

Belfast Community Co-op Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2026, Public meeting commenced at 6:00 p.m. at the BCC Admin Conference Room and via Zoom

Directors Present: Mary Bigelow, Ernie Cooper, Susan Cutting (president), Richard Dines Rio Greeley, John Krueger (treasurer), Jim Miller (vice president), Kim Relick (secretary), James Shimko, Valerie Tate

Absent: Todd Bluhm

Staff: Doug Johnson (GM), Emily Berry (scribe)

Owners: Jamie Cermak, Cristiane Gil, Steve Gold, Gina Ferendo, Heather Q Hay, Ashleigh Russell, Lisa Sadler

Preliminaries

Agenda

It was proposed that the BOD 1) remove the March minutes from the consent agenda for amendment, 2) add the approval of the April 14th Executive Session, 3) add a Board Development Committee membership change decision, and 4) table the Annual Board Review to the May meeting. The BOD accepted the agenda with the proposed adjustments by consensus.

Announcements

One director offered to provide operations with suggestions on ways to co-promote the 50th Anniversary Party.

On April 30th NFCA will be hosting their quarterly peer networking event for board members, which is an opportunity to talk with directors from other co-ops. BCC directors are encouraged to register and attend.

This April 15, 2026 meeting is being held over Zoom since the meeting date was changed and the Abbott Room of the Belfast Free Library was not available.

Owner Comments

None.

2026 Member-Owner Vote

In the 2026 Member-Owner Vote, 854 ballots were cast by member-owners in good standing, exceeding the 10% membership quorum, making the vote valid.

In this uncontested director election, Mary Bigelow, Susan Cutting, Richard Dines, Rio Greeley, John Krueger, and James Shimko all received votes totaling more than 25% of the total valid ballots cast, and were therefore elected to the Board of Directors.

Of the 854 ballots cast, a majority, 792 member-owners, approved the proposed amendment to the Bylaws thereby enacting the amendment.

The BOD accepted by consensus the results of the 2026 Member-Owner Vote, thereby ratifying the board election and the Bylaws amendment vote.

Seating New Directors

As stated in Article IV sec 3 of the BCC Bylaws: "Among the winning candidates, the top vote getters will be elected to the longer terms open." Therefore, Mary Bigelow, Susan Cutting, Rio Greeley, & John Krueger received 3 year terms, while Richard Dines & James Shimko received 2 year terms. The BOD seated the newly elected directors to the above terms by consensus.

Code of Conduct & Confidentiality Forms

Done.

GM Reporting

Alignment

A team from operations presented at the 2026 P6 Conference in Auburn on how co-ops in Maine can assist one another with shared services. The BCC presentation was well received, with attendees from each of the Maine food

co-ops. The P6 Conference featured Doug O'Brien, the President and CEO of the [National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International](#) (NCBA CLUSA), as the keynote speaker.

Jeanie Wells of Columinate presented to BCC workers on Monday, April 13. Her previous visit to the Co-op was prior to the renovation. After the presentation session, she walked through the store with operations folks recommending tweaks and generally energizing workers for the upcoming summer season. One big takeaway that Jeanie Wells conveyed is that each one of the workers can positively affect the co-op every day.

GM Update Report

Jamie and the marketing team are busy planning the 50th anniversary and have begun working with Courtney Hayes of counter/current:collective and The Day-Of event planning.

Directors wondered whether there was an opportunity to add a board-related question to the Customer Satisfaction Survey. The BOD and GM discussed that adding one question is likely possible, having a separate survey specifically for the BOD would probably yield better information for the Board's purposes.

The financial audit is almost complete. Doug has received the final statements and is waiting for the tax return to be cleared by the state. Final numbers indicate that the Co-op was profitable which is unheard of in the first year following a renovation/expansion.

Board Action Items

April Exec Session Minutes

The BOD accepted by consensus the minutes from the April 14th Executive Session.

March 2026 Minutes

There was an amendment to the draft of the March 25, 2026 minutes. The executive session scheduled for April 14th was to discuss the GM Compensation Proposal and the GM Compensation Agreement. The board accepted the amended minutes by consensus.

C3 - Agenda Planning

The BOD accepted by consensus policy C3 - Agenda Planning as in compliance.

Finalize GM Compensation

The BOD accepted by consensus the GM Compensation Agreement.

Officer Elections

Susan pointed out that the four officers are members of the executive committee and part of the leadership team with Doug. The leadership team sets the tone for the governance of this organization, it's a very important thing. The tone set can ripple out to the Co-op community. It is an additional time commitment and responsibility to take on but it's also an opportunity to demonstrate and articulate this unique and cooperative approach we have here. Being part of a co-op is different from a standard hierarchical for-profit board. We are owned by our community and we serve our community and this makes a difference. Susan quoted Doug O'Brien from the NFCA annual meeting: "Cooperation matters in challenging times and we are in a challenging time." She thanked all who have taken on this role, those who have stepped up in the past and those willing to step up in the future.

The BOD agreed to waive the reading of the officer job descriptions, which they all have in writing, during this election process.

Each director was given time to nominate a fellow director for each officer position.

The BOD agreed by consensus to appoint John to treasurer, Kim to secretary, Jim to vice president, and Susan to president for one-year terms.

Board Stipend as Owner Rewards

It was proposed that the board stipend be distributed through the owner rewards system instead of through gift cards. The BOD agreed by consensus to use the owner reward system to distribute the monthly board stipend.

Recast 2025-26 Budget

Going forward, the finance committee will review the financial data from two months prior, for example, in April the FC will review the numbers from February.

The BOD accepted by consensus the recast budget as submitted.

Committee Membership

The BOD agreed by consensus to add Steve Gold to the Board Development Committee.

May 2026 Meeting

The regular BOD meeting date for May is the travel day for CCMA attendees. The BOD agreed by consensus to move the May 2026 meeting to Wednesday, May 20th.

Discussion Items

Conflicts of Interest

Susan - on the board of NFCA

Rio - his sister, grandmother, and father all have ties with organizations who are common cents recipients. Rio himself leads Phoenix Knights Gaming, a common cents recipient. Rio is also connected to counter/current:collective which is working on the 50th Anniversary party.

Richard - on board of Shared Capital Cooperative

All directors were given the opportunity to share and no other conflicts of interest were disclosed at this time.

Summer Tabling

OEC proposed the BOD table outside the Co-op every other Friday, 11am - 1pm, from May to Oct. This would be approximately 20 total volunteer shifts for directors. John would like a t-shirt that specifically says "Board of Directors" on it for such events.

Retreat Scheduling

Looking at dates for the 2026 BOD retreat in September, possibility in October if necessary.

Board Development Committee

Nothing further to report.

Owner Engagement Committee

Rio has agreed to be chair of the OEC.

There is an opportunity to host a co-op trivia night on Tuesday, June 9th at Must Be Nice as build up to the 50th party.

Finance Committee

Nothing further to report.

Executive Committee

Richard expressed interest in traveling with the operations team to attend CCMA in Tacoma, WA May 28 - 30th.

Travel funds are in the BOD's budget and it was proposed that these be used to send Richard. The BOD approved by consensus funding Richard's travel to CCMA.

Closings

Homework

Full Board

1. Respond to retreat date availability
2. Sign up for tabling events
3. Let Susan know which committee you would like to be on

Committee Chairs

1. Send Kim B-meeting topic ideas for May & October

Board Development Committee

1. Gather information on proposed 8th Cooperative Principle
2. Weigh in on B-meeting topics
3. 6-month Columinate services eval

Owner Engagement Committee

1. Look into developing an owner survey

Doug

1. Update the Board introduction to the NCG Statement on Israel-Palestine Conflict, noting that the Co-op would provide country of origin information when possible.
2. In future B1 reports:
 - a. define net income
 - b. Interpret financial trends
3. Delve into mapping a path to meeting a livable wage
4. Send John the info for Anthony Goodwin of NCG Development Cooperative

Susan

1. Send April 14, 2026 minutes to Emily for posting
2. Follow up with operations re: Trivia Night, June 9th
3. Send full BOD link to NFCA's Peer-to-Peer event

Kim

1. Think about the Board Calendar
2. Check on Abbott Room availability for May 20th

Emily

1. Update Bylaws

Owner Comments

None.

Debrief

BOD discussed topics for the May meeting which is slated to be a "B-meeting". Although there are many topics of interest, the preliminary plan is to cover the living wage issue as well as an 8th Cooperative Principle.

Public meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm. Minutes respectfully submitted by Emily Berry, scribe.