



Board of Directors July 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Present: Jim Hutcheon, Ruth Brownstein, Anch Bergeson, Bob Marsalli, Jennifern Falknor, Jeni O'Connor, Ike Nwankwo (by Zoom), Andie Giron, Federica Faggioli

Other members present: Trudy Springer, Miles Batchelder, Theo, Taylor

Facilitator: Miles

Notes: Maggie Jay

Announcements

There were no announcements

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the cooperative is to contribute to the health and well-being of people by providing wholesome foods and other goods and services, accessible to all, through a locally oriented, collectively managed, not-for-profit cooperative organization that relies on **consensus** decision making. We strive to make human effects on the earth and its inhabitants positive and renewing, and to encourage economic and social justice. Our goals are to:

- Provide information about food
- Make good food accessible to more people
- Support efforts to increase democratic process
- Support efforts to foster a socially and economically egalitarian society
- Provide information about collective process and consensus decision making
- Support local production

- See to the long-term health of the business
- Assist in the development of local community resources

Land Acknowledgement

We start the meeting today by taking a moment to honor the land and the people whose ancestors have been stewards of this unceded land since time immemorial. We acknowledge the contemporary communities of Squaxin Island, Nisqually and all the people of the Medicine Creek Treaty.

Member Comment

Trudy wants to know the status for the Olympia Film Society as a register round-up recipient. They were approved through the MRC.

Trudy wanted to know about soil for Bits Café.

Tora Saeger, the owner of the commercial (café) building next to the West Side Garden Center, spoke about efforts to work with the Co-op to address the bamboo encroaching the garden area of her restaurant. She asked the Co-op to provide soil to fill planting containers to cover the affected area. The board agreed to offer her the soil, but Tora declined the offer.

Previous Commitments

- Jeni follow-up with Tora on her Soil request following the Board's Executive Session
- Mo will provide a follow-up on the ongoing results of the CX Survey in August or September
- Mo will send the monthly CX survey report to the board
- Mo will check in with Audrey at the Olympia Film Society to follow up on concerns raised by collective staff
- Miles will facilitate the next meeting

New Commitments

- Bob will create an email thread with a list of questions for the presenters of the Briggs Store. Deadline is 7.31.
- Jeni will take the amendment back to Member Relations to add Capital Campaign, Advocacy, and Board and Staff Relations to the list of committees

on the Board Member Application.

- Jeni will start a tabling schedule for the Board Elections. She will send options.
- Frederica and Maggie Jay will record a short video on each BOD member.

Pay it Forward Proposal

Theo and Taylor presented the Pay it Forward Proposal. Background was given on the Pay it Forward program. There is persistent demand for it but the support has kind of died off. People are generally spending about \$12 and are buying items that are generally deli and grocery products. The pros and cons were presented. Options on how to implement the program were researched and a proposed implementation, policies, and procedures were presented.

The Pay-it-Forward program will be funded by members only, in a gift card form. A training document will detail the policies and procedures for cashiers and front-end management. There will be a limit created before this proposal is passed.

We would like BOD consent to allow waiver of the non-member surcharge for the Pay-it-Forward program.

Clarification was needed on the amount each person can have. The current \$20 limit is flexible. This will go into the staff journal with the amendment of the approval amount. A hard limit with a small amount of a pre-determined wiggle room would be best.

How it works: A customer using the card can check with customer service/cashiers for the amount that is on the card before starting their shopping. The customer shops and then goes to the register to check out as normal. They can use their own form of payment first before using the Pay-it-Forward card.

Those using the Pay-it-Forward card can use it on anything except alcohol, non-clothing mercantile and taxable garden.

Board members expressed their gratitude with the proposal and their personal support of the program.

One member wanted to make sure this would be advertised on social media, the website, and *Table*. It was assured that this is in the works.

Another comment was about the types of products guests can purchase. Taylor commented that they want people to have the autonomy to make their own decisions on the products they need.

How will you measure success?

When we see more usage and money in the fund. We don't have a formal feedback system at the moment, but I would be interested in creating that. We would have to identify who would track it. Maybe through sales analysis.

People in our community love to be involved in mutual aid, it is just something they need to know about.

PROPOSAL: We would like BOD consent to allow a waiver of the non-member surcharge for the Pay-it-Forward program.

Blocks: 0

Stand Aside: 0

Consent: 8 (lke unavailable.)

CONSENT

Briggs Community Center

There is a new Community Center with commercial space opening in the Briggs area. There has been discussion on whether the Co-op should lease the retail space, opening a new location. Representatives of a Briggs Community advocacy group will be coming to present their ideas and answer questions at the next BOD meeting.

Discussion ensued:

A few board members live in this area and think it would be nice to have a 3rd store in their immediate community.

Would we rather want to help another co-op create a new space with help from OFC and NW Cooperative. Which is the better scenario? Is it something that is a future project?

There are risks for the organization. Location is distant and the Co-op is already involved with expanding the eastside.

There was also talk about the bigger question of where the culture of the co-op is

going. The vibe has changed. I feel like this new location doesn't really gel with the current co-op culture. I could see where it helps breach the area and can help feed the suburbs like Yelm, which is an area that is not currently well-covered.

The clientele really wants this. The development will take a while. We may not have to purchase the building as we will be able to just rent the building.

What will our financial relationship be to this commercial center? What are they providing in this contract? Will they finance coolers, freezers, walk-ins, etc.? It's a lot to take on if we do it in addition to the expansion. I'd hate to lose the eastside store; it would be nice to have both.

BOD will have questions ready for the proposers of the plan for the next meeting when they present.

2026 Board Member Application

Ange, Andie, and Jim finish board terms this year. We want to keep a rotating list of BOD members, usually with only 3 leaving at a time.

Amendments: Jeni will take these amendments back to Member Relations. Capital Campaign, Advocacy and Board and Staff Relations to be added to the list of committees on the Board Application.

Do some tabling for the Board member votes. A reminder was given that tabling is fun, we eat watermelon and chat with people. It is pretty cool.

General agreement on the board member application with the above amendments included.

Rescheduling First Session with Dr. Bre

July 23rd is the proposed date. Local committee is meeting, but is flexible with time. Do people have the capacity to meet from 3 to 6? General consensus says yes. Ike and Ruth will not be available. Meeting will be at the Annex.

Approval of April and May Board Meeting Minutes

Approve April Board Meeting Minutes

Blocks: 0

Stand Asides: 0

Consent: 8

CONSENT

Approval of May Board Meeting Minutes

Blocks: 0

Stand Asides: 1

Consent: 7

CONSENT

Staff and Committee Reports

Local Committee

- Look at 2014 Charter to see if we want to propose updates
- Outline our goals
- Identify local businesses with whom we would like to establish and nurture relationships – will be seeking support and approval of departments so as not to step on toes/ will attend

Exploring ways of connecting vendors to members.

Connecting local vendors with tabling opportunities.

Local committee was heavily involved in tabling prior to COVID. Big emphasis on tabling local produce.

CoSound Committee

Still going and still supporting them in a lot of different ways.

Capital Campaign Committee

Didn't meet this month. Looking for an attorney who knows about Co-ops and non-profits. Wanting to learn the legalities around members contributing to the expansion.

Expansion Committee

Expansion, we have 3 scenarios. Market study is complete. We have a feasibility analysis with 3 options:

1. Expanding 2k sq feet of retail space, more for warehouse.
2. Expanding retail to 10k sq ft, additional for warehouse 16k sq ft (doubling)
3. Rebuild a new store on the site. 9k sq ft retail space, more for warehouse, 14k sq ft total.

We are waiting on clarification from consultants around whether these scenarios include a remodel or upgrade of what we have now. Pricing looks really good if so.

Resilience hub money has been held up, but court has approved it. We will hear more about it next month. This will give us up to 5 million dollar loan.

Advocacy

Didn't meet this month

Local Committee

Ange and Max talked about inviting vendors for the annual meeting, will coordinate with MRC. Talked with ASHHO about inviting vendors for sampling and maybe sales of their products.

Proposal for changing of the Local Committee Charter, will bring it to next meeting. We noticed it's the only committee with a different procedure; we want to propose a change to make it similar.

Oyster and muscle vendors in store for pre-sales.

Max is putting together a spreadsheet of local vendors in each department. We will get department leads on which local vendors to feature at our local events. Begin having them in store and at the picnic. This will be an ongoing effort.

Board Staff Relations

John Steinmen came and did a great presentation for Collective Staff and Board.

Member Relations

We talked about the annual meeting. It will be at ASHHO who provides flowers, there will be a meat and vegetarian option. We are looking into local vendors who can show their products. Any other vendor ideas would be greatly appreciated. Involving other mutual aid non-profits next year sounds like a good idea.

Estuary and Expansion are presenting for 30 minutes. We are working on the timeline for the annual meeting. A spot in store and at the meeting with a running screen about things at the Co-op, information we want them to know. Something to

look at between presentations. Ways to get feedback and to get conversation started, things like expansion.

Board elections will be part of the presentation. There will be tabling for the meeting. So please all board members, sign up to table for the annual meeting!

We talked about round ups and Olympia Film Society. The funds will not be for paying staff.

Staff Report

The Farmworker's Boycott wasn't supported by Local Farmworkers. We checked with local co-ops. It was not supported by the Farmworkers Union, but worked on creating a quick consent through the Produce department.

We have had 2 resignations, Matt Marshall (Collective) and Matilda (flex).

We have a new website!

UNFI cyberattack Ridgefield has an automated picking system, pulling orders that completely shut down the picking system. We didn't get deliveries from UNFI for two weeks. We have started working with other distributors a few years ago, so we learned a lot about resiliency and supply chain management. On the positive side, produce wasn't affected at all.