

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

June 25, 2024

5:30 PM

Co-op Classroom

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

**Board Members Absent:**

**GM Present:** Nate Furler

**Co-op Staff:**

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

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.

**Amendments to Agenda:** Add parking lot discussion after training opportunities, And member linkage update

During **Board Learning**, the board reviewed D2 and D3:

**D2 Accountability of GM**

The board discussed the wording of D2.3 and noted that the performance of the GM and the performance of the store as a whole is not always one and the same, so the wording of “The Board will view General Manager performance as identical to organizational performance” may need to be changed. However, policies are in place to monitor each of these situations, so it is a complex system of reporting. The board will continue to think about potential wording and bring ideas to the July board meeting.

The board also discussed the wording of D2.1 “The Board will never give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the General Manager.” Is this wording too strict? Should there be a separate line that describes “collaboration” vs “supervision” or communication? The board would like the opportunity to collaborate with staff, but also realizes that there is a power dynamic inherent in a staff-to-board communication that board members need to be cautious of.

**D3 Delegation to the GM**

This is an outline of what policy governance is: the Board determines policy, GM has the opportunity to use any reasonable interpretation of policy in fulfilling it. The board has responsibility to challenge interpretation if necessary and to change the policy when needed.

**Motion by Breckbill to approve the May 2024 Meeting Minutes.** Second by Peterson. All ayes, motion carried.

**Motion by Peterson to approve D1 Unity of Control.** Second by Wood. All ayes, motion carried.

**Compliance reported.**

**Motion by Peterson to approve G1 Governance Style.** Second by Allsworth. All ayes, motion carried.

**L10 Board Logistical Support.**

This report ensures the board is receiving sufficient information from GM. Compliance reported.

**L1 Customer Treatment.**

Reporting compliance. Compliance is measured through surveys, shopping experience data, and store inspections. Everything is up-to-date and operating within given parameters.

**L4 Membership**

Compliance reported. L4 compliance includes safeguarding customer data, holding monthly board meetings and annual meetings, offering shares and member investing opportunities.

**GM Report**

Sales were under budget by \$34k through May, but have been looking up in the past two weeks. The worst we've recorded in the past was being under budget by about \$27k, so this is something to be concerned about if it continues to be a trend. However, it is worth noting that we had budgeted for the deli island to be removed much sooner than it was. Now that the island is gone, we are seeing a leveling out over the past two weeks. Hopefully, that positive trend will continue. Co-op has been responding to customer requests, deli island has been replaced by shelving, we've reset several departments, and we're focusing on full displays and merchandising, all of which create more sales.

Sales per labor hour are a little high, but reasonable. We have a robust staff right now with folks coming back for the summer, which gives us a cushion we're happy to have. We are still under budget for the year. With higher labor, we get lower sales-per-labor-hour, but we're still well within range of where we need to be.

The replacement HVAC and control system is on order and is scheduled to arrive in mid-July. This has deprioritized the switch of walk-in cooler and freezer in the basement.

We're prioritizing a lot of training for new managers and to help staff morale and job satisfaction. We've shifted the staff structure, and it is working well. Staff are happier and feel they have the resources to do their jobs. It is money well spent.

**Annual board retreat postponed**

The board retreat has been postponed until August 18 to give the development committee more time to prepare and ensure full participation by board members. Scott Timm will be hired to facilitate.

**Upcoming board training opportunities** include:

- a. Leadership Learning Circle – Let's Focus on Difficult. July 18
- b. Virtual CBL 101. July 20. This one is recommended for new board members.
- c. How to Disagree Better – Creating Your Conflict Resolution Toolkit. July 31

### **Parking lot discussion**

Peterson met with NRCS Amy Bouska to discuss possibilities for the parking lot next to the Co-op. The state has resources available for water quality programs that could be put into place with the parking lot, including water catchment projects and adding native plants. Peterson also talked to IA RC&D about possible grants. NRCS has funded projects in Decorah including Vesterheim landscaping and a space at Sunflower Daycare. Peterson also talked to the Decorah city manager to understand how everything would need to be coordinated. This project is a long-term possibility, but not a current project. The parking lot next to the Co-op and the parking lot used for the farmer's market could be done together. This would have to be after the city fixes the storm sewer system and the school fixes happen, so this would be a project for 2–3 years in the future at the soonest. Because it is on a slope that is not up to code, anything done to the parking lot by the Co-op besides patching (any improvements) would have to bring it up to code. Although no funding or plans are currently in place, it was good to have the conversation and put the possibility on everyone's radar.

### **Member linkage update**

The next Co-op potluck will be July 18 at the Pulpit Rock event room. We are working with Decorah Public Library to have kids activities to make it a family potluck.

Co-op will have a float in the Nordic Fest parade, honoring the Co-op's 50th anniversary. Board is invited to take part.

### **July Meeting, Tuesday, July 23 at 5:30 p.m.**

#### 11.1 Policy Monitoring

- a. D2 Accountability of GM
- b. D3 Delegation to the GM
- c. L5 Financial Condition (Quarterly Report)

#### 11.2 Treasurer Quarterly Report (through June)

**Motion by Iverson to adjourn meeting.** Seconded by Dietzenbach, All ayes, motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.