

RAFC BOD meeting minutes
Sept. 25, 2025
Location: RAFC, upstairs, and virtually



The Rutland Area Food Co-op exists to ensure:

Access and Affordability: Residents of Rutland and surrounding communities have affordable access to minimally processed, minimally packaged, organic, and ecologically sustainable food and products, promoting the health of individuals and the environment.

Support for Local, Ethical, and Co-operative Producers: A thriving market for local, regional, fair trade, and co-operative producers of food and household products, fostering economic sustainability and community resilience.

Community Building and Education: A vibrant community hub where owners and patrons can collaborate, learn, and empower each other through educational programs and shared experiences.

Values-driven Collaboration and Support: Partnerships and cooperation with individuals and organizations sharing similar goals, amplifying efforts towards community well-being and sustainability.

Employee Well-being and Engagement: A supportive workplace culture that values and respects employees, providing opportunities for education, growth, and fair compensation, ensuring a motivated and dedicated team.

Welcoming and Positive Shopping Environment: An inclusive and accessible space that embraces diversity and promotes a sense of belonging for all members of the community.

BOD present:

Theresa Haywood- 1st Facilitator

Jeanne Kaufman- Treasurer

Kevin Gustafson- Clerk

Irene Gold- timekeeper

Kathleen Wanner

Jennifer Sanford

Justine Ligon

Scout Edenfield

Kevin Drohan

Absent:

Steven Morneau- 2nd facilitator

Sue Priest

GM: Chris Etori

Facilitator Called to order at 6:15pm
Clerk's report: Kevin D. made a motion to approve minutes with suggested edits, Irene provided 2nd motion. All present approved.
Treasurer's report: Kevin D. summarized the finance committee meeting, clarifying some documents. Kevin suggests paying down the line of credit. However, it may make more sense to spend that money on the enhancements that are wanted to the store, to increase sales. He doesn't presently think the audit is the best use of the money at this time, unless it was suspected that there is fraud. Theresa shared the suggested updates to the charter, including striking the clause that requires the board to receive a quarterly report and excluding the bookkeeper from the committee's membership. No objections from the board.
Committees: <u>Education & Outreach:</u> Theresa summarized some of the actions of the committee to include the cookbook (still requesting submissions), an educational recipe card, and engaging with Rutland Downtown Partnership (RDP) for events. Chris clarified he was in regular contact with RDP's director Hal, and will participate if feasible.

Kathleen to send Chris an email blurb.

Kathleen would like to send a request to Chris next week to send membership a notification of *last call for recipe submission*. *We can plan to share about the participation of Voter Reg. Day with membership then, or in the Fall newsletter.*

Strategic Planning/Lease: Meeting was postponed to next week.

Kathleen shared that after she and Chris's application, they were awarded permission to submit a grant application to the Food Access & Retail Expansion Fund, due in 2 weeks.

There has been a meeting scheduled with Ben Doyle of the Preservation Trust of VT in a few weeks.

Membership Outreach:

Jen shared that a member was going to cook, but after being in a car accident, another member stepped up, but wasn't prepared to sit and eat with the house, so Jen went instead. Will make sure to be clearer in future instructions (eating with the house is expected). They are now going to do the men's house monthly in addition to the women's house. It was pointed out that the committee seems to be doing a great job connecting with member-owner volunteers.

Round up at the register may change to USCRI given that people who are not citizens are no longer eligible for food assistance; Chris is waiting to hear back from USCRI folks. There is sufficient funds at this point generated for Nourishing Neighbors (many volunteers have not asked to be reimbursed) so it would make sense to change the round up beneficiary.

The committee would like to have Ivan join the meetings to help promote initiatives and communication. Chris is aware.

Policy governance:

Board Process:

C8- Governance investment was prepared by Jeanne. Theresa presented it in her absence. All board members wish to leave the policy unchanged, with the suggested date for submission of the board budget as written. No additional changes suggested.

Executive Limitations:

Chris prepared B8: board logistical support, which he reported as in compliance. Theresa suggested that support of the internet for use in BOD meetings (including support of virtual access) seems to be under this policy. Chris plans to work with Steve W. to hardwire the internet for the board computer and may reach out to the internet provider since the router is not always working properly.

Theresa provided 1st motion to approve, Jen provided 2nd motion, and all approved.

Chris also prepared GM succession policy: B9, which he reported compliance with. He appointed Tres Weddle as the designated emergency successor.

Kevin D. asked if Chris agreed that *Tres should attend some BOD meetings*, and Chris stated agreement.

Jen provided 1st motion to approve, Irene provided 2nd, and all approved.

Old Business:

Board retreat: Molly will be in the NE on *Sun. Nov. 9*. Although this date did not work for every board member to attend, it seems the majority can attend, and the retreat is now tentatively scheduled on this date from 10am-2pm.

GM Update:

Chris wants to make sure that board members are prepared for the inventory on Oct. 5.

NCG reps. Coming on Oct. 7 to discuss store reset.

Chris was at the NGC conference last week. They are hiring a new CEO after the long-term CEO is stepping down. He was able to connect with the GMs who came to the store. They shared with Chris that they thought our board was using PG effectively, but didn't want to pay for professional guidance and were hoping to connect with our board.

Chris downloaded the documents from Dropbox to GoogleDrive. *Kevin G. is willing to view them once they are loaded onto a drive to be shared and confirm all needed documents are in Google drive.*

Chris hopes to increase communication with the membership.

Chris has almost finalized the logo.

The Chamber will give a GC to people who move to Rutland and have asked for a match from the RAFC.

The board wants to serve cake for the 30th anniversary. *Will decide next steps about how to make that happen and when at the next meeting.*

Kathleen wonders if we can track GCs given away at the Chamber events. Chris to consider.

New Business:

Holiday BOD meeting schedule was confirmed with the Nov. and Dec. meetings on the 3rd Thursday.

Discussion of planning the Fall newsletter ensued. Features to include:

GM

Store/staff/product feature

Wine (Gerd)

Board (new board member introduction), board retreat, update on N. Neighbors, Voter registration day, feature of new board members

Scout suggested a Fall food drive, which all agreed was a great idea. Recipient options include the VT Food bank, Rut. Co. Parent/Child, BROCC. BROCC does already come to pick up. *More planning to follow.*

Given the technical difficulties experienced this evening of several board members using Jitsi Meet, causing a delay in meeting start, *the board is in favor of taking Kevin D. up on his offer to host the meeting on Teams.* He will generate a URL for use in next month's meeting.

PG Assignment:

GM: B7

Board: D, D1- Irene

Community Outreach:

- Dismas house dinner (4th Wed)- TBD
- Chamber mixer (2nd Tues)- Sue, Irene

Review of upcoming committees and meetings:

- Membership outreach (2nd Thurs., 6pm, virtual): Oct. 9th
- Columinate consultant/exec. team/GM meeting (2nd Thurs, 1pm, virtual ZOOM): Oct. 9th
- Finance (3rd Wed., 6pm, virtual): Oct. 15th
- Education (3rd Thurs, 2pm, RAFC): Oct. 16th
- Strategic Plan/ Lease (4th Thurs, 1pm, virtual): Oct. 2, Oct. 23rd

INVENTORY: Oct. 5th, 8am.

Theresa, Scout, Jeanne, Irene, Kathleen, Jen (?)

Next BOD meeting (4th Thurs., 6pm, RAFC): Oct. 23th

TEAMS agreed on. It may be complicated if KG is not present.

Future agenda items:

Newsletter

Food drive

Holiday party

Drive update

What would you tell members about this meeting?

Adjourn

“Very productive”

Motion to adjourn- Theresa. All present were in favor.