



Board Meeting Minutes

September 11, 2024

APPROVED

Directors attending: Kevin Bendaw, Mark Gibbs, Joanna Wnorowski, Erica Thompson, Ernesto Soto, Kevin Bendaw, Jennifer Gibbs, and Kathryn Kavanagh.

Others attending: Nick Hardee, General Manager, Abby Lazerow, Board Administrator. **Absent:** Bob Kaplan.

Facilitator: Mark Gibbs. **Timekeeper:** Joanna Wnorowski The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Mark Gibbs.

ITEM #	ITEM DESCRIPTION	DISCUSSION
1.	Land Acknowledgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mark Gibbs led the land acknowledgement.
2.	Positive Affirmation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Joanna Wnorowski led the positive affirmation.
3.	Owners Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner and Produce Manager Joe Reyes and Brighton Litjens attended the meeting.
4.	Announcements and Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The October Fall Fest will be held from 4-7 p.m. AFC Board directors are invited to participate. ● The employee barbeque will be held on September 12 from 12-2 p.m. ● The Ashland Schools Foundation Monster Dash will be held on October 26.
5.	Agenda Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mark Gibbs reviewed the agenda.

6.	Consent Agenda	<p>The following Consent Agenda items were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board Meeting Minutes, 8-14-24 (unapproved) ● Executive Session Minutes, 8-14-24 (unapproved) ● Board Finance Report, 7-24
7.	Marketing Team Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AFC Marketing Manager Tracy Fischer introduced all members of her team. ● The department is working on a web design refresh in Jan-Feb. 2025. The RoCo web refresh will happen in late September. ● Prepared foods and bakery rebranding will happen in January 2025. ● The department is focusing on local branding and messaging for January 2025. Local is 100 miles or less. There will be more images of producers in the store. A flyer that lists local products will be available.. ● The team has conducted a price perception data collection project and two focus groups for market research. The project points to opportunities and to what our shoppers are looking for. ● On October 4 there will be a one one-day only sale with four products at 50% off. The fall harvest bulk sale is 10-10 to 10-12. ● There will be an EDI event for Ashland Pride, October 5 from 10-5. ● AFC will have a booth at the Monster Dash, October 27. Kids can build their own trail mix. ● The team reviewed many events that they sponsored for August, September and October. 1-2 emails per month are sent out to promote classes and events. Change for Good organizations are also promoted. ● The team reviewed social media analytics. Email marketing is equally if not more important. Followers on Instagram and Facebook accounts are increasing. ● The Co-op Carrots program for kids has been very successful. ● AFC hosted a Rogue Valley Farm to School kids camp in the summer. ● The Rogue Valley Farm tour had 29 participating farms this year. ● Owners are assisting AFC employees in the North Mountain Park clean up. ● El Dia de los Muertos will be held this year in the classroom and will be open to the community.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The First Street Beet is a great way to learn about what is going on at the Co-op. A newsletter of events for families and kids is also available. ● Shoppers who want to send comments to AFC can scan a QR code. ● AFC will be tabling at SOU to let students know about our store and the CAN program. ● Owners who want to receive the sales flyer can contact owner services or sign up through the website. ● The Board appreciated the excellent work of the Marketing Department team.
8.	2025 Annual Meeting Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Board of Directors and Marketing Department Manager Tracy Fischer. discussed how to make the 2025 annual meeting more of a celebration. ● Directors wondered if June was the best time of year. October might be a better month as June is busy with graduations and weddings. ● 350 owners attended the 50th anniversary party even though the weather was poor. That event had two bands, a food truck, vendors, raffles and 50th anniversary swag. ● The Briarpatch Co-op prints their annual report and sponsors a dinner for owners in a ballroom venue. ● Directors were in favor of an event at AFC, combining the meeting with a party. There could be different stations around the campus manned by directors and staff. ● Other suggestions included a keynote speaker and a scavenger hunt. ● The budget will need to be planned by the end of Q4.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A ten-minute break was taken.
9.	Options for Facilitation of Board Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BDC Chair Ernesto Soto presented options for facilitation of monthly board meetings: 1) The Board President facilitates; 2) all directors rotate facilitation; 3) Board officers rotate facilitation; 4) hire a facilitator for all 10 yearly meetings; and 5) hire a facilitator for the first 3 meetings. ● Directors discussed the costs of a professional facilitator. The cost would need to be included in the budget.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors appreciated Ernesto’s proposals. The Board agreed that a professional facilitator would be beneficial for retreats or special issues. • The Board agreed to continue to rotate facilitation for Board meetings. • Directors were encouraged to take the Columinate facilitation training over the year.
10.	Board Retreat Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joanna Whorowski reported that Kon Damas will be facilitating the Board retreat. • She reviewed the agenda with the directors. There will be some homework before the retreat to promote discussion.
12.	Exit Interview Summaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This topic was moved to the October Board meeting.
13.	EDI Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDI Committee Tri-Chair Erica Thompson reported in September the EDI Committee welcomed their new employee member and Board director Kat Kavanagh. Several employees applied to join the committee. A process was discussed for selecting a member when several people are interested in the same employee seat. • El Dia de los Muertos will be celebrated at the store. The committee is also planning events for the Chinese New Year and Black History month. • The harassment reporting policy has been modified and is going to AFCEA for approval. The committee is implementing a bias report form. • The committee will review their 2024 goals at the end of the year.
14.	AFC Gives Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abby Lazerow reported the August the Change for Good partner, <u>Rogue River Watershed Council</u> received \$6,738.57. The current CFG recipient is Friends of Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. • Last week the committee met and reviewed the Community Grants applications. 16 organizations received funding. Ashland Community Food Bank will receive special funding from the Twin Pines Fund.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The AFC Gives awards ceremony will be held on October 24 at the Ashland Springs Hotel.
15.	Board Finance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mark Gibbs welcomed a new Finance Committee member, HR Manager Jenn Trumm . Joe Reyes was thanked for his contributions to the committee. Tech Manager Phil Johnson will continue to be a committee member. ● Owner volunteer Conde Cox is interested in continuing on the Finance committee another year. ● The Finance Committee charter was reviewed and some language was revised. ● Sales in July are slightly down compared to June but are up compared to last year. The July customer count is down slightly but up compared to last year. The average basket size has trended up. ● AFC has a stable balance sheet. ● AFC earns interest on CDs; earnings are expected to be lower with rates going down. The CDs are spread around 25-30 institutions so that they may be fully insured. Staggered maturities are the best practice for short term liquidities. ● Total wages are up over July last year. Hours are down. The store is generating higher revenue with less labor hours. ● The CAN program is outstripping the budget number, approximately \$17,000 more than predicted. ● The Patronage dividend is \$718,000. Last year at this time it was \$518,000.
16.	GM Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● August sales were up 9.3%. ● Adopt a Road program will be November 11, from 9-12. Participants can sign up through Event Brite. Employees and owners will be working on Tolman Creek, between Siskiyou and Ashland Street. ● The Provender Conference is September 23rd-25th. 10 employees will be participating. Chris Byrne and Jenn Trum are both presenting. ● A new meat band saw has been purchased. The Wellness Department reset will happen by Q4. New induction stock pots have been ordered. An EMF detector has been ordered for the induction burners to make sure those are operating properly. ● Shrink is down about 3% month over last month. ● Product standards guidelines are being reassessed.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rogue to Go has been launched at RoCo. The POS system is being installed at RoCo this month. Owner purchases will go towards their patronage dividend. Employees will receive their staff discount at RoCo. ● Bakery lease is being restructured to be a yearly lease. ● Produce Manager Joe Reyes discussed the Rolling Hills. He reviewed the expenses and profits. ● Joe was very excited how this season turned out. He learned about the day-to-day fruit orchard business and worked at the Rolling Hills property several days a week through the summer. This was a special opportunity to take the #1 unique product in the valley and continue to provide it to our community. The Produce Department received overwhelming positive feedback and thanks for AFC taking this on this year. The Rolling Hills 49er peaches are a product that cannot be found anywhere else. 78,000 pounds of #1s and #2 were sold. ● Joe was able to work some farmers markets selling peaches. The peaches were also sold wholesale to Whistling Duck Farm store, Fry Family Farms, Medford Food Co-op, Cartwrights, Frog Farm Buying Club, Rogue Food Unites, RV Farm to School, the Central Point and Ashland School District, the 1st Alternative Co-op in Corvallis and Sundance Natural Foods in Eugene. Tom Marks from Rogue Natural Foods shipped peaches and Joe made deliveries around town. ● There is still money coming in from the orchard over the next few months. Plums, apples and Asian pears are now available. Prepared Foods also has frozen peaches in the freezer for baked goods. The margins were excellent. ● Joe hoped AFC would be able to make the same arrangement next season. ● The project also allowed assistant managers in the Produce Department to grow into new roles.. ● The Board of Directors applauded Joe’s work with this project.
17.	Action Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Consent Agenda was unanimously approved. ● The Board agreed that the maximum budget for facilitation of the board retreat would be \$2000. ● The Board Administrator will send out a vote by mail for the 2024-2025 financial calendar. ● The Board agreed to rotate meeting facilitation, adding a contingency in the 2024-2025 budget if facilitation were needed.

		Minutes were prepared by Abby Lazerow, Board Administrator.
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