Board of Directors Minutes – October 2026

Date: October 14, 2026.

Call to Order: Treasurer Debby Warren facilitated the meeting in the absence of Board President John. Debby called the meeting to order at 7:10.

Location: Virtual via Zoom.

Attendance/Quorum

Board members present: Donna Frederick (Vice President), Debby Warren (Treasurer), Diane Standaert (Secretary), Steph Carter, Amy Cao, and Kim Ionescu.

Board members not present: John Bonvechio (President), Summer Alston, Neisha Reynolds.

Others Present: Amy Zimmerman, Board Administrator; Rye Watson (staff); Tracie Little (staff); Thomas Beckett (owner); River Wadsworth (owner); Jess (Owner); Sarah Cross (owner).

A quorum was present.

Agenda Review: No changes were made to the agenda.

Introductions: Owners and staff introduced themselves to the board.

Approval of September 2026 Minutes

Vote: Kim moved to approve the September 2026 Board meeting minutes. Diane seconded the motion. The motion passed without objection. The September minutes were approved.

GM FYI Report – Jason Bowers (GM)

Jason was on vacation and submitted his written FYI report in advance of the meeting. The report was placed on file. Directors agreed to focus on highlights rather than reading the entire report during the meeting.

Discussion addressed the age and condition of refrigeration and cooling equipment and the importance of monitoring maintenance needs and associated financial implications.

Directors discussed recent staff training facilitated by Gabby. Jason was expected to receive a written report. One director shared informal feedback from a staff participant suggesting that smaller-group discussions might have been more effective. Directors expressed interest in receiving feedback directly from participating employees, in addition to the trainer's assessment. The board suggested that Jason consider a brief staff survey or another accessible method of gathering feedback to evaluate the training's effectiveness and identify improvements.

No vote was required.

GM Monitoring Reports

Debby reviewed the board's policy-monitoring responsibilities, noting that the General Manager provides interpretations, operational definitions, and evidence of compliance with executive limitations. Directors are responsible for assessing the reasonableness of those interpretations and whether the evidence adequately demonstrates compliance.

GM Report: B4 Membership

The board reviewed the General Manager's monitoring report for Policy B4, Membership.

During discussion, directors identified missing data in section 4.1 and requested additional information regarding membership levels and changes over time. Additional data would be helpful about membership growth, such as if it has grown.

The Board also discussed the difference between the $500 worker-owner share and the $100 consumer-owner share. Questions were raised about whether the existing membership structure continued to meet the co-op's needs and would like to revisit the issue at a future meeting.

Additional discussion addressed the importance of maintaining clear communication with preferred shareholders, particularly regarding whether dividends would be issued in a given year.

Kim explained that the process for worker elections as described in the bylaws. The need for a transparent and consistent process for electing worker-owner representatives to the board was discussed.

Vote: Kim moved to approve the B4 Membership monitoring report with a request for the missing B4.1 data. Diane seconded the motion. Motion passed with no objections. The B4 report was approved with the note that the board needs dated with B4.1.

B5 – Treatment of Customers Monitoring Report

The board reviewed the General Manager's B5 monitoring report and expressed concerns about insufficient supporting evidence to demonstrate compliance. The Board requested clearer headings, definitions, and comparison periods for customer satisfaction and loyalty data, as well as additional documentation for sections B5.1 and B5.4. The discussion emphasized the need to distinguish between actions already completed and proposed improvements. Directors also requested more detailed customer complaint data, including the number and nature of complaints, how they were handled, and whether they were resolved.

The board requested that the General Manager revise and resubmit it with sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance.

The vote for B5 was postponed to November.

Vote postponed, no vote occurred. The board would like to have this report redone with additional data.

Owner Comment Period

The owner comment period focused on serious concerns about the Durham Co-op Market's workplace culture, employee treatment, board accountability, and communication between workers, management, and the board. Several owners and staff members expressed frustration that previously reported problems had not been adequately addressed. Board members acknowledged these concerns while emphasizing the work already underway and the challenges of addressing personnel matters within the co-op's governance structure.

Owners and employees called for greater transparency, stronger worker representation, more direct engagement with staff, and meaningful changes to organizational practices. Board members acknowledged these concerns and emphasized their commitment to improvement, while also discussing the challenges of governance, financial stability, and organizational change.

General Manager Evaluation Committee

Chair: Summer Alston. Other members: Debby Warren.

Debby reported that the outside HR consultant hired to assist with the General Manager's annual performance evaluation, particularly gathering staff feedback, decided not to continue working with the Co-op. The General Manager Evaluation Committee was subsequently appointed to complete the evaluation but had not yet met. Concern was expressed about the continued delay and emphasized the need to move the process forward. The committee will need to establish a timeline, determine how staff feedback will be incorporated, and complete the outstanding evaluation.

Community Outreach Committee Charter

Chair: Diane Standaert.

Diane explained that this committee would help strengthen relationships between the Co-op, its owners, employees, and the broader Durham community. The committee would support staff-led outreach initiatives, identify opportunities for community partnerships, promote events, and help restore the co-op's role as a neighborhood gathering space. Membership would be open to board members, consumer owners, and worker owners, providing additional opportunities for participation and feedback.

Vote: Donna motioned to approve forming the Community Outreach Committee. Kim seconded the motion. There were no objections. Motion passed.

Self Monitoring Report

The board received more responses than usual on the self monitoring report in October.

Events

Coffee with the Board in November

Trunk or Treat.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned 8:49 PM.

Next Meeting

The next DCM meeting is scheduled for November 11, 2026 at 7 PM.