

**Blue Hill Co-op Board Meeting**  
August 24, 2023, Blue Hill Co-op Café

Board Members Attending: Jo Barrett, Jenny Brillhart, Aaron Dority, Deborah Evans, Anne Gilchrist, Jennifer Traub, Annie Silver.

Absent Board Member(s): Tim Tunney.

Others Attending: Julia Klein (Minute Taker), Kevin Gadsby (General Manager).

Julia Klein, minute taker

Aaron Dority, meeting facilitator, timekeeper

Jennifer Traub, tasks and decisions

Meeting called to order at 6:03 PM.

Approval of Agenda

**Jenny moved to approve the agenda with adjustments. Anne seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.**

Approval of Minutes

**Jo moved to approve the July 27, 2023 BOD Minutes with no changes. Deborah seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried. The board tabled the June 22, BOD and Annual Meeting Minutes for the September meeting.**

Tasks

-Strategic Leadership Committee Meeting – Jenny and Anne will set a September date and contact interested owners.

-2024 Calendar/Annual Meeting – Jen

-Notes for 2024 Election

-Working Owners Appreciation – Jennifer Coolidge Postcard

-Keane NH Columinate Retreat October – Kevin/Anne

-Video for Stan - Kevin

-EZ Pay - Kevin and Stan (difficulties)

-Finance Committee Tool

Open Owner Time - No owners attended.

Resignation – The board expressed their sadness over Jerome Lawther’s resignation from long years of board service.

Board Communications – The board discussed election postcard content as communication to the owners from the board. The importance of including the Co-op logo on the front was emphasized. The board decided to include a postcard review as a task on the calendar.

Annual Meeting Debrief – Julia shared thoughts from the Annual Meeting with suggestions to create more clarity in the meeting format and better acoustics for presentations and discussion between the board and owners. Discussion ensued and the board suggested suspending the

regular board meeting in June for the Annual Meeting allowing ample time for conversation with the owners. Jen will look into adjusting the board calendar to an 11-month board-and-GM-reporting schedule rather than 12. Julia will compile a Lessons Learned document. Jen will link the doc in the board calendar 2024 under Annual Meeting preparation. Anne and Jenny will review the postcard for event content before sending. Jen expressed concern over low attendance at Annual Meetings and discussion turned to attracting owners.

### Board Monitoring

C7 Board Principles – The board tabled Tim’s C7 report for the September meeting.

### GM Monitoring

B6 Staff Treatment and Compensation – Kevin began his report announcing that he has raised the minimum wage to \$15. He reported compliance with B6 and noted that he will supply surveys to the department manager team in September. He intends to strategize for the next year before the busy season begins, hiring summer staff earlier in the season. He reported that while last year the Co-op saw only one day of \$41,000 in sales, this year days were already over \$40,000 in June with a 15% growth in August totaling 1.1 million in sales for the month. This year saw sales begin to decrease the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in August rather than the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The board appreciated Kevin’s additions to the balance sheet showing the number of items sold and customer count. The customer count is up 7% and storewide units sold were up 12% at 22,000 in July.

Kevin shared information from a conference call with other co-ops regarding B6, noting that Blue Hill’s compensation/income ratio is average at 25.1%. He went on to share his observation that some co-ops offer larger benefits and higher wages though often they have fewer employees. Kevin is compiling notes regarding benefits. He is also researching insurance brokers and the legalities of the Co-op’s current insurance arrangement. He has hired a café consultant to help bring down café expenses. Discussion turned to keeping the café in the community despite labor troubles. Aaron asked about staff turnover versus retention and whether Kevin received guidance about keeping up staff morale during the busy season. Kevin responded that Blue Hill’s seasonality makes it an outlier among other co-ops but there are some resources.

Discussion turned to the employee handbook and Kevin explained an issue among staff in which a few employees work only one 6-hour shift per week but receive the same discount as full-time employees. Kevin is considering a tiered discount, or a minimum number of hours worked per week. Department managers are in favor of the adjustment. Discussion ensued. **Jo moved to accept Kevin’s GM report. Deborah seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.**

B4 Policy Update – Jo presented re-written policy B4 with the addition of “in the preceding period.” The policy was updated to match bylaw 2.8 voted on by the owners. **Deborah moved to approve updates to policy B4. Anne seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.**

Investment Redemption Request – Kevin informed the board of a request for redemption of \$200. The board discussed whether to honor the request immediately or to wait until the next scheduled redemption review in January 2024. The board agreed not to move on the issue in the

absence of Tim and to deliberate over email. The Finance Committee will discuss redemption with Tim.

Email September 1, 2023, 2:59 PM – Tim proposed that the board grant the GM authority to approve *de minimis* requests as they come in. The GM would be permitted to establish what constitutes *de minimis* and would be given a limit of \$5,000 of allowable redemptions in between board authorized redemptions. The GM would not be obligated to make redemption, but may if in their analysis, the Co-op has funds legally available to do so. **Jen moved that the board grant the GM authority to approve *de minimis* valid redemption requests up to an aggregate amount of \$5,000 between Board review dates provided that the GM determines the Co-op has funds legally available to do so, per the details outlined by Tim at 3:54 PM. Annie seconded the motion at 4:02PM. All directors responded and the motion unanimously carried.**

#### Agenda

2024 Calendar Draft - Jen  
C7 Board Principles - Tim  
C8 Governance Investment - Aaron  
GM Report - B2 Planning and Budgeting  
Board President Election - Aaron  
Board Appointment for Empty Seat  
Resignation - Decision

Meeting Evaluation: Thorough, somber.

Recessed to Executive Session: 7:25 PM - Board Personnel  
Reconvened Public Session: 7:30PM

Meeting Adjourned: 7:30PM

Due Date for the Board Packet: Items for the Board Packet will be due on Thursday, September 21, 2023.

Next Board Meeting: Board Meeting Thursday, September 28, 2023, 6:00PM, Blue Hill Co-op, Café.

Minutes submitted by Julia Klein