



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

April 4, 2024 • 6 – 8pm

Zoom

Present at meeting:

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

Absent Board Members: Mimi Smith (Employee Director)

Co-op Employees: Emily Walter, Sean Nolan, Jessica Correa, Kiya Villarreal

Member-owners: Nerissa, Dave Ryan, Kathleen Pelley, Karpani

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

- Jessica – The clutter near the quiet corner in Arcata has been cleaned up a bit and the employees are appreciative of that. Employees are curious about what the status of the surveys is, and will management be taking any action based on them.
 - o Sean – We recently had all staff take an employee survey. The results were reviewed by me and the HR Department first, followed by the management team addressing issues. We don't plan to share the results staff wide, but we are utilizing it to make improvements. We plan to conduct the survey again in the future to see if there are improvements following the implementation of actions.
- Jessica – There is a member who wants to give a presentation to the board about Bitcoin.
- Karpani – Has the board taken any steps to support the Palestinian people?
 - o Brenda – The board did not take action to participate in a boycott.
 - o Roger – Political issues are difficult for the Co-op. I can't recall when the Co-op got involved with politics outside of food and local sustainability issues.
 - o Kathleen – In my experience when I was on the Board, we kept our focus on business and issues directly related to our business. We've had pressure in the past to save the redwoods, but we haven't gotten involved.
 - o Karpani – I would argue that this isn't just a political issue but a moral issue.
 - o Kiya – Just because the Board hasn't taken a stance doesn't mean that individuals on the Board and staff haven't taken our own stance on ceasefire. Staff are allowed to wear their beliefs and speak their beliefs.
 - o Roger – when the Board makes a stance of any kind, we depend on input from a large portion of the membership. It's difficult to decide on behalf of 20,000 members.
- Roger – Twice in one day people were excited to see my tofu in my own packaging. It would be great to have more education so that people know it's an option.

4. Approve March 2024 Board Minutes

Motion: Approve the March 2024 board minutes.

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

5. Board Correspondence – reported by Brenda

We got an email about the Senior discount day. Sean was able to respond to her and she was pleased with the information given to her and understood and supports the Co-op. Another person was upset about the price increases in the deli but after some conversations it was worked out. Another member emailed saying what great service she got from an employee at the Eureka store.

- Ellis – I heard some employee comments about deli price increases and not being prepared to speak with customers that were upset about the changes. It would be great if something like this happened again so that staff could receive some helpful talking points.

6. Guest Employee – reported by Sue Coulter
Tabled due to absence.

7. Monthly Finance Reports – reported by Mike

At the last Finance meeting we recommended that the Board doesn't need to review monthly financials. We added something to the Board Policy Manual stating that the Board only needs to review the financials if one or more of three activators are activated. The Finance Committee will continue reviewing the quarterly financials that the Board then approves. I would like to receive monthly financials even if we aren't officially reviewing them.

AGREEMENT: Monthly financials will be distributed directly to the Board as soon as they are complete.

8. GM Report – reported by Sean

We had a visit from the National Cooperative Grocers (NCG) this week. They are a co-op for co-ops. Most co-ops are members of NCG. They provide consulting services, benefits and negotiated pricing deals from suppliers. They are there to help co-ops succeed nationwide. They visit every few years to see how we are doing and look for areas that where can approve. Overall, they believe we are doing well but did point out that we need to maintain good margins. The Board was also able to meet with them.

- Roger – We asked about what other Co-ops are doing for senior discounts. They said many other co-ops are getting rid of senior discounts which I thought was interesting. They said we need to have something to be famous for. They emphasized that Sacramento has a famous cookie. They also talked about having lots of sales items up front. That's their perspective from seeing how other co-ops are succeeding.
- Laura – We were discussing how to actively gain members. We discussed tabling in front of stores. At the Sacramento store they have members volunteering with the organizations in their Round Up program.

Other items in the GM Report. We've wrapped up the exterior painting at the Eureka store. There are new signs and lighting in Eureka too. We are working on updating the landscaping in Eureka and just getting everything looking nice at the Eureka store.

- Kiya – the Co-op is doing an Earth Day event with Zero Waste Humboldt on Saturday, April 20, 2-6pm outside of the Arcata Co-op. The event is a fundraiser for Zero Waste Humboldt.

9. Member Comment

- None

10. New Business (items for next agenda):

- Employee Speaker
- Quarterly Strategic Plan Report

Consensus reached to adjourn the April 4, 2024, meeting at 7:01 pm and move into Executive Session.

**North Coast Co-op
Board of Directors Executive Session Minutes
April 4, 2024**

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Absent Board Members: Mimi Smith (Employee Director)

Co-op Employees: Sean Nolan

No reportable action.

Executive Session ended at 7:25pm

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Minutes by Emily Walter