



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

**Board Meeting Minutes**

November 9, 2022

APPROVED

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

Facilitator: Bob Kaplan Timekeeper: Erica Thompson The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Bob Kaplan.

ITEM #	ITEM DESCRIPTION	PERSON
1.	<b>Positive Affirmation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bob Kaplan led the positive affirmation.</li></ul>
2.	<b>Land Acknowledgement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bob Kaplan led the land acknowledgment.</li></ul>
3.	<b>Owners Forum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Store Manager Barry Hayes and Amey Broeker attended the meeting.</li><li>• Barry Haynes congratulated Bob Kaplan on his election to Ashland City Council.</li><li>• Amey Broeker said new eligibility rules restricting Change for Good partners from applying again for two years after being selected should be shared with organizations as soon as possible. She appreciated the Smart Giving program that can directly impact the Ashland community via the Ashland Emergency Food Bank.</li><li>• Rogue Valley Unites has opened a free organic food market, serving 130 families in Medford.</li></ul>
4.	<b>Announcements and Opportunities</b> -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employee Holiday Party, December 3</li><li>• Owners are encouraged to learn more about running for the Board in 2023. There will be three open seats.</li></ul>
5.	<b>Agenda Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Done</li></ul>
6.	<b>Consent Agenda:</b>	The Board unanimously approved the following Consent Agenda items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Board Meeting Minutes, 10-12-22 (Unapproved)</li><li>• Board Finance Report, 9-22</li></ul>
7.	<b>Strategic Planning Refresh Next Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Board and Management Team held two strategic planning meetings. They identified five major initiatives: Expansion Initiative, Partnerships with Local Growers/Producers, Co-op Economy, AFC Employment Experience and Community Engagement.</li><li>• Each initiative will have a committee and a champion to lead the initiative forward. The</li></ul>

		Strategic Planning Steering Committee will receive regular updates from initiative leaders.
8.	<b>AFC Gives Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AFC Gives Chair Melissa Scudder reported the AFC Community fund had \$14,900 available to respond to local emergencies.</li> <li>• The committee is working on making applications for CFG and Community Grants similar to simplify the application process. .</li> <li>• It is very important for front-end cashiers to ask shoppers to round up.</li> <li>• The committee is planning an awards ceremony and party in 2023 and hopes to include past recipients who could not attend for the past two years due to the pandemic.</li> </ul>
9.	<b>AFCEA Collective Bargaining Agreement Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The GM reported there is no significant progress to report at this time. When negotiations are completed, employees will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed agreement.</li> </ul>
10.	<b>BDC Proposal: Board Volunteer Compensation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board agreed owner volunteers who regularly serve on Board committees will receive an ongoing 15% shopping discount as long as their volunteer service continues. Their names must be submitted by the committee chair and approved by the Board. The Board also agreed an alternative option to compensate short-term volunteers with one time 15% shopping discounts for each four hours of volunteer activity. Their names must also be submitted by the committee chair and approved by the Board.</li> </ul>
12.	<b>December 11 Board Retreat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board retreat will take place December 11 in the Co-op classroom. The focus will be Board goals and team building. The Interim General Manager will also be invited to attend.</li> </ul>
13.	<b>HR Manager Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three HR candidates have been identified by the recruiter. The most qualified candidates will be contacted to see if they are interested in applying before a new GM is hired.</li> <li>• Sharon Van Duker will stay on as interim HR Manager until the new GM and HR Manager are hired.</li> </ul>
14.	<b>Board Finance Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board Treasurer has been working with the Finance Committee on the AFC preliminary budget. It is challenging to estimate trends, inflation, sales and costs for the coming year..</li> <li>• ERC funds will finally be distributed in 2023, but have been accounted for in AFC's 2021 revenue. When funds are received they will be carried as an asset on our balance sheet.</li> <li>• Sales were \$2.5 million September, up 3% from last year and down to budget by 5% year to date. Some sales volume is being lost due to inflation. Sales have been flat over the past 6 years.</li> <li>• The Prepared Foods Department has been making their budgeted margins despite rising food costs. The cost per pound may need to be addressed again, as costs are rising. For example, AFC's cost is more than \$5.00 for a head of organic lettuce, due to issues in some California growing regions. Even higher spikes have not yet hit the shelves.</li> <li>• Cutlery and durable wear are coming back in the Prepared Foods Department to cut costs.</li> <li>• YTD Benefits are \$155K over budget and \$232K over last year. So far benefit costs for the</li> </ul>

		<p>third quarter are more moderate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer count for September was 2300 and average daily baskets were \$36.41, 4.2% smaller than 2021. Sales are 76% of pre-pandemic levels. Member sales are 75% of all purchases.</li> </ul>
15.	<b>GM Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AFC recently conducted a pilot project testing EduMe, a mobile-based training app that works on personal devices and tablets. It seamlessly integrates with BeeKeeper to deliver content to employees.</li> <li>• Employees are becoming more engaged on the Beekeeper platform. Employees have been asked to take a picture of a store product that they love and one post will be chosen each week through the end of the year to win a \$25 gift card.</li> <li>• Susan Moen of SART was recently hired as a confidential advocate for AFC employees. The EDI committee was very positive about having a SART representative as a neutral third party advocate. The advocate will be paid a monthly flat fee.</li> <li>• It is likely the CAN discount will be increased from 5% to 10%. The team will also likely recommend a mechanism to allow CAN eligible individuals to become Owners without the financial barrier of the upfront \$100 equity payment or making the commitment to current payment options.</li> <li>• Rianna Koppel, the Sustainability Coordinator, has taken a new position. AFC will be hiring a new sustainability coordinator and will also consider if the position should have more hours. The Board acknowledged Rianna's excellent service to the Co-op and wished her well at her new employment.</li> <li>• The Strategic Energy Management intern will return next year. The Energy Trust of Oregon pays up to \$10,000 of their wages.</li> <li>• The Strategic Planning Steering Committee recently recommended allocating \$200,000 in investment funds to support farmer and producer initiatives and the creation of farmer partnerships with AFC. All investment proposals will be brought to the Finance Committee and then to the Board for approval. The Board unanimously approved this proposal.</li> </ul>
16.	<b>Additional Board Meeting in December</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There may be emails or decisions by email that will be required in December. Directors should check their emails regularly</li> </ul>
17.	<b>Board Holiday Party</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board directors should RSVP and submit any dietary changes to the Board Administrator as soon as possible.</li> </ul>

*The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. Minutes were prepared by Abby Lazerow, Board Administrator.*