of the meeting for the Board to discuss the upcoming Strategic Plan with those in attendance, along with recruiting members who are interested in being on the Strategic Planning committee. The Board will choose from interested members at the November Board meeting.

8. GM Report – reported by Sean

- We had our 37th Annual Pumpkin Patch. Kiya planned this event, and it was a success once again.
- We are working on the last step to get the Arcata generator fully installed and ready to go by mid-October.
- The Eureka backup generator is in the process of being installed.
- We are updating the Arcata parking lot with more directional signs, including stop lines. We also recently restriped the parking lot lines.
- Lyndsi Reel, our Assistant Store Manager has recently moved on from the Co-op. We wish her well.
- Roger – I think we should paint a mural on the new generators.
- Mike – Are there any particular rules or targets to reach out to different communities for different types of foods and culturally appropriate items on the shelves?
 - o Sean – We don't have an active practice/policy for doing that.
- Mike – Can we get an update on competitive pricing?
 - o Sean – We compare our pricing with our competitors pricing and then see an average storewide. We are currently doing audits and will then review data.
 - o Roger – We used to have something in the newsletter that showed comparisons, so that members could see that the rumor of the Co-op being more expensive than other stores isn't true.

ACTION: Sean will send information on Cal Poly coupon use to the Board.

9. Member Comment

- None.

10. Retired Employee Benefits – reported by Roger

We used to let retired staff continue using their employee discounts. I think we should reinstate this. I don't know what the rules would be.

- Emily – The retirement benefit change you just discussed was voted on by the Board in 2013. The change was to remove the shopping discount and instead give \$100 of C shares for ever year they worked, after working for 25 years.
- ACTION - Sean will send a summary of the current plan to the board.

11. New Business (items for next agenda):

- Welcome New Board Members
- Choose Officers
- Choose Strategic Planning Committee
- Annual Membership Meeting Feedback

(Invite Union to December meeting)

Consensus reached to adjourn the October 3, 2024, meeting at 7:24pm and move into Executive Session.

**North Coast Co-op
Board of Directors Executive Session Minutes
October 3, 2024**

Present at meeting:

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

Absent Board Members:

Co-op Employees: Sean Nolan

No reportable action.

Executive Session ended at 8:11pm

Minutes by Emily Walter