



## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2026 • 6pm

Arcata Co-op & Zoom

### Present at meeting:

**Board Members:** Elizabeth/Lizzy Gahm (Vice President/Employee Director), George WinterSun, Layla Richardson (President), Hayley Simera (Secretary), Michael Cahill (Employee Director)

**Absent Board Members:** Mike Connors (Treasurer), Jon Haumeder

**Co-op Employees:** Emily Walter, Sean Nolan, Margaret Sataua, Kiya Villarreal, Lauren Fawcett

**Member-owners:** Kyle Finger, Roger, Pat Bitton

### 1. **Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 by Layla and introductions were made.

### 2. **Agenda Review**

The agenda was reviewed.

### 3. **Approve February 12, 2026 Board Minutes and February 10, 2026 Finance Minutes**

Minutes approved by consensus.

### 4. **Owner Comment Period**

- Roger – Some owners have commented to me about the new use of the word owner. Someone was picking up tacks off the ground where the bicycles are parked at the Arcata store. This might be helpful to address. Some checkers mentioned some individual products that come in garbage. I think we should assign numbers to them. We used to have bread from the Co-op bakery that was whole wheat and it's no longer actually whole wheat. I don't think we should label bread as whole wheat if it isn't 100% whole wheat. I would like to have an Earth Action Committee meeting to write to different companies to use less packaging. I recently got great food service at a local store to help me get food without plastic, which was a great experience.
- Kiya – A regular owner had a critique of the front end. I was sad to hear this following the recent customer service training.

### 5. **Board Correspondence** – reported by Layla

None.

### 6. **Owner Unclaimed Equity** – reported by Margaret

The board has been provided with a list of owners that are eligible for unclaimed equity. These owners have been flagged as dormant. They don't appear to be using their ownerships for the last three years. We are asking for board approval to begin the process to close these memberships. This includes a set protocol so that these owners still have the opportunity to contact the Co-op and keep their membership or close it appropriately. I do expect that we will hear from some of the owners.

<p><b>Motion:</b> Approve moving forward with the unclaimed equity process from the list provided to the Board. Motion by George, 2<sup>nd</sup> from Layla, motion approved (5/0/0).</p>
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### 7. **Employee Guest Speaker** – Lauren Fawcett, Food Service Director

I've been here at the Co-op for about 17.5 years. I worked in the Community Kitchen for five years and since then I've been working in Prepared Foods. We recently expanded the hot bar menu and have more changes to come. We hope to expand menu variety and hours. We have a new hot bar deli case with hot calzones.

- Roger – I'd like to see a schedule sign, so I know what foods to expect.

**8. Fiscal Year 2027 Draft Board Expenses** – reported by Layla

The draft budget was updated from last month's board meeting.

- Roger – I noticed that one of the first actions the board took was to give themselves a raise with a shopping discount. Board members serving a 3-year term get about \$10,000 and I'd estimate another \$5,000 in discounts from shopping on top of that. That's a big chunk so I started looking at how other co-ops compensate their boards. Some only get gift certificates. Others gave 15% shopping discounts to thank them for working 15-20 hours a month.
  - o Layla – This board is very active, and we have a lot of meetings outside of the board meetings. My understanding is this board compared to past work a lot more. We're constantly meeting.
  - o Roger – That's good to hear. I love to hear that all the board members are putting in 20 hours a month. The last time we raised board stipends it was to increase applicants, but it didn't help get more applicants. And in the past, it's been hard to get and keep employee board members, but I don't want to pay to be what tips the scale. I wanted to give some perspective. I checked in with about five other Co-ops and none of them had as high board incentives as this Co-op. It hit a funny nerve for people on the outside to see \$5,000 or more being kicked into compensation to the Board. I think it's important that the board make sure that owners know the work they are doing.

**Motion:** I move we approve the board expense budget for Fiscal Year 2027 as presented in the packet.  
Motion by George, 2<sup>nd</sup> from M. Cahill, motion approved (5/0/0).

**9. Election Committee** – reported by Layla

We met earlier this month. One thing we are looking into is creating a minimum vote count needed to get a seat on the board. We started discussing a lot of other things that we will continue discussing at the next meeting on April 21.

The committee recommends to the board to approve Saturday October 10 for the Annual Owner Meeting.

**Motion:** Approve the Annual Owner Meeting date for Saturday, October 10, 2026.  
Motion by George, 2<sup>nd</sup> from M. Cahill, motion approved (5/0/0).

**10. GM Report** – reported by Sean

Our first business partner program in February with Humboldt Pet Supply was a success. 559 people used the discount with over 700 transactions. This month's business partner is Belle Star clothing. We had well attended chocolate and wine tastings for Valentine's Day, plus great sales of wine and chocolate. We are gearing up for the Co-op 20% off sale on March 20. This is the first time we've done this kind of sale. We just got some new bookshelves in the Arcata store.

**11. Owner Comment**

None.

**12. New Business (items for next agenda):**

Agenda Items:

- Approve FY27 budget

Consensus reached to adjourn the March 12, 2026, meeting at 6:54pm and move into Executive Session.

*Minutes by Emily Walter*



**North Coast Co-op  
Board of Directors Executive Session Minutes  
March 12, 2026**

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**Absent Board Members:** Mike Connors (Treasurer), Jon Haumeder

**Co-op Employees:** Sean Nolan

No reportable action.

Executive Session ended at 7:45pm.