
MINUTES
Common Ground Food Co-op
Board of Directors Meeting
5:30 – 7:30 pm Central Time
September 21, 2026

Roll Call

Call to Order Welcome Guests, Owners

Wang called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm. Cronin, Wang, Stengrim, Muller, Taylor, and Parsons were the voting members in attendance.

Etienne, Hari were absent.

Gary Taylor was in attendance as an ex officio guest of the Board.

Joanne Mierek joined as a guest.

Julia Cronin served as the notetaker.

To note: Coleman arrived at 6:15pm.

Public Comment

There were none.

Agenda Amendments – Document 1

There were none.

Approve Consent Agenda

August Meeting Minutes – Document 2a, 2b

Treasurer's Report – Document 2c

Motion. Stengrim moved and Cronin seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Internal Monitoring and Board Admin

Columinate Renewal

It is time to renew our Columinate account to catch the early bird rate (late Sept/early Oct). Gary mentioned other co-ops seem unhappy with Columinate, but he doesn't have details on why. The early bird rate decreases at the end of each month.

Action. Taylor will collect and present feedback from other co-ops about Columinate before the end of the month.

Motion. Muller moved and Cronin seconded to renew our contract with Columinate before the end of this month, pending feedback from Gary. Unanimously passes.

GM Monitoring Executive Limitation Reports

ELB7 - document 4

Cronin noted that ELB1 monitoring reports have not been on time within the past 12 months, so this policy should be found out of compliance. The return to compliance plan is already in place, but Gary will revise to reflect his new processes with the accounting firm to get reports in on time. Electronic motions will follow the meeting.

Action. Taylor will make edits to ELB7.

ELB8 - document 5

Taylor extended thanks to Liz for serving as notetaker. Parsons noted that the payment routing for the Board's Google Workspace account now goes through Taylor as Parsons has deactivated his credit card.

Action. Board shall designate someone on the board to have a credit card.

Motion. Parsons moved and Mullers seconded to accept ELB8. Unanimously passes.

ELB9 - N/A

Removed from the meeting folder pending edits for errors found by Wang before the meeting. Electronic voting will follow the meeting.

Monthly Operations Report and Financials

Documents 6a, 6b

Taylor offers thanks to Joanne and Katie for improving our direction with sales. Wang asked about the new positions posted and whether those are in line with our labor goals.

Action. Taylor to include details about the decision regarding the meat & cheese clerk in October MORE.

Tracking Reports

Tracking Reports – Document 7a, 7b

1. Cost Plus - Taylor reported that we are meeting our ordering goals with a healthy buffer and should be back to our higher cost plus rate soon.
2. Margin Tracking - Wang repeated a question from August about the bulk margins.
3. Out of Stock - Data was inaccurate due to employee issues with connection between out counts and ordering.
4. Rebate - Board extended congratulations to Taylor and the staff.

Action. Taylor and Mierek will look into a 10% difference between goal and actual for bulk margin percentage.

Action. Taylor will work with the employee to decide a better way to get out counts.

Action. Taylor should review the Department Expense Budget tracking report when preparing next year's budget.

Transition Directives

Transition Directives – Document 8a, 8b

Taylor was not able to speak with Tony about benefits standards. If Tony can't provide that, other GMs hopefully can. Due date moved.

Action. Taylor will bring up benefits with the other GMs at the NCG Fall Meeting.

Labor action items verified as incomplete, due date moved.

Action. Taylor will meet with Joanne tomorrow regarding labor goals.

Action. Taylor and Mierek to meet with members of labor task force before October 1.

Executive session directives verified complete.

Labor numbers in grocery have reduced significantly and are meeting goal consistently. Kitchen is also close to goal. Produce is also much improved. FOH is improving. Meat & cheese and Wellness will need to be fixed with cross-training as their sales cannot justify base coverage. Admin and GM, containing salaried wages, are either sales goals or the goal must be adjusted with percentages cut elsewhere.

Board Admin - circling back

Election/MOO

All candidate bios are live on the website and voting has opened.

Action. Muller to edit Engagement Committee slides.

Action. Wang to complete Board/Board Work slide.

Board Budget

Bonnie had added another budget line for GM search expenses.

Action. When next board is seated, discuss how the GM search should impact the budget.

Action. Mierek to remove Parson's stipend as his service ends after this meeting - he will not be able to attend the MOO.

Motion. Cronin moves and Stengrim seconds to approve a provisional board budget. Unanimously passes.

Officer Elections

Last year's proposal to elect the president before the new board election is in conflict with the bylaws, so Wang proposes that the expiring board merely make a recommendation as to next year's president.

After discussion and several declined nominations for officers, the board determined that it was not in a position to recommend officers.

Cronin moved and Stengrim seconded to enter executive session. 7:08

Executive Session

Stengrim moved and Coleman seconded to exit executive session. 7:10

Committees and Task Forces Updates

Policy Committee – Policy Updates

Cronin explained a newly codified ban on candidates who have active bans from the store or its social media.

Engagement Committee

Muller will write a profile on the new board members for the newsletter.

Board Development Committee

No updates.

Closing

Additional Discussion

We discussed a venue for the board retreat. The Urbana Library was vetoed because it is only for public meetings. Wang will book Mad Goat again.

Newsletter Assignment

Muller will write a profile on new board members.

Review of Action Items from This Meeting

Cronin reviewed action items from this meeting.

Board Bits and Owner Updates

We are gearing up for the MOO and preparing for our new slate of directors.

Scheduling October Meeting

Scheduled for October 19th.

Adjourn

Motion. Cronin moved and Stengrim seconded a motion to adjourn the Board meeting at 7:22 pm. Motion passed unanimously.