Willimantic Food Co-op
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
October 1, 2026 6:00-8:00 PM
WorkMode Office Space, 109 Valley St Suite B, Willimantic

Directors attending: Patty Smith, Matthew Coolbeth, Stephanie White, Tomasyn Goode, Peter Kirk, Katherine Gavin, Jessica Larkin-Wells, Monica van Beusekom
Absent: Kathe Gable
Others attending: David Kohn, Kathy Leddy

Call to Order – 6:03pm

Member Speak Out

- David Kohn, speaking on behalf of another member
    - Asks us to reconsider the removal of the senior discount
        - Believes the discount assists people with a financial need, such as fixed or low incomes
        - His view is that loyalty points do not provide the same benefit as a discount
    - Board acknowledged David's views, but cannot respond during the meeting
- Group discussed how to respond to David's concerns
    - It is difficult to meet everyone's needs equitably
    - Loyalty program is not a direct swap for the senior discount – age-based discount was replaced with RAMP **and** the loyalty program – needs-based discount in addition to a discount for every member
        - People are in need in every age category
    - Volunteer discount – David believes there is no longer an opportunity to get working discount
        - We should clarify that volunteer discounts are still available with the Co-op Ambassador program
            - *Action item:* Respond to David's concerns
                - Matt will do this

Board Photo

Action: Delay photo until November board meeting. (Motion: Larkin-Wells, Second: Van Beusekom. Motion unanimously approved.)

Consent Agenda

- Minutes of August board meeting

Action: Approve minutes of August board meeting. (Motion: Goode, Second: Coolbeth.)

Action: Postpone approval of August minutes. (Motion: Van Beusekom, Second: Goode. Motion unanimously approved.)

- Minutes of September board meeting

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

Monitoring Reports

- GM Monitoring Report B.8 Membership

  Action: Approve B.8 Monitoring Report as compliant. (Motion: Larkin-Wells, Second: Van Beusekom, Abstained: Smith.)

  - Patty wants to celebrate how much we've achieved in the past year: new member benefits finally rolled out today!
    - New loyalty points and RAMP discounts are working smoothly at the register
    - Ambassador program is a success
      - Working on the expansion of the volunteer program – in contact with CLiCK and MESA

    (Motion approved by all others.)

- Board Monitoring Report D.4 Board Meetings

  Action: Approve D.4 Monitoring Report as compliant. (Motion: Smith, Second: Van Beusekom.)

  - Report is straightforward
  - Members who attend for Member Speak Out are welcome to stay through the full board meeting, barring executive sessions

Discussion on Term and Recruitment for Staff Director

- Kathe's term coming to an end – planning to step down
  - *Action item:* Patty will confirm Kathe's official end date
- Should staff director be elected with the general director elections in June?
  - Might increase staff interest, make onboarding easier to have election at the same time as the general
  - Term would remain at 2 years for staff director as opposed to 3 years with member directors
  - Board perpetuation committee should recruit for staff election in addition to general election
    - Storecast meeting attendance, letters, poster

      Action: Change staff director election to align with general election. (Motion: Smith, Second: Gavin. Motion unanimously approved.)

Fall Board Retreat Recap

- Ends project was beneficial
  - Opportunity to dissect and interpret the new Ends statements
    - Just the right amount of room for interpretation
- Patty found it very valuable as she works to interpret ends for her strategic plan
  - Need to finalize the lease and/or relocation before truly developing a long-term, multi-year strategy

- Not an ideal time to make a long-term plan

Executive Session on Lease Renewal Negotiations & Expansion Feasibility – 7:18pm

Action: Enter executive session. (Motion: Van Beusekom, Second: Coolbeth. Motion unanimously approved.)

Action: Adjourn executive session. (Motion: Goode, Second: Van Beusekom. Motion unanimously approved.)

Executive session adjourned at 8:29pm.

Adjourn 8:29pm