

**Oneota Community Co-op**  
**Minutes for Regular Board Meeting**  
Tuesday, January 27, 2026, 6:00 pm, Co-op Classroom

**Board Members Present:** Brennan Allsworth, Erin Shaw, Amy Grinna, Steph Hughes, Piper Wood, Carly Zierke

**Board Members Absent:** Hannah Breckbill

**GM Present :** Nate Furler

**Co-op Staff Present :** Niki Sanness

**Administrative Assistant Present:** Alison Blake

**Member/Owners Present:**

**Call to Order**

Wood called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

**Agenda**

Wood requested to shift updating the L6 and the presentation of the Business Plan until the February meeting. *Grinna motioned to approve the agenda as edited, Zierke seconded. All ayes, motion carried.*

**Consent Agenda**

None.

**December Minutes**

*Allsworth moved to approve December minutes as written, Hughes seconded. All ayes, motion carried.*

**Member Comment**

None.

**Board Learning**

All policies are located at [oneotacoop.com/policy-register/](https://oneotacoop.com/policy-register/) on the Oneota Coop website.

**D: Global Governance - Management Connection**

No Changes

**L9 : GM Succession**

There is a general desire to expand this policy to help strengthen the policy, which could result in better guidelines for succession training and preparedness. This conversation will be tabled until a later date.

## **Policy Monitoring**

### **G2 : Board Job Description**

General consensus that having the entire board review each policy during board learning one month followed by testing for compliance helps the group with policy comprehension and reduces subjective bias.

*Zierke moved to report compliance on the G2, seconded by Allsworth. All ayes, motion carried.*

### **L8: Communications and Counsel to the Board**

The GM provides the Board with compliance updates via a summary document and supporting materials.

*Allsworth moved to accept the L8, seconded by Hughes. All ayes to accept the L8 report prepared by Furler, motion carried.*

### **L6 : Budgeting/Financial Planning**

The Board reviewed budget assumptions, including a projected 3% year-over-year sales growth and a conservative budgeting approach. The Cost of Goods Sold (CoGS) is the largest expense group, and NCG benchmarking data was used to help compare margin goals to remain competitive while responding to market conditions. Staff appreciation funding remains a priority in the budget overall, and capital needs were discussed to identify potential future building and security upgrades.

The GM reviewed current financial ratios, noting they are within NCG benchmarks. There has typically been stronger performance in the fourth quarter and slower activity in the first quarter, so current numbers are typical. The Board also discussed the importance of establishing clear long-term financial and strategic goals over the next two to five years, noting that financial projections are strengthened by narrative context tied to the Co-op's broader strategic objectives.

*Grinna moved to approve the 2026 operating budget as presented, seconded by Shaw. All ayes, motion passed.*

## **9.1 GM Report**

Sales continue to perform ahead of budget and year-over-year benchmarks, with sales up 4.66% compared to budget. Recent periods through late December remain solidly ahead of

2024 and are in-line with peer co-op performance. The GM notes that holiday-related store closures had a temporary negative impact on labor as a percentage of sales, reflecting expected seasonal fluctuations. Most departments performed favorably compared to budget, with only two small departments underperforming relative to goals, which doesn't materially impact overall results.

The GM shared plans to host a local grower meeting in February with key produce leadership and consultants to strengthen supplier relationships and support the resiliency of our local food supply.

The Coop Deli is participating in Decorah's Restaurant Week, so falafel will be available every day!

### **Board Treasurer Year End Report (through December 2025)**

The board discussed the final treasurer report, which reflected the pantry donation for the end of 2025.

### **Vote on Board Budget 2026**

The change to a new voting system should save a significant amount of funds which would enable reallocation to other areas in the budget once the savings are realized. The calculations for the current budget are based on  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 1% of 2025 actual sales.

*Hughes moves to approve the board budget, seconded by Allsworth. All ayes, motion carried.*

### **Board Development Committee**

There are a series of training goals to strengthen the knowledge and skills of board members throughout the year, starting with risk assessment. There will be an upcoming blog post regarding the Grow the Good program.

### **Member Linkage**

The final miniseries meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2026 from 7 pm to 8 pm. While January's group has had the smallest attendance, 30 participants has been the largest and has really allowed the board to hear and incorporate member feedback and create space for member conversations.

### **Board assessment of Annual Member Payments**

There are 3,702 members in good standing as of 1/21/2026. Of this total, 1,953 will receive email communication regarding the upcoming election because they have an active and approved email on file. To update your profile and add an email address, you can go to the

Co-op website via the Update Your Member/Owner contact information button. Paper ballots will be available in-store for those that would prefer that option.

### **Board Nominates candidates for election**

The following co-op members are candidates in the 2026 election:

- Parker Deen
- Flannery Cerbin-Bohach
- Andrea Eger
- Hannah Breckbill
- Brennan Allsworth

Applications will be shared with all board members and there is one month remaining until voting begins. The Board Nomination Committee was unanimous about nominating these individuals.

*Shaw motions to nominate the full slate of candidates as recommended by the Board Nomination Committee, seconded by Hughes. All ayes, motion passed.*

### **Discuss plan for upcoming board education**

*Wood motioned to table this discussion until the February meeting due to the late night, seconded by Zierke. All ayes, motion passed.*

### **Discuss tentative annual meeting date**

The GM will check on reserving preferred dates of Tuesday, April 14th or Thursday, April 9th at an ADA accessible venue.

### **Discuss election voting platform options**

Some fields in the form have a smaller character limit than what has been used in the past. Therefore, messaging has been condensed to share important information in a concise way. There will be the first email to ask members to vote and two reminder emails, with all results hidden until the election has ended.

### **Reminders**

The Principles in Practice Miniseries will have the final session on Tuesday, February 3 from 7 pm to 8 pm at Pulpit Rock.

February's Potluck will be on February 19th at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

### **Wrap Up**

The next meeting is February 24, 2026 at 6:00 pm.

*Allsworth moved to enter executive session, Grinna seconded. All ayes. The open session adjourned at 9:09 PM.*

*Hughes moved to exit executive session, Shaw seconded. All ayes.*

*Allsworth moved to adjourn, Grinna seconded. All ayes. The meeting adjourned at 9:31 PM.*