



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

**Board Meeting Minutes**

May 10, 2023  
(APPROVED).

**Directors expected to attend:** Julie O'Dwyer, Ed Claassen, Mark Gibbs, Joanna Wnorowski, Bob Kaplan, Melissa Scudder, Erica Thompson, Larry Cooper. **Others attending:** Barry Haynes, Interim General Manager, Abby Lazerow, Board Administrator.

Facilitator: Ed Claassen      Timekeeper: Mark Gibbs      The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Ed Claassen.

ITEM #	ITEM DESCRIPTION	DISCUSSION	ACTION
1.	<b>Positive Affirmation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mark Gibbs led the positive affirmation.</li></ul>	
2.	<b>Land Acknowledgement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Julie O'Dwyer led the land acknowledgement.</li></ul>	
3.	<b>Owners Forum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Owners Conde Cox, Anthony Trevanty, Kevin Bendaw, Tod King, and Judy Emanuel attended the meeting.</li><li>Kevin Bendaw asked if there would be information provided in the patronage dividend letter about the four-year amount retained by the Co-op. Kevin Bendaw also asked if there could be a staff director on the Board in the future.</li></ul>	
4.	<b>Announcements and Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The all staff party will be held on Tuesday, June 20 at Caldera Brewery at 6 p.m. Directors have received flyers in their store mailboxes.</li><li>The going away party for Emile Amarotico, Board and Managers will be held on June 1 from 5-8 p.m. at the Naumes Winery.</li><li>The Ashland Schools Foundation had a successful fundraising campaign in April.</li></ul>	
5.	<b>Agenda Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ed Claassen reviewed the agenda.</li></ul>	Done.
6.	<b>Consent Agenda</b>	The following Consent Agenda items were approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Board Meeting Minutes, 4-12-23 (Unapproved)</li><li>Executive Session Minutes, 4-12-23 (Unapproved, confidential)</li></ul>	The Consent Agenda documents

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board Finance Report, 3-23</li> </ul>	were unanimously approved.
7.	<b>EDI Committee Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four new members joined the EDI committee this month. One member is a new AFCEA representative, one is a non-bargaining unit employee and two are bargaining unit employees.</li> <li>There are 12 members of the committee, plus a facilitator.</li> <li>Melina Barker will be leaving the committee next month.</li> <li>The committee is creating an all-inclusive yearly calendar with special dates and holidays.</li> <li>An owner volunteer will be needed to fill a seat on the committee.</li> </ul>	
8.	<b>AFC Gives Update</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$8081 was raised for Pollinator Project in April. To date \$2077.01 has been raised in May for Talent Maker City.</li> <li>It is important for owners to hear about the success of AFC Gives and how effective it has been in raising funds for the community. The Front End cashiers have contributed to this growth as well.</li> </ul>	
9.	<b>Strategic Energy Management Impact Report 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barry Haynes presented a 2022 Strategic Energy Management Impact Report. The Co-op's performance was very strong even though the sustainability coordinator was on a leave of absence for four months. AFC still has the highest engagement of all the participants in the state. Although the store's energy savings went up from \$130 to \$169, milestone incentive amounts went down because the store has already achieved many of the milestones and now larger projects must be approached.</li> <li>In 2021 the store earned \$4900 in Strategic Energy Management incentives. In 2022 the store earned \$3400.</li> <li>Barry is trying to find more sustainability hours for sustainability coordinator Chris Byrne.</li> <li>Directors suggested reviewing the store's emissions and refrigeration systems and looking for ways to transition from natural gas to induction cooking in the Prepared Foods Department and the Community Kitchen.</li> </ul>	
10.	<b>Board Finance Report; Patronage Dividend Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board Treasurer reported in Q1 sales were up \$100,000 for the month of March, compared to 2022. Margins were higher than budgeted last year and for the first quarter. Labor costs were under budget last year by \$267,000; Hero Pay has been sunsetted and the store is waiting for a new labor contract to be</li> </ul>	

		<p>signed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were high benefit claims in 2022; this year claims are \$100,000 under last year.</li> <li>• The language for the Patronage Dividend is still being rewritten. The information letter will highlight how the patronage dividend has been distributed over the last four years.</li> <li>• The Board unanimously agreed to delegate the responsibility for the wording of the Patronage Dividend letter to the Finance Committee.</li> </ul>	
11.	<b>GM Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim GM Barry Haynes reported April sales were up 6.5% compared to April 2022, primarily due to the additional 10% discount for owners. Sales may level out in May. YTD sales are up 2.78% over the prior year through April.</li> <li>• Grocery Manager Kelly McNamara went to a competitor's store and did price comparisons on the Field Day line. She found the Co-op was less expensive on every product but one. Some of our prices were 25% under their prices.. Barry will work with Kelly and the Marketing Manager to get the message out about our lower store prices.</li> <li>• Progress is being made with negotiations for the Collective Bargaining Agreement. It is hoped an agreement will be reviewed and approved soon by legal counsel and the Board and forwarded for a vote by Bargaining Unit employees.</li> <li>• The Prepared Foods Manager met with Amber Ferguson of Rogue Food Unites. Their goal is to warehouse 30 million meals for disaster preparedness. All Care Health wants to provide meals to underserved populations in Jackson County. Participation in the project would be an opportunity for AFC to take a larger leadership role in the community.</li> <li>• Engagement is increasing in Beekeeper. Employees are participating in contests such as "Co-op a-copia" to win gift cards and a grand prize of 8 hours of pay. 70 to 80% of employees are signed up on Beekeeper. Wellness, grocery, specialties, and produce employees use the app the most frequently.</li> <li>• The workbook has been submitted back to Project WHEN (Workplace Harassment Ends Now.) After an assessment, the store needs to meet only 5 out of the 100 criteria.</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Marketing team attended the Earth Day program where they launched a new program for children age 14 and under called Co-op Carrots.</li> <li>● Barry attended the spring NCG meeting for GMs of co-ops nationwide. NCG helps negotiate a purchasing contract with our distributor and shares resources, education and support. The NCG board voted to accept 5 new co-ops into the organization.</li> <li>● The OBRC Oregon Bottle Redemption will open at the Co-op on May 11. Customers must sign up for the program and print out labels for their bottle drop bats at the kiosk at the back of the store. Funds are placed in the customer's account in about a week. Directors suggested customers could have the option to donate their bottle proceeds to the AFC Gives Community fund. The Board appreciated Zack Burrow's and Dale Shostrum's efforts to get this program in place.</li> <li>● The 20% bulk sale was very successful, with a big increase in bulk and store-wide purchases.</li> <li>● The Oregon Department of Agriculture is now allowing the use of reusable containers.</li> </ul>	

***The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m. Minutes were prepared by Abby Lazerow, Board Administrator.***