

Blue Hill Co-op Board Meeting
August 28, 2025, Blue Hill Co-op Cafe

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

Absent Board Member(s):

Others Attending: Nina Woodward (director of Chase Emerson Memorial Library), Jennifer Walquist Coolidge (Ownership and Events Coordinator), Kevin Gadsby (General Manager).

Annie Silver, minute taker

Aaron Dority, meeting facilitator, timekeeper

Jenny Brillhart, tasks and decisions

Meeting called to order at 6:04 PM

Approval of Agenda

Susan moved to approve the agenda with changes. Deborah seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

Tasks Check-In

Tasks for next meeting

- Provide clarity on Board request for cafe updates from Kevin
- SLC to review Weaver's Way ends statement and draft options and recommendations for Board review ahead of September
- Consider way to honor Tim's service. The idea is an article in the Harvest Herald. Aaron will do a first draft and Jo will do a review of it.
- Annie and Jenny to cover minutes of Sept board meeting while Julia is away

Approval of Minutes

Jenny moved to approve the July 24, 2025 (July) BOD Minutes with edits. Jo seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

Annie moved to approve the June 26, 2025 (June and Annual Mtg) BOD Minutes with edits. Anne seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

Open Owner Time

Change for Good:

Jennifer Wahlquist Coolidge introduced Nina Woodward, director of Chase Emerson Memorial Library, Deer Isle. They will be the upcoming Change for Good recipients. Jennifer and Nina presented the board with glowing reviews of the library, background information, as well as insight into how funds will be used for operational costs..

Farm Fresh Rewards:

Jennifer explained there will be a change in this program starting September, 2025. This is a program administered through Rhode Island with 6 states in the Northeast participating including Maine. The Blue Hill Co-op participates in this program, which allows anyone paying with a SNAP card to get a 50% discount on produce purchased.

There has been a recent funding change at the federal level. In order to comply with the USDA grant that funds the program, going forward only local produce will be eligible for the farm fresh rewards .

In an effort to get the word out to shoppers this information has gone out in weekly e-newsletters, there are informational cards at checkout, and there are flyers up around the store. There has been signage ordered which will go up around the store soon.

There was a suggestion to get word out further through Healthy Peninsula.

Plastic reduction:

Jennifer briefed the board on the upcoming plastic reduction forum to be held Sept 9 from 4-5pm in the co-op cafe. The goal is to inform the community about what the co-op is doing to reduce plastics and ask if there are suggestions for improvement.

There was a question if we can tap into existing programs and initiatives? Jennifer replied that there is a program called slash your trash that we do participate in.

The most prevalent problem is a common problem amongst all co-ops and natural food stores, and that is with the packaging in the grab and go case.

Board Monitoring

C7 Board Committee Principles – Jenny shared her review and assessment the board is in compliance with policy C7. **Anne moved to accept C7 as in compliance. Susan seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.**

GM Monitoring

B5 Treatment of Customers – Kevin reports compliance and explained that efforts are made to respond to people who leave reviews if they leave their contact information.

Deborah moved that the board accept Kevin’s report on B5 as in compliance. Jo seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

B6 Staff Treatment and Compensation– Kevin reports compliance. Annual wages have increased \$800K since opening the new store. The starting wage has increased and will soon be \$16/hour. Wages are 23.5% of annual revenue, as they are budgeted to be. The general manager is tasked with both providing good wages and also being financially responsible with the co-op as a business owned by its’ members. In addition it was noted that while sales have been growing and are impressive, the amount of debt carried by the co-op is also very substantial.

This report was timely given that there is currently much discussion and emotion relating to the health care portion of the compensation. Due to the federal mandate for businesses with 50+ full time employees (or the equivalent) to provide health insurance to all full time employees changes to the compensation package will need to be considered. Kevin has a meeting with an insurance agent next Thursday and will find out more information.

Deborah moved that the board accept Kevin's report on B6 as in compliance. Cheryl seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

Finance Committee Update-

Jen summarized her notes from the recent committee meeting August 22.

The bulk of the meeting was dedicated to reviewing the Thought for Food proposal to overhaul the cafe department by providing systems, training, and menu planning to optimize the cafe's potential. Kevin spoke highly of the expertise of the consulting team, who specialize in this area and are currently working with Rising Tide. Kevin met the team personally at a Co-op conference and has heard glowing reviews of their changemaking work with other co-ops.

Investment redemption and dividends were discussed.

Finance committee meetings are now being held monthly so the committee would like to review key financial statements on a monthly basis.

Next month lawyer Jeff Spaulding from Viridian will come to the finance meeting to discuss the bylaw change suggested by Synergy Accounting regarding the allocation of net losses.

Recess to Executive Session: 7:03

Executive Session - Personnel

Return to Open Session: 7:57

A statement was made by consensus of the Board in support of Kevin moving forward with Thought For Food consulting based on their recent proposal

Meeting Adjourned: 8:01

Agenda for September meeting:

GM evaluation 2025

C8 Governance investment- Jo

GM Monitoring B2- Planning and Budgeting- Kevin

Strategic Plan- Kevin

Discussion of Ends rewording- SLC committee

Due Date for the Board Packet: Items for the Board Packet will be due on Thursday, Sept 18, 2025.

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, Sept 25, 2025, 6:00-7:30 Blue Hill Co-op, Café.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Annie Silver