

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

Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 6:00 pm, Co-op Classroom

**Board Members Present:** Brennan Allsworth, Hannah Breckbill, Erin Shaw, Amy Grinna, Steph Hughes, Piper Wood, Flannery Cerbin-Bohach (newly elected)

**Board Members Absent:**

**GM Present :** Nate Furler

**Co-op Staff Present :**

**Administrative Assistant Present:** Alison Blake

**Member/Owners Present:** Aimee Rovelo

**Call to Order**

Wood called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

**Agenda**

The Board reviewed the proposed agenda. An amendment was noted to correct the location of the May Co-op Potluck from the picnic shelter to Humble Hands Harvest, consistent with the notice published in the Humble Hands newsletter. An update will be sent to members

*Breckbill moved to approve the amended agenda. Allsworth seconded. All ayes, motion carried.*

**Member Comments**

Rovelo presented on behalf of Decorah Community for Immigrant Rights (DCIR), requesting that area businesses, including the Co-op, consider becoming more visible supporters of immigrant rights in the community. Rovelo raised questions regarding the Co-op's involvement with the Winneshiek County Fair, specifically in light of the booking of Confederate Railroad as entertainment. Questions included whether the Co-op has any sponsorship relationship with the fair, whether a booth or tabling presence is planned, and whether signage could be used to distinguish the Co-op's participation from the fair's entertainment programming. Rovelo also asked whether a notice regarding the rights of individuals in private/employee-only spaces could be posted in the store as a welcoming gesture to the community.

Board discussion clarified that the Co-op does not currently have a booth at the fair and has not sponsored the fair in recent years, though it has historically supported the 4H program. It was noted that a staff member was approached by the fair to serve as a judge in the Make the Most Favorable Bite competition.

Wood thanked Rovelo for her engagement and use of member-owned democratic rights. Wood noted the Co-op doesn't endorse Confederate Railroad, and committed to following up with Co-op staff to clarify the Co-op's operational involvement and to share developments with Rovelo. Wood extended an invitation for Rovelo to participate on a Co-op committee.

## **Resolution of Member Comments**

Wood took ownership of following up with Furler and Co-op staff and will report back to Rovelov on next steps.

## **Consent Agenda**

*Breckbill moved to approve the consent agenda. Hughes seconded. All ayes, motion carried.*

## **Policy Monitoring**

### **G1 - Governing Style**

The Board discussed the G1 policy, which calls for understanding, to the best of the Board's ability, the needs and desires of the membership as a whole. The membership survey, conducted every three years, is due this year. Discussion noted that with over 5,000 member-owners, it remains a challenge to gather feedback broadly. The 2023 survey received 421 responses. Feedback channels include in-store signage, bag stuffers, annual meetings, potlucks, and direct engagement events such as Principles in Practice.

The Board acknowledged that in-store feedback tends to be operational in nature and does not typically rise to the board level. Discussion touched on opportunities such as "coffee with the board" events to increase direct engagement. The Board recognized the work done over the past year to expand engagement opportunities and expressed a desire to continue improving.

*Grinna moved to report compliance against G1. Hughes seconded. All ayes, motion carried.*

### **L5 - Financial Conditions and Activities**

The Board reviewed the L5 report. Compliance was reported in all areas except L5.1, related to sales growth. The absence of a Fresh Manager for an extended period contributed to a sales decrease of 5.56% in that department, with overall sales remaining relatively flat at -0.11%. While sales targets have not been fully met, the Co-op is meeting budget for net income, which has helped offset the sales shortfall.

It was also reported that a prior compliance concern under L5.7 related to a matter with the IRS has now been resolved, as the IRS acknowledged an error on their part. L5.7 is now in compliance.

*Allsworth moved to accept the L5 report as presented. Breckbill seconded. All ayes, motion carried.*

### **E1 - Global Ends**

The Board reviewed the Ends policies to support ongoing literacy around the Co-op's guiding commitments. Discussion focused on the current 100-mile definition of "local" as it applies to purchasing and merchandising. The Food Hub uses a 150-mile radius, and the Board discussed whether the Co-op's definition remains appropriate given changes in supply chain infrastructure and member expectations. Discussion raised questions about what definition best reflects the Co-op's values and community, the distinction between "local" and "regional," and the importance of not adjusting a definition simply to improve reported metrics.

Additional highlights from the Ends report included: continued growth in new member-owners (135 in 2025, compared to 55 and 67 in prior years); continued success of the Double Up Food Bucks program; and strong overall growth in 2025.

*Grinna moved to accept the Ends report. Shaw seconded. All ayes, motion carried.*

### **Board Financial Statement and Quarterly Report**

The Board reviewed the financial statement and clarified charges related to the January board meeting and the annual meeting. The Co-op Board provided a supplemental Grow the Good grant donation to cover the gap between funds raised and amounts requested, with adequate budget remaining for other initiatives. Election expenses were minimal this cycle.

### **Confirm Certification of Board Election Results**

Wood oversaw the election certification process in place of Allsworth, who was on the ballot.

*Grinna moved to certify the results of the board election. Hughes seconded. All ayes, motion carried.*

*Breckbill moved to approve disposal of the board election ballots. Allsworth seconded. All ayes, motion carried.*

### **Member Linkage Committee Updates**

The committee met in advance of the annual meeting. Discussion focused on increasing the impact of potlucks as a member engagement tool, including committee members committing to bring additional food when members are hosting and sending personal invitations to increase attendance. The committee noted a community appetite for connection and expressed interest in building more infrastructure to support it. Wood has reached out to prospective committee members and received interest.

### **Board Development Committee Updates**

The committee is developing a risk assessment training module led by Grinna, anticipated to be ready by June. The next deep dive, scheduled for the following month, will continue the discussion on Co-op public statements and responses to community issues that began in March.

June and July deep dives will focus on the topic of employee representation on the board. The committee discussed adding member-owners to relevant subcommittees to broaden input. Two subcommittees are being considered: one focused on employee board representation, and one focused on the Co-op's approach to public and political statements.

### **Board Transition**

Nominations were received for Board officers.

*Grinna moved to approve the current officer slate for another term. Shaw seconded. All ayes, motion carried.*

All Board members completed the annual signing of the Code of Conduct and Ethics.

### **Appointment to Committees**

Committee assignments will continue as in 25-26. Cerbin-Bohach was appointed to the Member Linkage Committee.

### **GM Report**

Furler reported that sales through March are slightly below budget (-0.88%). Sales have remained relatively flat overall, consistent with trends seen at many cooperatives nationally. Owner Appreciation Week is approaching and is expected to provide a positive bump. Seasonal tourism traffic has begun to increase. Despite the sales shortfall, the Co-op is approximately \$40,000 under budget primarily due to strong expense and labor management. Deli sales have continued their upward trend, attributed in part to a price evaluation conducted last June, making direct year-over-year comparisons less straightforward.

A new Fresh Manager was recently hired. A consultant has been providing training and on-site coverage, and Furler noted the focus is shifting from gap-filling to building manager-level capacity and sustainable departmental leadership. The Board encouraged clarity around the consultant engagement's intended timeline and return on investment.

POS Transition: Pre-work on the transition to the ECRS point-of-sale system continues. NCG is providing transition support, and the IT Manager is leading setup work at a strong pace. The Co-op will retain CoPOS as a backup during the transition, shifting registers one at a time beginning the week of June 22, the target installation date. Training will include multiple full-day sessions. The HR/Finance Manager is working on general ledger alignment.

### **Reminders**

May Co-op Potluck: Thursday, May 21 at 6:00 pm at Humble Hands Harvest.

### **Wrap Up**

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 26, 2026 at 6:00 pm.

*Breckbill moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:11 pm.*