

CCFC Board Meeting Minutes

Date: January 12, 2026

Time: 6:00 PM -8:00 PM

Location: Benicia Chamber of Commerce

Board attendees: Paula Schnese, Steve Hahn-Smith, Mike Klug, Dave McAdams, Taryn Shawstad, Andre Stewart (via Zoom)

Owner attendees: None

1. Call to Order

6:15 PM Meeting was called to order by Paula Schnese.

2. Roll Call

- All Board members in attendance.

3. Opportunity for Owner Comment, None.

4. Agenda Approved

5. Approved December 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes

- Draft minutes circulated earlier and a few revisions were recommended and made. No changes were noted during the meeting.

6. Discussion Topics

- **Welcome New Board Members**, Steve Hahn Smith, Mike Klug and Andre Stewart began their two-year terms. The new Board members' work experience, business expertise and support for our co-op are a great addition to the Board. Currently, six of the seven Board positions are filled. The Board will work with the Board Development team to identify potential candidates to fill the remaining position until the end of this year.
- **Conflict of Interest Declaration**, with the beginning of the year and addition of new members each of the attendees were asked if they had any personal and/or business conflicts of interest that impact Cultivate Community Food Coop (CCFC) activities. None were identified.
 - **Agreement** – the Board agreed to include an agenda item at upcoming Board meetings to ask members if there are any conflicts of interest with the topics after approving the meeting agenda.
- **Update on Partial Share Owners**, as a courtesy to our owners, we established a partial payment plan when we began selling owner shares. There are almost 170 partial share Owners. Currently emails are being sent to the impacted Owners to provide their current balance and next steps for making payments. This is the first time a formal reminder has been sent to all of our partial share Owners.

- **February 21, 2026 CCFC Annual Meeting**, the Board reviewed the Outreach team’s proposed plans for the upcoming Annual Meeting at the San Pablo Lodge (Odd Fellows) 342 Georgia Street, Vallejo, CA.
 - **Agreement** – the Board approved the proposed theme, “Rooted in Community, Guided by You” and the meeting budget. The meeting agenda is designed to solicit more owner questions and feedback. The meeting will be held from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Invitations will be sent shortly.

- **Approve Outreach Team Proposed Engagement Script**, the Outreach team drafted a 1-minute elevator pitch and an engagement script to ensure consistency on CCFC messaging during tabling, events, or talking with family/friends. The documents will be used to train new Outreach team members.
 - **Agreement** – the Board approved the documents and appreciated the proactive step taken by the Outreach Team to develop the materials.

- **Auburn – Co-op Café**, CCFC Board members are invited to a full-day networking event in Auburn next month that will be organized and facilitated by Columinate. Columinate is a cooperative of consultants focused on helping co-ops. Attendees to the networking event include Davis Food Co-op, Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op, BriarPatch Food Co-op (Grass Valley), and the newly launched Auburn Food Co-op.
 - **Agreement** – the Board will send several Board members to the session to learn from other co-ops and think strategically about the future of our co-op.

- **Update CCFC Legal Advice Provider Search**, with the current work underway CCFC needs to establish an ongoing relationship with legal resources to provide expertise on our projects. The Board received a summary of the legal candidates against the selection criteria following interviews with each of them. An initial list of proposed projects that could benefit from legal review was shared.
 - **Agreement** – the projects were discussed and the Board agreed to approach one of the recommended attorneys for advice on an initial project.

- **2026 CCFC Board Operational Plan**, the output from the “deep dive” session that Board members attended on December 10 was used to develop a draft 2026 Board Operational Plan. There was a good discussion about the intent of the operational plan and a desire for the Board to be able to clearly identify the critical few actions that need to be completed in 2026 in order to progress towards opening a co-op.
 - **Agreement** – a subgroup of the Board will work on clarifying the best way to communicate and track the CCFC goals and progress this year. The draft proposal will be brought to the next Board meeting for approval.

- **Food Cooperative Initiative (FCI) Peer Group**, the FCI is a non-profit organization focused on supporting and helping to open community-owned grocery stores. One of the services they provide is to organize and facilitate monthly peer group discussions for food co-ops that are in similar stages of development. CCFC has

participated in the peer groups in the past. The first meeting for the year will be in January.

- **Agreement** – the three new Board members wanted to be added to the invite list for the monthly sessions. The Board agreed that at least one or two Board members should be in attendance and learnings shared with the Board as appropriate.
- **Approve Board Member Exit Interview Process**, in 2024 the Board started exit interviews with departing Board members to identify what is going well and opportunities for improvement in the functioning of the Board. In order to formalize the approach a revised exit interview questionnaire and process was developed with the Board Development team and brought to the Board.
 - **Agreement** – the Board approved the revised interview questionnaire and supported a member of the Board Development team conducting the interview and then sharing a summary with the Board.

7. Updates

- **Treasurer's Report** – reviewed the current CCFC bank balance.
- **Calendar**, nothing new reported.
- **Board Actions and Outcomes Sheet**, discussed that the Board Actions document is to capture one offs.
- **2026 Draft CCFC Board Operational Plan**, discussed as an earlier agenda item.
- **CCFC Team Requests** – the Outreach team flagged actions and requested Board involvement. The Board identified next steps to address the items.

8. Closing

- **Next Board Meeting Agenda Items**, identified initial agenda topics for February 9, 2026 meeting.
- **New Systems**, discussed organizational and access changes being implemented on the CCFC Google shared drive.
- **Meeting Plus/Delta**, a short-brainstormed discussion on what went well at the meeting and where potential meeting process improvement could occur.

9. **Adjournment**

Time: 8:30 p.m.

Next Board Meeting: February 9, 2026 at 6:00 p.m., Benicia Chamber of Commerce

Minutes submitted by: Taryn Shawstad

Date: January 18, 2026

Revised: January 27, 2026 (based on Board feedback)

Approved: February 9, 2026