

Blue Hill Co-op Annual Meeting
June 26, 2025, Blue Hill Co-op Café

Board Members Attending: Jo Barrett, Cheryl Boulet, Jenny Brillhart, Aaron Dority, Deborah Evans, Anne Gilchrist, Annie Silver, Jennifer Traub. Board Member Absent: Tim Tunney.

Others Attending: Kevin Gadsby (General Manager); Emery Bradshaw Thomas (Piano player); Jennifer Wahlquist Coolidge (Ownership & Events Coordinator); Susan Brookman, John Laurence Busch, Leslie Cummins, Peter Gilchrist, Jacqueline Lee, Pam Maholtra, Eileen Mielenhausen, Chris Ramsay, Tim Seabrook, Rick Traub, Deborah Wiggs, David Zachow (Owners)

Jennifer Traub, minute taker

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm.

Welcome from the Board & GM. Board Members introduced themselves, and Jennifer T. (Secretary) circulated a pad to record meeting attendance.

President—Aaron shared appreciation for the Co-op staff as a whole as well as owner investors. He acknowledged the Cafe for a fantastic food spread, along with Jennifer Coolidge and Emery Bradshaw Thomas for event support.

General Manager—Kevin remarked on the continued growth of the Co-op in this space and shared thoughts on what growth means as a cooperative, including increased wages of over \$700,000 since the new location opened. In the cooperative model, growth is about supporting the food economy and giving back to the community.

Treasurer—With Tim Tunney stuck in a traffic jam and unable to get to the meeting, Aaron referred attendees to his statement in the Annual Report.

Open Owner Time. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to owner questions and comments.

Tim Seabrook, reflecting on the themes of growth and community, suggested the Co-op has always evolved and needs to keep evolving so as not to become stagnant. He appreciates supporting community needs by participating in the Round Up program at the register. Tim feels it is becoming more and more vital to broaden our community support efforts further, even globally.

Jennifer Coolidge, Ownership & Events Coordinator, shared her pride as a Co-op owner for 22 years, stating “I own a grocery store with my family and friends.” She emphasized the Co-op’s autonomy in not being owned by a corporation. As owners, she added, we share in the benefits and risks of the Co-op. Owner benefits include money savings through bulk purchasing as well

as Farm Fresh and Share assistance programs for those who qualify. Jennifer C. called attention to store donations in support of broader efforts such as the Cinco de Mayo donation to Mano a Mano, which serves migrant farm workers, the Juneteenth donation to NAACP Bangor, and the Into the Light campaign raising awareness and advocating for survivors of domestic violence.

Jennifer C. announced an initiative at the Co-op to bring back mugs and silverware into the cafe space. In the past, efforts to provide silverware failed because people inadvertently took or threw away utensils. The new effort is being dubbed a “give it/take it” campaign and solicits ongoing donations of mugs and silverware to maintain availability.

Greg Paulmier expressed appreciation for farmers being able to sell their products locally. He referred to a movement in the country toward “public banking” and encouraged the Co-op to look into this trend.

John Bush commented that cashiers don’t always ask him to round up and wondered if there has been a policy change. Jennifer C. spoke to varied reactions cashiers experience when inviting shoppers to round up. Cashiers have been accompanying her to interviews with Change for Good recipients, which provides the opportunity for them to learn more about the mission and work of supported organizations.

Owners who would like to round up every time can request a prompt for the Round-Up donation be added to their account. Deborah Wiggs shared that she takes the initiative to request rounding up. Rick Traub pointed out that there is currently no round-up option with self-checkout. Kevin will look into that issue.

John Bush shared his impression that the aisle with wellness products seems emptier than others. Kevin stated that HABA product sales actually are growing at double digits, due to a loyal customer base and valued employee expertise.

Greg Paulmier asked if the Co-op has a relationship with the Island Cooperative in Deer Isle. Kevin said yes, and that other co-ops order through us, as well.

Rick Traub noted the mostly female make-up of the Board currently.

Pam Maholtra inquired about meat bones for pets. Kevin will check with the Co-op’s meat buyer.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:39 PM

Next Board Meeting: Board Meeting Thursday, July 24, 2025, 6:00PM, Blue Hill Co-op, Café.
Minutes submitted by Jennifer Traub.