

# Willimantic Food Co-op Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 4, 2025 6:00-8:00 PM

WorkMode Office Space, 109 Valley St Suite B, Willimantic

**Directors attending:** Kathe Gable, Hannah Moore, Matthew Coolbeth, Katherine Gavin, Stephanie White, Patty Smith, Peter Kirk, Tomasyn Goode

**Absent:** Brock Alosky

**Others attending:** James Cashmore-Everton, Steve Rouse

## Call to Order – 6:04 pm

## Board Check-In (Gavin)

- Next month: Kirk

## Consent Agenda

- Minutes of November Board meeting

Action: Approve minutes of November meeting as written. (Motion: Moore, Second: Goode. Motion unanimously approved.)

- Committee reports
  - o DEIB Committee: in process of creating DEIB mission statement for the Co-op
  - o Board Perpetuation Committee: planning tabling session early next year in Co-op café to reach out to interested members

## Monitoring Reports

- GM Monitoring Report B.4 Asset Protection (Smith)

Action: Approve B.4 Monitoring Report as compliant. (Motion: Goode; Second: Coolbeth; Abstained: Smith.)

- o Physical assets: Installed security cameras throughout the store, extensive insurance coverage
- o Digital assets: Working with IT consultant on comprehensive cyberattack recovery plan – may consider getting coverage specifically for cybersecurity-related damages
- o Reputation protection: Made more difficult by social media, GM has less control now than when policy was written
  - Social media best practices for Board members – how much should we be posting about our opinions on social media as representatives of the Co-op?

- Consider asking Todd at Columinate, reaching out to marketing & PR departments at other co-ops

(Motion approved by all others.)

- Board Monitoring Report D.8 Governance Investment (Kirk)

Action: Approve D.8 Monitoring Report as compliant. (Motion: Goode; Second: Coolbeth.)

- Definition of “governing with excellence” – are we?
  - We are in compliance with all or most policies
  - We have supports in place and resources to draw from to continuously improve
- *Action item:* Vote to change Board budget target date to November instead of October in a future meeting.
- Outside monitoring assistance: seek out more of this?
  - Already have financial & legal assistance

(Motion unanimously approved.)

## **Executive Session**

Action: Move Executive Session to end of meeting to provide best experience for our guest.

(Motion: Coolbeth; Second: Gable. Motion unanimously approved.)

## **Store Report (Smith)**

- Sales growth dropped slightly compared to 2024 in last two weeks of November
  - Probably due to lack of November holiday member coupon
- 7 days leading up to Thanksgiving were 6% busier than last year
- YTD sales growth around 8%
- Half of bulk reset done last night, second half getting done tonight – looks beautiful
- Participated in Jingle Bars pub crawl last night
- December 10% member coupon is live
- Still working on Food For All program & revamped member benefits – rolling out early next year

## **Next Steps on Strategic Planning: Reviewing the Ends**

- Overall themes discussed:
  - Food accessibility
    - Include as additional end, or add to DEIB or financial end?
      - Accessibility is a larger DEIB theme with food access as a subtopic
        - Financial diversity is a part of overall diversity
  - Sustainability
    - Zero waste aspirations are more or less unattainable
      - Do we want ends to be more idealistic or practical?
  - Competing interests
    - Sustainability vs. price accessibility: conventional/inorganic products are cheaper & more familiar, but do not align with other goals
  - DEIB
    - Needs more detail – be specific about different DEIB goals/ends in our community vs. membership vs. staff
      - Consider working with DEIB Committee to develop this end
  - Staff treatment & compensation
    - Could be separate end or fall under DEIB
  - Language discrepancies between ends
    - Some ends are specific, some vague; some attainable, some unrealistic
      - Restructure to be more uniform
  - Ends statement formatting
    - Rework to be outcome-focused instead of process-focused
      - Current ends read more like a vision statement than a declaration of the products of our work
    - “Because the Co-op exists, these other things are true/will be true”
- At least some revision is necessary – keep values & priorities, adjust language to create more cohesion & balance
  - Created committee to draft new statement – Tomasyn, Katherine, and Hannah volunteered. Matt will ask Brock – if he is not interested, Matt will join.
  - *Action item:* Create rough draft of new ends statement for February meeting.

**Executive Session – 7:46pm**

Action: Enter executive session. (Motion: Coolbeth; Second: Kirk. Motion unanimously approved.)

Executive Session ends at 8:00pm.

### **Board Holiday Gathering**

- Sometime in January – will arrange through email

Action: Adjourn meeting. (Motion: Coolbeth; Second: Goode. Motion unanimously approved.)

**Adjourn – 8:03 pm**