

**FINAL - UKIAH NATURAL FOODS
(A.K.A THE HOMESTEAD EXCHANGE)
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The regular meeting of the Ukiah Natural Foods Board of Directors was convened on Monday, October 20th, 2025, at 5:34 PM at the Ukiah Coop..

BOARD DIRECTORS PRESENT: Tim Dolan (Treasurer), Angie McChesney (Vice President), Stephen Turner, Tom Chandler, Gideon Burdick (President), Stephen Groff, Christine Rodrigues (Secretary), Larry Mayfield

BOARD DIRECTORS NOT PRESENT: Ky Myers

STAFF PRESENT: Anne Wright (Accounting Manager), Dagoberto Gonzalez (HR Manager), Lodi DeAlba (Front End Manager)

Owner-Members: Ben Wolff, Susan Knopf, Linda Sanders, Bruni Kobbe, Pinky Kushner

President Burdick called the meeting to order at 5:34 P.M.

1. Introductions and Check-Ins:

2. Brief Announcements and Confirm Agenda:

Treasurer Dolan **MOVED to approve the agenda with changes presented.** Seconded by Secretary Rodrigues. **MOTION PASSED.**

Yes: Board Members;
 Burdick, McChesney, Chandler, Mayfield, Dolan, Groff, Rodrigues, and Turner

3. Consent Agenda:

Board President Burdick **MOVED to approve the agenda with changes as presented.** Seconded by Secretary Rodriguez. **MOTION PASSED.**

Yes: Board Members: Burdick, McChesney, Chandler, Dolan, Mayfield, Groff, Rodrigues, and Turner

4. Public Forum:

Member One: Bernie brought up the following:

Confusion on Board Administrator and Secretary

Minutes, need to add more to the discussion when stating "discussion"

Make up our mind on whether we are members or member owners

The Annual Member meeting should not be a party; it should be for members to voice their concerns

Outreach (more of it, and she sent a letter to the Board)
Financial transparency and it should be understandable to all, and not just CPA's
Would like to see more space for bulk foods and less coffee, and also more local produce

Member Two: Linda brought up the following:

BOD Agenda and Meetings, visibility of when and where the meetings are, and what is on the agenda.

Member Three: Susan brought up the following:

Secrecy with everything and everything being closed off, and it needs to be more open

Member Four: Pinky brought up the following:

Shops here regularly and is here to help.

Member Five: Ben brought up the following:

Adding more local foods from local producers

5. GM Report:

Accounting Manager Wright stated that a written report was submitted. Preparing for upcoming holidays, the Produce Manager resigned, first round interviews completed, second interviews are happening, and they are current employees. The Assistant Grocery Manager is leaving on November 26th. Holiday hiring has happened, and we have hired two PT cashiers to help during this time. Front End Manager DeAlba has been working on schedules, and cross-training has been happening and working well. Deli improvements are in place, and we have improved the cleanliness, and are having them use checklists to ensure that weekly cleaning schedules are being adhered to. The new cooler is coming on November 10th, and the asphalt in the parking lot is complete.

Accounting Manager Wright stated that September sales were 1% under September of last year, and year-to-date sales growth is less than 1%. Average transactions per day were flat, and third-quarter sales were also flat with last year. Year-to-date sales are under 1%. I already said that, and it's 2.74% under budget. We're not having great sales this year.. We were hoping to do about three and a half percent this year, and right now we're doing under 1%.

Accounting Manager Wright stated that although the sales are below budget expectations, we have reduced a lot of expenses this year. We've really been working on our labor costs. Right now, our labor costs are \$198,000 under what I budgeted for this year and \$88,000 under what we spent last year. We're working on sales for labor hours and labor efficiency.

6. Rob, New General Manager, Arrival Update:

President Burdick stated that the new GM will be starting on November 3rd. Onboarding and transition meetings will be set up and ongoing.

7. IGMC Floor Manager Needs Assessment

Accounting Manager Wright stated that there is no board approval and that this is just bringing to the board's attention on what the Coop needs

The team wants to hire a Floor Manager to oversee schedules for the entire store and look at things globally within the store. We have a current staff member who could do this and would cost about \$23k annually, but we will wait to see what the new GM has to say. The deli needs more improvement and needs to have constant attention; there's still a long way to go, and making improvements in this department is going to take constant supervision to ensure it doesn't slide backwards. All Incubated food used in the prep of the deli audience needs to fit within our merchandising policy, and then, all items used in the coffee smoothie bar must be organic in accordance with our signage, which they are right now. There's just a lot more that needs to be done here.

8. ORC & Member Engagement

Board Member Groff stated that the ORC wanted to get involved in the response to the letter that was received. There was a good discussion within the committee on the letter that was received by the board. Jessica Lee is on the ORC and stated that we can give out a flyer to faculty at Ukiah High School on the Co-op membership.

Treasurer Dolan stated that he wants to post a summary of the finances to the membership downstairs so it is visible. Accounting Manager Wright stated that she used to put it in the newsletter, and the newsletter then became a marketing tool. She was hoping that at some point, we could have a section of the website where you'd use your member number to get into that and all the finances, but posting it downstairs is fine.

Secretary Rogrigues stated that there is a lot more activity on the emails coming to board@ukiahcoop.com. Categories that are coming in are general inquiries, vendor inquiries, and comments on staff and governments. Those categories will be handled as follows: vendor inquiries will go to info@ukiahcoop.com. Comments on staff and governance will be sent to ORC, and other general inquiries will be responded to by the board Secretary, and depending on the response, those responses can be sent to the board for approval before sending.

President Burdick inquired about setting the Board Meeting schedule through April 2026 as follows:

November and December will be in person

January and February will be via Zoom

March and April will be in person

9. Committee Reports:

Owner Relations Committee - See above

Board Development Committee - We need more good people. We're looking for specifically, legal expertise, experience in retail business, experience in farming or food production, and

diversity in demographics and life experiences on the board.

Finance Committee - There was no meeting, but a brief overview of the finances to date was provided.

GMEC - No meeting

10. Little Questions:

Board Member Turner inquired about adding back the grants/donations next year, and it was stated that those will not return in 2026.

11. Topics for Next Month:

- None Reported

12. Closing and Evaluation:

President Burdick adjourned the meeting at 7:20 P.M.

The next Meeting is on **November 18, 2025**, at Ukiah Natural Foods

Submitted by Erica Ramirez, Board Administrator