Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2026 • 6pm

Sequoia Conference Center & Zoom

Present at meeting:
Board Members: Layla Richardson (President), Elizabeth/Lizzy Gahm (Vice President/Employee Director), Mike Connors (Treasurer), Jon Haumeder, George WinterSun
Absent Board Members:
Co-op Employees: Sean Nolan, Emily Walter, Lauren Fawcett
Owners: Joanne McGarry, Roger, Brenda Harper, Karen Zimbelman, Chris Copple, Carilyn Golddhamer, Pamela Brown, Micki Elia, Kim Elia, Holly S., Yvette Ferreira, Claire Anderson, Gina Espinosa, Katherine Almy, Shawn Leon, Geoffry Robinson, Kathleen Pelly, Pat Kanzler, Alison Murphy, Michael Golden, Andrew Dawid, Tamara Krigel, Daniel Shahin, Tracy Murray, Susan Parsons, Michael Lavin, Robie Tenorio, Shannon Townsend

1. **Welcome**
   The meeting was called to order at 6:00 by Layla.

   The Board of Directors started the meeting by directly addressing feedback received from Co-op owners regarding the storefront tabling policy and election process.

   Tabling policy: Management updated these guidelines in response to ongoing operational difficulties, including disruption of operations and staff time, communication issues and conflict, and complaints from shoppers. Eligibility criteria are now focused strictly on organizations that primarily serve Humboldt County across set categories, mirroring our existing giving programs.

   We are aware of concerns suggesting these changes were implemented to intentionally exclude pro-Palestinian tabling. We offer our sincere apologies if the policy was received in this manner; however, the intent has never been to target specific viewpoints or organizations. While customer complaints regarding political topics did factor into the decision, the primary objective was to resolve operational strain and align practices with our local community focus. The new policy has successfully mitigated these challenges, and while the Board will continue to accept owner feedback to share with management, our current recommendations to staff remain unchanged.

   Election process: The Elections Committee recently updated its candidate nomination procedures to include an interview process to evaluate each applicant's potential for Board leadership and address any concerns regarding suitability or motives. While this is a recent change to our Co-op, applicant screening is a commonly used practice among food Co-ops nationally.

   This year, the committee selected four out of six applicants for the candidate slate. The two applicants not chosen were given the opportunity to appeal to the Board, which was not

utilized. While the Board values transparency wherever feasible, we do not feel it is appropriate to share specific vetting details for individual candidates.

All these changes were discussed and voted upon in public forums with the goal of positioning the Co-op to better serve our community. However, we recognize that our communication regarding these transitions could have been clearer. The Elections Committee will evaluate this new process post-election using owner input and other factors to ensure it remains fair, consistent, and transparent.

2. **Agenda Review**
   Approved

3. **Approve September 10, 2026, Board Minutes**
   Minutes approved by consensus.

4. **Owner Comment**
   Owners shared thoughts on co-op governance, election transparency, tabling rules, communication improvements, meeting logistics, and the burrito bar.

5. **Board Correspondence** – reported by Layla
   No correspondence was discussed.

6. **Annual Owner Meeting** – reported by Lizzy
   The Annual Owner Meeting takes place Saturday, October 10, noon to 3pm at the Arcata Community Center. There will be food, music, raffle baskets and a pop quiz. Prize drawings are at 1:30pm and there will be a formal meeting starting at 2pm that includes updates from the General Manager, a finance report from Mike, a board election update, statements from the board candidates, and an owner comment period.

7. **Employee Seat** – reported by Lizzy
   We have one open employee seat that needs to be filled. The board will start an election process for the employee seat before the end of the year.

8. **Financials** – reported by Mike
   Sean and Barney took the Finance Committee through the audit process. Highlights are that we had almost a half million positive income and for the first time since 2014 we are distributing about $64k to Co-op owners.

Motion: Approve the September 2026 Finance Committee minutes. Approved by consensus

9. **GM Report** – reported by Sean
   Biggest thing that recently happened was the 20% off Fall Sale. It was operationally smoother than the spring sale. The sale was operationally smooth. Overall, it was a successful event. Our new water heater in Eureka broke again. We are looking for solutions for that. We are excited about giving out a patronage refund to owners this year.

10. New Business (items for next agenda):

Next Board Meeting is Thursday, November 12 at 6pm

Agenda Items:

- Welcome Newly Elected Board
- Employee Seat
- Appoint Officers

Consensus reached to adjourn October 8, 2026, meeting at 7:18pm and move into Executive Session.

Minutes by Emily Walter

North Coast Co-op
Board of Directors Executive Session Minutes
October 8, 2026

Present at meeting:
Board Members: Layla Richardson (President), Elizabeth/Lizzy Gahm (Vice President/Employee Director), Mike Connors (Treasurer), Jon Haumeder, George WinterSun
Absent Board Members:
Co-op Employees: Sean Nolan

No reportable action.

Executive Session ended at 8:20pm.