

Willimantic Food Co-op
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2026 6:00-8:00 PM
Zoom Meeting

Directors attending: Patty Smith, Matthew Coolbeth, Peter Kirk, Kathe Gable, Jessica Larkin-Wells, Stephanie White, Tomasyn Goode, Brock Alosky, Katherine Gavin
Others attending: James Cashmore-Everton

Call to Order – 6:04pm

Consent Agenda

- April meeting minutes
Action: Approve April minutes as written. (Motion: Goode, Second: Coolbeth. Motion unanimously approved.)

Monitoring Reports

- GM Monitoring Report: B.3 Financial Condition & Activities
Action: Approve B.3 Monitoring Report as compliant. (Motion: Gable, Second: Goode, Abstained: Smith.)
 - o Sales growth lower than budgeted for the first time in many years, but still doing better than both NCG average and Eastern Corridor co-ops average
 - Given broader economic context, not worrying
 - o March low sales growth in part due to uncommonly high March growth in 2025
 - April sales growth was higher
 - o Quarter still profitable
 - Lower than budget on payroll & other expenses
 - o Transaction count, basket size, & cash on hand still strong
 - o Liquidity & solvency measures just as strong if not stronger than previous reports
(Motion approved by all others.)
- Board Monitoring Report: D.7 Board Committee Principles
Action: Approve D.7 Monitoring Report as compliant. (Motion: Kirk, Second: Alosky.)
 - o *Action item:* Create standing annual procedure to review what current committees are & what their charters are every time we make D.7 report
(Motion unanimously approved.)

Review Applications from Prospective Director Candidates

Action: Approve prospective Board member slate proposed by the Board Perpetuation Committee. (Motion: Goode, Second: Alosky. Motion unanimously approved.)

Store Report

- Grocery manager Matt and his wife just had a baby girl! On paternity leave for 12 weeks

- Assistant grocery manager Willow is now acting grocery manager – doing great
- Other managers stepping in to fill gaps
- April sales growth 5.2%; 4.6% sales growth YTD for end of April
- Co-op Neighborhood Fair last weekend went great, Mel and fair committee did great job
 - Feedback from longtime members, Alice – “felt like coming home”, old timey co-op vibes
- Cooperative statute legislation – finally made it through all committees and both houses of general assembly – now law!
 - Reincorporation finally able to happen now – will have to look over bylaws, talk to attorney
 - On agenda for later this year
- New co-op ambassador program – several volunteered at fair, more at annual meeting – new way for members to contribute at events
- Working member discounts – current rules for spouses of working members are convoluted & need updating – work in process
 - In the interim, working member discounts only apply to individual working members – not their spouses

Ends Committee Update

- One additional bullet than previous ends, but seems more clear & easy to report on
- More focused on customer value than old ends
- New ends lend themselves much easier to concrete future plans – more specific, better wording
- Shoutout Tomasyn and entire Ends committee, did a great job
 - Action: Ratify new Ends Statement. (Motion: Alosky, Second: Tomasyn. Motion unanimously approved.)

Annual Meeting Preparation

- Need a few board members to come early to avoid sign-in bottleneck
- Different strategy for Q&A section
 - Seat board members in front to assist – Matt will help moderate
 - More time for questions, opportunity to submit question in advance, prep answers for common themes
 - Brainstorm what people are likely to ask about – thinking about annual meeting from member perspective
 - What members will be interested in may not be what we have been recently working on or on the forefront of our minds
- Teasing/previewing new member benefits structure
 - How much detail do we want to go into when people ask what the changes will be?
 - Emphasize we are making benefits programs more aligned with our ends and values – more equitable, more beneficial to our community
 - “Currently not all members get an everyday benefit from their discount, and we want all members to get an everyday benefit”

- Program still in early phases – don't want to start messaging until we have a complete message, or say anything that might not be true later on
- Bringing up to “industry standard”, “best practices” – more similar to other co-op's benefit programs
- Expansion/Church St property questions
 - World is a very different place than when we bought the property – situation was inherited
 - Not looking to spend a bunch of cash on anything right now given the state of the world/economy

Adjourn – 7:34pm