

Oneota Community Co-op
Minutes for Regular Board Meeting
September 17, 2024
5:30 PM

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

Board Members Absent:

GM Present: Nate Furler

Co-op Staff: Niki Sanness

Member/Owners Present: Jeanine Scheffert (Board Administrative Assistant),

Lutz called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

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

Motion by Breckbill to approve August 2024 Meeting Minutes. Second by Wood. All ayes, motion carried; Peterson abstained due to absence at August meeting.

Motion by Breckbill approve L2: Staff Treatment. Second by Iverson. All ayes, motion carried.

Compliance reported on all but 2.3.

2.3 is non-compliant because we're still implementing changes in the personnel policy. We have switched HR software to something with more capacity for revising the personnel policy manual (PPM). Staff report that the current PPM is clear and helpful, but it is still something we will be revising.

We hired an outside staff survey this year. All metrics were above Columinate compliance benchmarks. We are happy with the results and striving for even higher numbers in the future.

Board has great appreciation for the management leading to the satisfaction of the staff.

Motion by Peterson to report compliance on L3: Compensation & Benefits. Second by Dietzenbach. All ayes, motion carried.

This report includes data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics showing what similar jobs would be paid compared to what we are paying. It also compares us to what other co-ops are offering for pay and benefits. Living wage in Winneshiek County is \$20.34/hour for a one-person household. Two people under the same roof goes down to \$14. Our entry-level positions currently make \$14-17.50.

We removed the difference between level 1 and 2 in wages. Wish we could bump the entire scale, but not within our means at this time. This month will be rolling out a new wage scale. PTO accrual remains the same and is standard with other coops.

GM Report

Through the end of August we're at about \$3.6 million, just shy of the budget, but getting close to the NCG benchmark of 3% increase YoY. Checking and savings stay solid. Sales growth vs. budget still bounces around a bit. We've been investing in labor to get training completed. It is

good to see that is closer to the benchmark. Mostly we've been under due to call-outs which create hardships. We'd rather be above the benchmark slightly, but we're managing well.

Bulk has been shrinking. We revamped a decade ago, more repack with less bulk bins. We might go back the other direction. Would like to bring back bulk bins. That may not affect the sales — people have to buy larger containers right now and could purchase smaller increments. But it might gain trust back. People think we're shrinking it and not living to our standards. We want to recuperate that trust. As a percentage, beer and wine are down the largest % YoY, and we budgeted it to be flat. We shrunk it though and streamlined. Books and gifts is 9.4% YoY. Packaged grocery we budgeted 10% increase. We're making a 6.8% increase, which is still good. Part of it was getting rid of the hot bar and dedicating more space.

General store: HVAC should be operational by the 20th. We got the replacement fan finally. Glad front unit could float us for the summer, although the staff were very cold. Next week we should be up and running with the new system with new operating control system. Slowly getting through all the plastic we can't recycle here, swapping them out for #1 and 2

Staff evaluations are complete

Registration for the 50th is at 200, including kids. We're shooting for 400.

Moving forward with footage for a video series that Tanya wrote a grant for. They were also at Sweet Season and Humble Hands Harvest. Not sure on ETA Grow the Good grant-funded campaign.

Going to GM NCG Fall meeting next week in Twin Cities.

Motion by Breckbill to appoint Piper Wood as Board President. Second by Allsworth. All ayes, motion carried. **Piper accepts nomination as Board President.**

Lutz formally resigned as President of the board for personal reasons, but will still serve the rest of their term as a board member through April 2025.

Board Retreat Reflections

The board retreat included a helpful process to identify things we need to focus on. Felt both productive but loose, room, casual, time to sit and wait for response, which facilitator Timm is good at. Good to soak in the questions and think about next steps and future. Good mix of practical, tangible things to check off the list, like streamlining elections. And also got into bigger questions of the relationship of the board to staff and membership and who do we want to look for in the next board election.

Subcommittee meetings will be scheduled at board meetings.

Add to next agenda: Board candidate recruitment and processes

Appoint Ad Hoc Board Nomination Committee

VP Allsworth is on it, appointing Dietzenbach — Brennan moves and Breckbill seconds. Will start reaching out more and more. If not interested in board, could ask them to be on the board nomination committee — Allsworth will reach out to people. Board is asked to make a list of

names. It's the same list as from last year. Also add past board members would be good to have on nomination committee. Would like to have the committee sorted out by the next meeting. Can marketing help? Yes.

O'Connor sent old message for board member recruitment. Allsworth will forward to the rest of board to review. Needs to be done by Oct. 1. Need to change: compensation - it's a good blog post explaining what to expect and what a board member does.

During retreat, commented about what else could provide to board members? Talked about childcare. Can ask people what impediments there are for people, see if that can be overcome.

Announcement at Fall Frolic that we're looking for board members.

Optional Bylaw change regarding current paper election mailing

Written notice is required, as specified in the bylaws. It was written before email was widely adopted. Legally, "written" means printed. Remove the word "written" and it still requires notices, but much fewer trees. If there are 30 people who still need something written, then we can take that information and have that list of 30 people. Furler will bring legal consultation into the discussion. We want to clarify and respond to any member concerns.

Board member recruitment publicity

Talked about the skills matrix being a helpful tool to identify skills and qualities we're looking for in board members. Dietzenbach, Wood, and Peterson have not done the skills matrix yet. Board members are asked to complete this and discuss skills matrix before next month's meeting. Complete the matrix a week ahead of the meeting. Nathan will prepare a report.

Upcoming board training opportunities include

- a. Women's Leadership Learning Circle – fall 2024 (Sep 18, 2024 and 3 other sessions)
- b. Leadership Learning Circle – Unlock the Power of Personal Change (Sep 20, 2024)

Is training something we should talk about as a group? Putting this list out has not enticed anyone to go to any trainings. After reviewing the skills matrix, we can see what training we require as a board and find it.

October Meeting, Tuesday, October 22 at 5:30 p.m.

11.1 Policy Monitoring

- a. G6: Governance Investment
- b. L5: Financial Conditions (Quarterly Report)

11.2 GM Self evaluation

11.3 Nominations report

11.4 Board Treasurer quarterly report

11.5 Staff holiday gifts

Motion by Allsworth to adjourn meeting. Seconded by Dietzenbach, All ayes, motion carried.
The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.