

**Oneota Community Co-op  
Minutes for Regular Board Meeting**

August 20, 2024

5:30 PM

Zoom

**Board Members Present:** Bee Lutz, Brennan Allsworth, Bill Iverson, Hannah Breckbill, Nathan Dietzenbach, Piper Wood

**Board Members Absent:** Carl Peterson

**GM Present:** Nate Furler

**Co-op Staff:**

**Member/Owners Present:** Jeanine Scheffert (Bd Admin Asst),

Lutz called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

**Motion by Allsworth to approve the amended agenda.** Second by Wood. All ayes, motion carried.

Amendments:

9.2 Modify to Board Retreat Reschedule (instead of reflection)

Add New Business: Add Officer Role Transition

Add: Review Draft Budget before GM Report

During **Board Learning**, board reviewed **Board Election Procedure**.

**Motion by Breckbill to approve July 2024 Meeting Minutes.** Second by Allsworth. All ayes, motion carried.

**Motion by Breckbill to report compliance on G5 Board Committee Principles.** Second by Allsworth. All ayes, motion carried.

Board edited the language of G5.7 from “he or she” to “they” for gender-inclusive language.

**Dietzenbach moved to approve budget.** Second by Allsworth. All ayes, motion carried.

Breckbill wrote out expenses for the year, indicating which have happened and which are hypothetical. Total YTD is approximately the same as our budget of \$25,500 for the year. Board development line pays Scott for his time. Admin assistant is \$140 at this time, could move it to \$150 to be compensated same as board. “Other” is for snacks. \$1000 is board contribution to staff appreciation. Board compensation numbers are on there. Community development line for Grow the Good. Take \$2k out of development and add \$2k in September for the fall frolic. \$5k in Feb was elections. April and May is also elections + annual meeting. Proposed \$4200 in board development. If it isn’t used, it can be rolled into staff appreciation at end of the year.

**GM Report**

Sales through July are \$3.1 million; 1.84% below budget, about \$68k under for the year. Budgeted aggressively in some departments. Sad that lower, but interesting to see trends not as high as thought. Checking and savings solid. The mortgage has been paid off, so checking and savings will grow. Through end of July, sales

Had good owner appreciation sale, so last week’s sales were up over budget.

Sales growth vs. budget has been going back and forth. Nordic Fest showed more transactions and smaller transactions. Labor as percent of sales: 18% on owner appreciation weeks — sales per labor hour jumps up there as well.

Total budgeted sales were a little under budget, up 2.18 percent compared to last year. Labor is under control — a little under spent. Compensates for the loss of sales.

Financial commentary: store sales slightly over 2023, but still a little low. The largest shortfalls so far for the year are produce, bulk, wine and beer, books and gifts. Budgeted for flat sales in wine and beer. Bulk has been negative for over 10 years, has been shrinking in sales. Revising the bulk department didn't increase sales. At the time, discussions of a changing demographic — next generation not into bulk as much as prior generation — did more repack. Shrunk the department to "right size" it. Sales continued to decrease. Grocery managers are digging into bulk and planning for a reset. Entertaining additional bulk items, streamlining repack. Testing out items with repack and bulk, see how they move. We'll market it heavily. Clean up the department. Wine and beer budgeted for zero growth. The prior grocery manager had more experience in wine and beer. Don't have anyone with this knowledge right now, so rely on our vendors, but not as good as having that niche on staff. Know that it is difficult to be price competitive on HyVee and Fareway in this department. Have reduced to 8ft from 12ft in this department. Deli island was removed, that could be the reason for change in books and gifts.

Nordic fest went smoothly — staff did a great job — comments from customers on how smooth it went

Door code and lock devices are updated. Can see who is trying to get in when. Thank you to the board and staff participating in the Nordic fest parade. Great to be involved

Rear HVAC installed, but had a faulty fan, so still waiting to use it for replacement fan. But the front until has been keeping up with the heat. We're still working on replacing old plastic containers. Bulk containers shifting to being more recyclable + home compostable cellophane for the bakery.

Invested in mobile stock picking carts.

Annual staff survey went out; will report on it next month. It looks like it will be acceptable with room to grow. Registration is open for fall frolic; everything getting set for that. Starting up the Co-op salsa contest as part of Seed Savers tomato tasting. Anyone can enter, including staff. Love to have a lot of participation.

Great to hear about progress in archival work at Luther College, sorting thousands of photos and items, prepping for next wave of archiving of scanning things in and digitizing.

Will have a "peer audit" by NCG connected folks on September 9-11. Composed of people from NCG and GMs from medium-sized co-ops in our corridor. Excited to get that feedback.

Fall meeting NCG Furler is required to go in Minneapolis on Tuesday, Sept 24-Friday 27.

### **Board Retreat Rescheduled**

Board retreat is tentatively rescheduled for September 15, 2024.

### **Set Dates for Board Election Process**

General deadlines are noted in the board procedure doc. Allsworth will run election as VP. Will need another board member to be on election committee. Invites all to suggest board candidates as well.

Candidate recruitment Sept after ad-hoc board nomination committee has been put together. That committee should have 2 non-board members. Candidate recruitment formally after September meeting through December. Must publish dates in September in various coop communications, including nomination deadline, when voting opens and closes, when ballots will be counted. Everything else falls in January: 1st week candidate applications due (Jan 10), determining if candidates are members in good standing (at January board meeting, along with board nominations) perspective candidates interviewed and applications reviewed before the meeting. At the end of the month, their statements are published after the board formally accepts the nomination. Staff will reserve meeting space.

Jan 10 — candidate applications and statements due for all candidates

Furler will send out other dates, modified for the year, same as last year.

Board meeting, Jan 28

Need to set dates today.

**Upcoming board training opportunities** include

- a. Effective Meeting Facilitation (Aug 27, 2024)
- b. Facilitation Fundamentals – Fall 2024 (Sep 05, 2024 and following 3 Thursdays)
- c. Fundamentals of Interpersonal Communication: Let's Focus on Feedback (Sep 16, 2024)
- d. Financial Training for Directors (Sep 17, 2024)
- e. Women's Leadership Learning Circle – fall 2024 (Sep 18, 2024 and 3 other sessions)
- f. Leadership Learning Circle – Unlock the Power of Personal Change (Sep 20, 2024)

### **Officer Role Transition**

Bee had stepped into the role of president this year with a different understanding of what the year was going to look at that point. Late May/early June, a month or two in, decided to move away from Decorah to several hours away, back to Minnesota. Have been dealing with what that looks like — relocating personal life and farm business. Navigating a lot this summer. Challenging to fulfill regular board president duties and bring the culture to board meetings and GM relationships that was hoping to. Haven't been able to dedicate the time it deserves to those duties. Talked to Furler and Allsworth and Wood about this. Would love to step down from the role of president and open that up to someone else. When first talked to Furler, said wanted to still be on board and attend in person when able; confident can still show up to the board in a regular board member capacity. Don't think wise or helpful to the rest of the board and co-op as a whole to keep "hobbling along" as president. Would like to nudge Allsworth into Pres and Wood into VP.

Lutz will email all board members and outline the timeline.

Lutz, thanks everyone, for their understanding. The board understands that life happens and supports Lutz. Appreciates everything they've done.

**September Meeting, Tuesday, September 17 at 5:30 p.m.**

11.1 Policy Monitoring

a. L2: Staff Treatment

b. L3: Compensation & Benefits

11.2 Appoint ad hoc Board Nomination Committee

**Motion by Breckbill to adjourn meeting.** Seconded by Allsworth, All ayes, motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.