



**ASHLAND
FOOD CO+OP**
— BOARD OF DIRECTORS —

Board Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2022

(APPROVED)

Directors expected attending: Julie O'Dwyer, Ed Claassen, Mark Gibbs, Joanna Wnorowski, Bob Kaplan, Melissa Scudder, Erica Thompson, Larry Cooper. **Others attending:** Emile Amarotico, General Manager; Abby Lazerow, Board Administrator, Tracy Kaiser, Marketing Manager.

Facilitator: Larry Cooper

Timekeeper: Mark Gibbs

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Larry Cooper.

ITEM #	ITEM DESCRIPTION	DISCUSSION	ACTION
1.	Positive Affirmation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Julie O'Dwyer led the positive affirmation.	
2.	Land Acknowledgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bob Kaplan led the land acknowledgement.	
3.	Owners Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Owners Barry Haynes, Amey Broeker, Mahlea Rasmussen, Tracy Kaiser, Jennifer Nelson, Jon Griffin (16026) attended the meeting.Amey Broeker, director of the Ashland Emergency Food Bank, appreciated receiving a grant from AFC Gives to create a cookbook to help clients.	
4.	Announcements and Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A drought and water webinar sponsored by Ashland Climate Collaborative will be held on September 21 from 7-8:15 p.m. Larry O'Neill, state of Oregon climatologist will be the presenter.The Monster Dash will be held on October 29 to support the Ashland Schools Foundation.Directors were reminded to save the second Wednesday in December for the Board holiday party.	
5.	Agenda Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Done.	
6.	Consent Agenda	The following Consent Agenda items were approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Board Meeting Minutes, 8-10-22 (Unapproved)	The Board unanimously

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Session Minutes, 8-10-22 (Unapproved, Confidential) Board Finance Report, 7-22 Positive Affirmation Calendar, 2022-23 Board Facilitation Calendar, 2022-23 Land Acknowledgment Calendar, 2022-23 	approved the Consent Agenda documents.
7.	Education Initiatives Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracy Kaiser, Marketing Manager, presented an outline for education classes throughout the year. The AFC classroom is available as a meet-up location for the community. Nonprofits may use the classroom free of charge. Otherwise, costs are \$25/hr. or \$125/day. Interested persons can log onto EventBrite to reserve the classroom. Classes will focus on healthy food and wellness and others will be related to special sales and promotions. Some classes will be virtually recorded and available through the website, especially during the summer months. The first in person class will be taught by local fermentation expert Kirsten Shockey. The Co-op Carrots program for kids will launch in January. Director suggestions for possible future classes included eating for muscle gain, using an induction burner, organic retail certification, having a healthy home, and animal wellness. Employees will be marching at the October 8 Pride event. There will be a big First Friday event for June 2023. Directors were excited about the upcoming series of classes and appreciated Tracy's presentation and the excellent work of the Marketing Department. 	
8.	Strategic Planning Refresh Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Julie O'Dwyer reviewed the agenda for the September 28 Strategic Refresh meeting. Directors and AFC Managers will meet at the Ashland Springs Hotel to consider where AFC wants to go as an organization in the next 25 years. A survey will be sent out in advance. 	
9.	Meeting Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A ten-minute meeting break was taken. 	
10.	AFC Gives Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> August donations to Community Works in August totaled \$5,234.07. To date, the Truth to Power Club has earned \$1504.79. The AFC Gives Committee recently awarded grants to 17 organizations ranging from \$250 to \$2000. Next week some committee members are going to go to the organizations to deliver checks and gift bags. 	
11.	Board Finance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sales are off budget by 2%, down over July 2021, and 5% YTD. Inflation has impacted the business, with shoppers shifting to lower cost products 	

		<p>and brands. The Finance Committee is considering revisiting the budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee benefits are high compared to other years and \$152,000 over budget. Gary Lapedis made a presentation to the Finance Committee about health benefits, comparing the store's 20-year history of using self-insurance versus traditional insurance. Self-insurance has given the store substantial savings. • The Finance Committee is holding ongoing discussions about the investment policy and strategy. 	
12.	GM Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After lackluster sales for several months, September sales to date are more than 5% over budget. Trends are similar in most of Ashland for local retailers. • The EDI Committee has forwarded two candidates for a facilitator. One is local and the other works remotely. • The EDI Committee is considering recommending a confidential advocate role for employees to use as an alternative to reporting discrimination or harassment to management. This role could be played by a current employee or an outside specialist hired to navigate policy and help employees communicate with the GM and HR. While an outside specialist is not obligated to report, if an employee assumes the advocate role, current policies require the employee to report. The GM announced that Susan Moen has agreed to play this role temporarily. • Most directors thought an outside navigator was a good option. One director supported the internal option as a good developmental opportunity for employees, training staff to listen to each other. • AFC is planning to contract Project WHEN (Workplace Harassment Ends Now) to help create a respectful and harassment free workplace. There will be a process for surveying all employees, assessing the results and developing a working plan. • The GM discussed the attendance policy with the Board. • The GM recommended directors study the recent National Cooperative Grocers (NCG) Participation Report. • More frequent 10% discount shops for owners may be offered in 2023. • The former HR Manager is serving as interim HR Manager and has been warmly received. She and the GM will meet with a recruiter with the Carlisle Group, which focuses on cooperatives, to begin the search for a new HR Manager. • The GM is investigating options for participation in the CAN program, 	

		<p>allowing shoppers to become an owner with a small amount down, and making an annual payment towards ownership with their patronage dividend.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Store Manager and the Grocery Manager are looking for more opportunities to feature bulk items. Nationally, 45-56% of customers are saying they no longer buy organic due to inflation.	

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m. Minutes were prepared by Abby Lazerow, Board Administrator.