



Board Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2026

APPROVED

Directors attending: Mark Gibbs, Jennifer Gibbs, Evan Archerd, Elizabeth Walsh, Ernesto Soto, Bob Kaplan and Kathryn Kavanagh. **Absent:** Joanna Wnorowski. **Also attending:** Barry Haynes, Store Manager: Abby Lazerow, BoD Administrator.

Facilitator: Kathryn Kavanagh **Timekeeper:** Elizabeth Walsh. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m.

ITEM #	ITEM DESCRIPTION	DISCUSSION	ACTION
1.	Land Acknowledgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evan Archerd led the land acknowledgement. 	
2.	Positive Affirmation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jen Gibbs shared a positive affirmation. 	
3.	Owners Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathryn Hering attended to be informed about the Co-op. She noted the Medford Food Co-op was no longer carrying Alexandre milk because of their animal treatment. She also noted • Andrew Blanchflower asked about AFC's ethics and how it could be an ethical business. He would like AFC to be an ethical business in relation to the sourcing of goods that are put on the shelves. He asked if there could be an ethics committee. He was pleased the Co-op was discussing employee safety if ICE entered the store. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owners Sara Huque and Daniel Greenblatt also attended. Kathryn also said she was disappointed the taste of RoCo's coffee had changed. She asked if different beans or roasters were used. She also said having point people in the store who know how to interact with ICE was important. 	
4.	Announcements and Opportunities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employee holiday party will be held January 17. The store will be closing early that day. A MLK Day event will be at the Ashland Armory on Monday, beginning at noon. The Rogue Valley Food Solutions summit will be held on January 16 in Jacksonville. Applications for board candidates will be available in early March. The Ashland City Town hall will be held on January 21 at Ashland High School. 	
5.	Agenda Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kathryn Kavanagh reviewed the agenda. 	Done.
6.	Consent Agenda:	<p>The following minutes were unanimously approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Meeting Minutes, 11-25 Executive Session Minutes, 11-25 Board Finance Report, 11-25 Board Finance Report, 11-25 	Unanimously approved.
7.	Appointment of Interim GM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Gibbs reported that the contract for the General Manager (GM) was terminated in late November. Management and employees stepped up and managed well without a GM during the holidays, running the business as a team. There will be a formal search for a new GM. 	The Board unanimously agreed to appoint Barry Haynes as interim GM.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The MT recommended that Store Manager Barry Haynes step into the interim GM position. ● Barry was honored to have consensus from the MT and was honored to accept the role. ● Barry did not think that an interim store manager was needed. ● The Board unanimously agreed to appoint Barry Haynes as interim GM. 	
8.	GM Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Barry Haynes reported that sales softened in November and December. Industry experts do not expect growth in grocery or retail, and people are tightening their belts. Consumers are looking for value and eating out less. Some see organic and natural as a luxury. ● RoCo coffee sales are strong. AFC is now selling three gravity bins of coffee beans and nine skews of 12 oz bags RoCo coffee are also offered in Prepared Foods. Prepared Foods is wholesaling to RoCo. Barry anticipated that RoCo sales will do well. ● RoCo is closing one hour earlier during the winter months. ● A business plan is being developed for RoCo. ● There is currently a penny shortage. AFC is rounding up to the nearest nickel in the customer's favor when payment is made in case. He anticipated the cost will be approximately \$2000 a year. ● Department managers are retraining in customer experience, with the goal of offering the highest service and having the most knowledgeable staff. ● The store will close at 5 p.m. on January 17 for the Employee Holiday party. The party is a way to appreciate the hard work and dedication of AFC's staff. ● The Marketing Department is messaging about the advantages of the cooperative business model and what AFC does for our community. ● The AFC website will be updated no later than the end of Q2. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Reyes is working with Oregon Tilth to renew the store's organic certification. • Pruning of Rolling Hills' 1800 trees is underway. 40 new peach trees have also been ordered for planting. • A search for a new HR Manager is in progress. • Half of the Management Team (MT) recently met with representatives from Coalicion Fortaleza to discuss 4th amendment training from Oregon Safe about what to do if ICE is on the property. They shared information packets and online resources with the MT. The MT could not reach consensus about the training. Some managers have resistance to participating in politics that do not involve food politics. The topic will be brought up again with the MT on Tuesday. 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evan Archerd reported an organization that lost their matching funding for a proposed project will make a presentation at the February AFC Gives meeting. • Employees appreciated the gift cards from the AFC Gives committee. • CFG applications will be available on the AFC website in February. • An in-person information meeting for applicants will be held on February 10. • The December 2025 total for Change for Good, which will go to Jackson County Fuel Committee is \$7,376.92. 	
	<p>BDC Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elizabeth Walsh reported the Board Development Committee (BDC) is updating the materials for the Board elections. There had been a pause on clarifying the petition and committee charters because of the termination of the GM. • The petition process summary is ready to go for legal review. • Directors whose terms are ending in 2026 should inform the Board in February if they are running again. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bob said former GM Emile Amaratoko recommended reading the 2024 findings from the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Governance Research Initiative.	
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11.	5	EDI Report – Upcoming Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathryn Kavanagh reported the EDI Committee met today. • There will be an MLK event at the Ashland Armory on January 19. • There is a food drive for Unite. Baskets are near the front of the store. • The committee is partnering with SOU to host an Oregon Black Pioneers event. This event also coincides with a Black youth leadership summit. • The first “Breaking Bread” event was held in November and was very successful. There will be another around Valentine’s Day, with the theme of love and cooperation. • Committee goals include staff and Board trainings on topics such as microaggressions, accessibility, conflict resolution and de-escalation. 	Discussion
12.	15	Treasurer’s Report; Board Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Treasurer Ernesto Soto reported the Finance Committee (FC) will have completed the store budget by the end of January and approved it in February. • Sales are ahead of last year’s numbers by 4.5%, but sales were flat in November and December. • Customer counts are up 3.5% but are still 10% below pre-pandemic levels (2019). • There are 8600 active owners and a total of 14000 owners. • Labor and benefits account for higher costs. AFC is now fully staffed, which impacts profitability. • The FC had three finalists for the owner volunteer position. • The Board discussed the Board budget. More funds will be needed for directors to attend CCMA, which will be held in Tacoma at the end of May. • Bob Kaplan motioned to approve the Board budget. The Board unanimously agreed to approve the Board budget 	The Board approved the 2026 Board budget.

