FAMILY SUPPORT COMMITTEE REPORT

September 29, 2026



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By Lauren Belski for the Family Support Committee

Earlier this year, the Family Support Committee formed to take on the task of making the post-Covid Coop more family friendly. If you are a parent from the before times who knew the bulk bagging room when it was full of toddlers, wooden blocks and beautiful books, and if your kid made unlikely friends there while drooling contentedly on a bagel, then you know what was lost at the Coop was more than just the ability for families with young children to complete their shifts or shop without having to haul their children around the tight aisles. But our committee has acknowledged that

sometimes you just have to buy your pre-bagged beans and keep going. So here we are.

Our committee's focus has been finding alternative support for families with children aged ten and under (about 1,700-2,000 members). Below are the most viable solutions we identified:

1. **Parental Leave in Shift # Instead of Calendar Year** – Parents are currently exempt from 12 months of shifts for each child that joins their family. This amounts to 8 total shifts per household per calendar year. We propose that parental leave should instead be measured by shifts instead of months. Families would instead receive 14 shift credits to use at their discretion to support them throughout their early years of parenting in the coop. This allows for more flexibility for families and is the easiest change to make at the GM level.
2. **Offsite Childcare Pods and Playdates** – Currently, there are too many legal hurdles involved in this idea, but our dream is for member families living in close proximity to create at-home pods that would provide coop kids a place to go while their parents worked and would allow babysitters the opportunity for shift credit. We hoped to create space for community building among member families, but the same legal restraints regarding licensing and insurance that prevented us from being able to reopen the childcare room are at play here.
3. **Gift a Shift Program –** The Gift a Shift Program is a more universal proposal, one that acknowledges the fact that as members of the same food cooperative, we are our own family, and as such, it's good to share with and help others in need. As members, we already have the ability to give shift credit to other members, but this program would allow gifters to post extra shifts to a collective bank, and for takers (anyone in need, not just parents) to utilize one when in a pinch. (There is still much to work out, including the predetermined limit/year.) Perhaps gifters could be rewarded in some sense, much like how the people who ride Citi Bikes from crowded docks to less crowded ones receive redeemable points. This idea requires a separate committee, as well as some programming and coding to establish a system on our shared network. Anyone who is interested in pursuing this, reach out and let

us know!

Each of these solutions—and many that didn't make the report—are grounded in a mutual love and respect for our fellow members and the desire for the Coop to be a vibrant place where people of all backgrounds, at any age, can thrive.

After careful consideration, The Family Support Committee is working with the GM to change our leave policy to award families 14 shifts, instead of 12 months of leave. While this doesn't bring the childcare room back or the beautiful, multigenerational, joyous space it fostered, it does at least offer more relief for working family members as they struggle to strike a balance between finding available shifts and working them while caring for their children.

In terms of options 2 and 3, although the Coop cannot formally put them into action right now, we will be creating a Google Group where members can post about shift swaps, look for babysitters and share clothes and materials to other members who may be in need. If you are interested in joining, please contact us at the email address below.

The GM mandated term for our committee expires on September 30, but we will be continuing to draft a formal proposal for option 1 in the coming months.

Our goal is to continue nurturing member families so the next generation of Brooklyn kids can grow up and love this place.

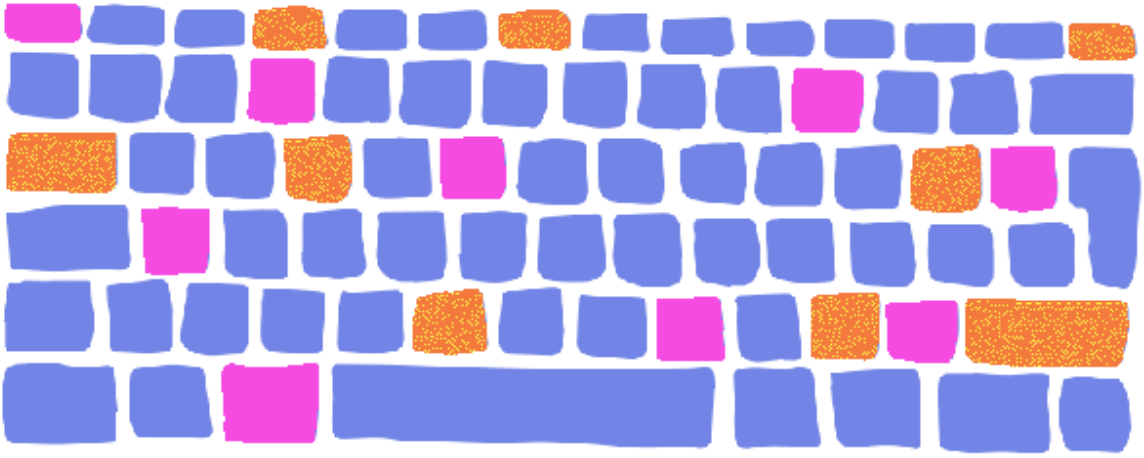
Thanks for putting your trust in us!

For comments please reach out to Lauren Belski and Brian Russ, chairs of the Family Support Committee, at psfcfamilysupport@gmail.com.

JANUARY 7, 2025

September 29, 2026

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Give more TLC to the Food Coop!

Greetings!

The Coop is amazing. For more than 50 years, this neighborhood community has out--competed corporate giants, offering better products at lower prices. But this success is fragile. The existence of this institution is truly miraculous and should not be taken for granted. Perhaps members have already forgotten our dire financial condition during the pandemic?

Good governance and the pragmatic business approach of the management team have been key to this success. Far from promoting rigidity, the Mission Statement and the Environmental Policy Guidelines are replete with language such as “will strive,” “we prefer,” “we try,” providing flexibility to buyers and GMs to ensure that they do good, without harming the business.

Sourcing of affordable, local and organic produce is prioritized. But there are also nonorganic and imports in our bins, including Mexican blueberries, Belgium endives, Israeli peppers, Peruvian mangoes. Plastic bags are not offered at checkout, but there is a choice of compostable and traditional produce bags, and even spinach in big plastic containers. And yes, we do carry products from multiple undemocratic or deeply flawed countries, and even from states which ban abortion.

A Coop that places ideological purity ahead of its mission statement, adopts non-consensual policies, tinkers with governance or pursues narrow partisan issues unrelated to its core mission is likely to experience what is typical for such businesses: decline and potential failure (think of X).

We are riding on the shoulders of 50 years of community effort. We should strive to continue improving the Coop, perhaps expanding to more locations, acting as a model to new communities, and thereby supporting our ecological transition while improving the health and pocketbooks of more people. At a minimum, let’s not mess it up!

Bruno Grandsard

Time for a Hybrid Meeting Option

Dear Coop Members,

At the September General Meeting, there was a presentation about moving to hybrid meetings, which would give us the choice of either remote or in-person participation. This would open the way for so many more people to join in vital PSFC discussions and votes. It is an essential accommodation when, for various reasons, many who want to participate are unable to get to the Prospect Park Picnic House on Tuesday nights. (It's telling that at a recent GM I attended, the Picnic House was over capacity, meaning that if members *do* turn out in greater numbers, we don't even have a venue large enough to hold them!).

The presentation on hybrid meetings was clear and very well received. I expected the item to be on the agenda for a decision within a month or two. What happened? Assuming a positive vote, it will still take some time to implement this sensible proposal. Let's move ahead together!

Winston McIntosh

(B)ring in the Fun in 2025

To the editor:

A big thank you to the Fun Committee for the Happy Hour at BierWax on December 5.

They truly lived up to their name. It was just so much fun to be out and with friendly people. It was a wonderful reminder of what the Coop can be. Beyond just a grocery

store with good prices.

I’m looking forward to more events from the Fun Committee in 2025.

Barbara Mazor

Help for Coop Members Parenting Small Children

Fellow Members,

As COVID wound down, I was thrilled when our Coop reinstated member labor and returned to more familiar shopping procedures. Unfortunately, childcare, a long-standing support for families with young children, was yet another seemingly permanent casualty. We’ve been told that the Coop can no longer obtain affordable insurance for it.

If we cannot reinstate childcare, there are other ways to support families with young children, in particular, single-parent families. We can offer them longer than one year of parental leave from required work; I suggest at least three to four years, enough time for free daytime childcare in the form of 3K and Pre-K, to be available. I also suggest that this could be extended on a case-by-case basis, as needed. Perhaps a committee of members who are single parents could help us develop guidelines.

We can also offer an easy means for parents of young children (and so many others) to participate in Coop governance via virtual attendance at our monthly General Meetings. Currently, the only members who can take part in our GMs are those who can get to the Prospect Park Picnic house at 7p.m. on the last Tuesday of each month. For parents of young children (especially single parents), people who live far from the Picnic House, those with mobility issues or other caregiver responsibilities, there is no option to join these meetings, to offer opinions on important Coop matters, to bring pro-

posals to the floor, or to vote on others' proposals.

The Picnic House holds around 200 people, and our Coop has over 15,000 members. If we want to call our Coop a democratically run organization, we need to do much better in making its democracy more inclusive. Hybrid meetings would be a great start.

Cooperatively,
Alyce Barr

Conflict Resolution, Not Conflict Escalation

To the Editor:

Eight agenda items relate to the campaign to make the Coop part of the Boycott Divestment Sanctions movement.

I sponsored the seventh, item 901, which would "pause any member vote on items relating to a boycott of products associated with Israel pending four mediation sessions within six months from the vote on this item and issuance of a document containing a statement by each side."

The proposal that the Coop declare its allegiance to BDS polarizes the membership. Joe Holtz wrote in the *Linewaiters' Gazette* on February 26, 2024, for the General Coordinators, that the Israel boycott is qualitatively different from other boycotts that have been proposed in the past, and the campaign could result in thousands of members withdrawing. The differences in beliefs about the Israel-Palestine conflict have reached the point of vilification and overt hostility between members. There is no mechanism for resolving member disputes arising out of political identities and other belief systems. The Dispute Resolution Committee is not equipped to deal with such

disputes—and there are now multiple cases before the DRC resulting from this conflict. It seems self-evident that an attempt at collective conflict resolution would benefit the Coop.

Agenda Committee guideline number 2 provides that “an item may be placed ahead of others submitted earlier if the item requires more immediate attention or its timely consideration at the GM is beneficial to the efficient running of the Coop.…”

I requested that the Agenda Committee expedite discussion of item 901. The Agenda Committee did not do so, nor has it responded to my question how it applies Guideline 2.

To promote cooperative dispute resolution, I urge that the Agenda Committe schedule discussion of item 901 ahead of earlier pending boycott-related items or explain why Guideline 2 does not apply.

Noah Potter

Mission Statement in Support of Coop Culture

Dear members,

A BDS proponent approached me some weeks ago, asking me to support their proposal. I said it doesn’t align with the Coop mission. “That’s not really true,” she retorted. The word “really” is of interest here.

I’d like to share my POV regarding the BDS boycott proposal, informed by the Coop’s mission statement. One could argue that the following sentences from the statement are relevant to their proposal:

“We seek to avoid products that depend on the exploitation of others.”

However, “exploitation of others” relates to the labor culture at the company and how it treats staff; those companies are presumably independent from the government of the country they’re in.

“We strive to make the Coop welcoming and accessible to all and to respect the opinions, needs and concerns of every member. We seek to maximize participation at every level, from policymaking to running the store.”

This applies within the parameters of the aforementioned items in the mission statement, not losing sight of the first line of that last paragraph: “We are committed to diversity and equality. We oppose discrimination in any form.”

Yet…if there is a reason to exclude suppliers in Israel, it would be that “We prefer to buy from local…producers.” If suppliers in Israel would be excluded for that reason, it would be legit…*and apply to all suppliers in all faraway places, all politics aside.*

If it has to come to a vote, I’d suggest to appeal to Coop members as individuals and as allies of each other by way of Coop mission, no matter their backgrounds. Beyond that, I believe in the power of the individual consumer to forgo a product for whatever reason, political reasons included. It’d be a great thing if we did more of it.

Erik Schurink

Towards a Liberatory Coop

Dear Coop Members,

As we edge closer towards the end of the year, I’ve been reflecting on the ways in

which I show up in community and how the Coop and its values are an extension of my own. I feel an immense amount of gratitude for access to such an abundance of quality food, but also for the potential that the Coop has to become a liberatory space for the people. As a member, I believe that it's critical that we demand that the goods that we have on our shelves be reflective of our values. It's a radical act to choose not to purchase food from mega corporations and instead, to support small businesses and regenerative, family-owned farms.

In the same vein, I refuse to support a genocide and the occupation of stolen land. And I feel hopeful knowing that so many other Coop members share my commitment. I look forward to the day when we'll make it official, following in the footsteps of leaders at Olympia Food Co-Op in Washington state, as well as our neighbors at Greene Hill Food Co-Op. As an expression of their solidarity with Palestine, Greene Hill members voted in October to join the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, pledging not to stock Israeli products in their store until the end of the occupation.

If we are a collective that believes that the Coop is reflective of our values, then we must continue to decide how the millions of dollars that we spend on food every year will demonstrate what they are. Audre Lorde spoke truth when she wrote:

And I dream of our coming together

encircled driven
not only by love
but by lust for a working tomorrow
the flights of this journey
maples. uncertain
and necessary as water.

Taylor Pate

APRIL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

September 29, 2026



By Anita Bushell

Personnel Policies, Childcare Woes, and Home Delivery: Highlights from the April 30 General Meeting

The April 30, 2024 General Meeting focused on personnel policies, updates to the Personnel Committee and General Coordinator roles, as well as solutions for families without childcare.

OPEN FORUM

In the open forum, members brought up several concerns surrounding the Israeli/-Palestinian conflict, including opinions on boycotting Israeli products to protest the war in Gaza; the issue of whether the group Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BD-S) supports violence; and a 4/30/24 *Linewaiters' Gazette* letter titled "Coop Members Engage in Intimidation Campaign." A member who had recently traveled to Israel and Palestine spoke about the need for inclusivity at the Coop at this time. Several members advocated for hybrid (in person and video) General Meetings to accommodate those who cannot get to in-person meetings. One member spoke about how successful the Coop is and the need to bring the model to other neighborhoods. A member asked why childcare is not returning to the Coop.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer and General Manager Joe Holtz began his report by answering the question about childcare. The Coop cannot reinstate childcare because insurers will no longer provide coverage unless the Coop becomes a licensed childcare facility. Holtz shared the financial summary for the 8-week period ending March 24, 2024. Highlights included:

- Average weekly sales were $1,122,000 (2024), compared to $1,049,000 (2023)
- The gross margin was $1,724,000
- There was a $49,000 shortfall to cover current expenses of $1,773,000
- Cash and cash equivalents were $7.8 million, as opposed to $7.3 million in 2023
- Employee health benefits were 3.93% of sales as compared to 2.90% in the same period of the prior year

Holtz spoke about the gross margin drop this period versus the same period last year, as a result of decreasing the 25% markup to 24%, which lowers gross margin. Another factor in lowered gross margin is "shrink" (a loss of inventory because of fac-

tors such as damages, theft or administrative errors).

Holtz discussed the Coop's financial plans for the future, which include: home delivery, which will begin in approximately one year; restoring nine regular checkout stations (as opposed to the current seven); a savings plan of $7.5 to $10 million for the next pandemic because of concerns that the grocery industry will not receive the same support from the government that it got during the Covid pandemic.

During the Q&A period, a member asked whether expenses will be going up; another member asked what current interest rates were (5–5.25%). The question of how many members there currently are came up (15,900), and a discussion ensued about membership size control since 2009 because of lack of space at the Coop.

GENERAL COORDINATOR REPORTS

Joe Szladek opened the report by introducing the possibility of home delivery on weekdays as opposed to weekends. He then outlined the state of the current online member labor system, which has now been in place for three years, as member labor returned in full in July 2022. Szladek elaborated on the ongoing challenge of full operation with enough member labor, while having enough shifts for members to sign up for.

General Coordinator Ann Herpel added that it was important that members schedule more shifts if necessary to stay up to date, as well as plan for the summer, in case of absence for vacations. In addition, she reminded members that the online system responds to sales decreases, and fewer slots will be available when the Coop is receiving and selling less food in the summer months. During the Q&A period, members asked about growth in membership, beer committee work and an increase in stocking shifts.

A PUBLIC JOB PERFORMANCE REVIEW IS CONTRARY TO GOOD HUMAN RESOURCES

PRACTICE AND COULD EASILY RESULT IN A LAWSUIT AGAINST THE COOP.

Previous open forum questions were addressed, including push notifications for early--morning shifts, whether member labor would be involved in the proposed home delivery system, as well as shifts for the recently created Youth Committee, whose members are between 18 and 22 years old.

AGENDA ITEM: ROLE OF PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

General Coordinators (GCs) Joe Holtz and Lisa Moore presented a proposal for new Personnel Committee (PC) practices. Holtz stated that the GCs, in reviewing General Meeting-approved personnel policies, realized that there were deficiencies that needed to be addressed. Holtz referred to a 1981 policy that states that one role of the PC is for all performance reviews of GCs to come to the GM in writing and verbally. Holtz stated that a public job performance review is contrary to good human resources (HR) practice and could easily result in a lawsuit against the Coop. HR-related discussions must take place confidentially under the guidance of qualified HR professionals. The GCs work with the PC and an attorney recommended by National Cooperative Grocers to develop comprehensive policies that comply with widely accepted HR practices and establish a system of accountability and fairness. Holtz stated that the role of the PC, as delineated in this evening's proposal, is a result of that process. Additionally, Holtz said, the Coop and the GCs need a fully functioning PC. Passing this proposal would be a vital step to rebuilding the PC, which currently has two of the seven authorized member positions filled. Approving this proposal would allow the Coop to once again look for additional members of the PC.

The GCs and the PC have explored the possibility of implementing an appeals process, however after consulting multiple HR attorneys the Coop has been counseled that such an implementation could result in legal action against the Coop. The proposal outlines a neutral outside employment lawyer to conduct an investigation of complaints.

Moore then read part one of the PC proposal, relating to the role of the GCs in personnel policies. Moore stated that the proposal asks to combine into one coherent policy the current policy which was granted to the GCs by the GM over two separate proposals, in 1995 and 2002, and has been the practice for decades. Moore stated that the turnover in Coop staff is extremely low. Additionally, Coop employee policies are regularly reviewed by employment lawyers and employee handbook changes are regularly made with the input of Coop staff.

Moore then outlined and read part two of the proposal, which addresses the role of the PC. The purpose of part two of the proposal is to establish a system of accountability for the management team. The current proposal was approved in 1981, when standards were lower on PCs and would leave the Coop open to litigation. Moore re-emphasized the importance of rebuilding the Coop in order to clarify the role of the PC and asked for the GM to support the proposal.

> THE COOP NO LONGER HAS SQUADS AND SQUAD LEADERS, WHICH HAS ROBBED THE COOP OF A SENSE OF COMMUNITY, SAID A MEMBER.

During the Q&A period members asked questions including who appoints the members of the PC, and why it is currently understaffed. Another member asked about grievances and how they would be handled by the PC. Moore outlined how the current grievance process works. A member referred to a previous issue with a GC and how it was handled 15 months ago. Moore stated that personnel matters remain confidential in reference to this incident. One member asked whether members would be on the PC or only GCs. Moore answered by stating that PC applications would be from the membership pool, and then outlined how the applications process works.

After discussion, the meeting voted by hand count, because not enough ballots had been prepared. There were two attempts at counting hands. The first result was 71 yes, 86 no votes. The second result was 80 yes, 85 no votes. Thus, the proposal was

voted down.

AGENDA ITEM: CHILDCARE

Member Lauren Belski presented the agenda item, and proposed returning to a more "family friendly" Coop. She described the struggle of parents who cannot make it to GMs, or work shifts because of challenges with the current online labor system. In addition, Belski spoke about how the shift cycle is now different and that the Coop no longer has squads and squad leaders, which has robbed the Coop of a sense of community. Belski also brought up the possibility of hybrid General Meetings so that more members could attend. Holtz reminded the meeting that the Coop bylaws state that meetings must be in person (they were remote only during the pandemic) and that a change in meeting style would first mean a change in the bylaws. Members presented their views regarding childcare and hybrid meetings.

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES

Elizabeth Tobier presented the minutes of March 26, 2024; no corrections were made.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

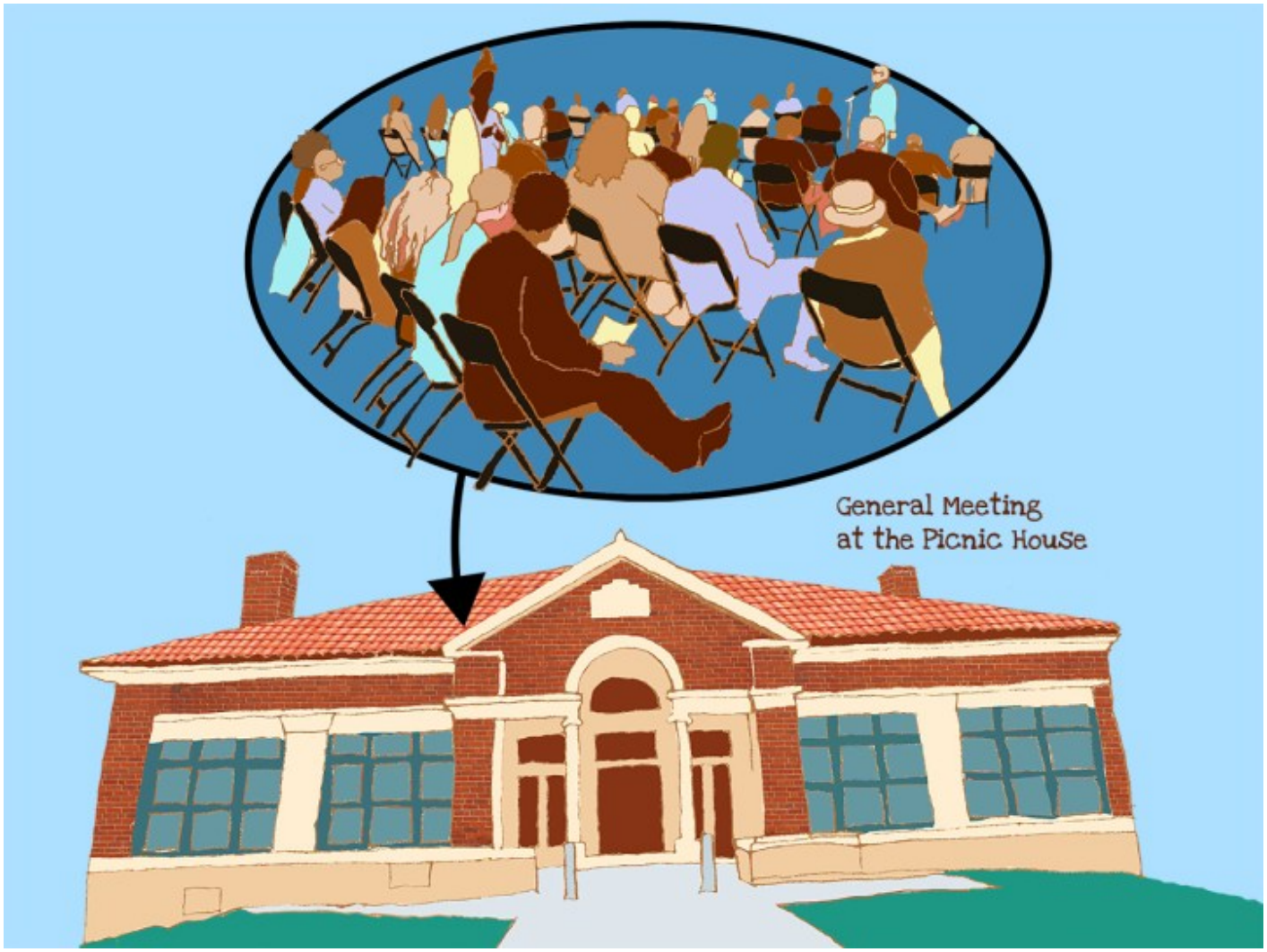
Tim Hospodor chaired the meeting and all members of the board present voted in favor of accepting the advice of the members on the minutes of the March 26, 2024 GM. All members of the board present voted in favor of accepting the advice of the members on Agenda Item 1, Personnel Policies: Personnel Committee and General Coordinator Roles.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Anita Bushell is a freelance writer who has been published in Friends Journal*,* Ford Foundation Report*, and* Uncensored: American Experiences with Poverty and Homelessness*. She just published* Object Essays*.*

TWISTS AND TURNS OF ROBERT'S RULES AT THE FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING

September 29, 2026



By Jess Powers

The General Meeting (GM) held its February 27 gathering in person at ShapeShifter Labs, a performance space diagonally across the street from the Park Slope Food Coop. Roughly 132 members attended that rainy evening.

OPEN FORUM POLITICALLY CHARGED BUT RESPECTFUL

The Open Forum began with questions about securing a larger meeting space, so the

Coop can hold a vote on a proposal to boycott Israeli goods. Past votes drew large crowds and led to a rules change requiring a supermajority for boycotts. The current venue doesn't have sufficient capacity to house the vote.

> FLEX WORKER CAROL WALD'S REMARKS ELICITED BOTH APPLAUSE AND A REMINDER FROM CHAIR COMMITTEE MEMBER IMANI Q'RYN THAT APPLAUSE AND BOOS ARE DISCOURAGED AT THE MEETING.

Carol Wald, a flex worker, acknowledged strong feelings on the subject as "a proud Jew, whose grandfather and uncle were killed in Auschwitz. The rage and grief and trauma that propels so many to work against the boycott," she said, "[is what] compels me to work with Palestinian people against genocide." She called for mutual respect as debate continues. Her remarks elicited both applause and a reminder from Chair Committee member Imani Q'ryn that applause and boos are discouraged at the meeting.

Coop member Sophie Glickman spoke of a strategic boycott as the civilian death toll in Gaza exceeds 30,000, many of the victims women and children. She continued that Israel is using starvation as a tactic—a war crime—and that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has openly stated his opposition to Palestinian statehood. She did not wish to "[make] fellow Jewish Coop members uncomfortable" but inquired about the location for the vote.

Outspoken Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) critic, Jesse Rosenfeld said that Coop members who support Palestine support BDS, and that BDS supports violence. He stated that the BDS website itself describes "armed resistance" and "any action, whether one considers it legally or ethically justifiable." [Note: This reporter's review and fact check of the BDS website did not find these words; rather, "non-violence" and opposition to "discrimination, including anti-Semitism."]

Rosenfeld continued, “October 7, rape, infanticide… when will the Chair Committee clamp down [against BDS]?” His comments were also met by applause—and another reminder from Chair Committee member Q’ryn about applause and boos.

Brian Shuman, a food processor, expressed appreciation for Carol Wald (who spoke earlier), even though he disagreed with her position. He supports Anera (American Near East Refugee Aid), which provides immediate emergency aid and he “opposes BDS, which does not acknowledge Israel’s right to exist and is anti-Semitic.”

In response, someone in the audience called a point of order, asking whether clarification can be made if a point made is based on fact or opinion.

GENERAL COORDINATOR UPDATES ON SPACE FOR BDS VOTE, CHILDCARE AND FLYERS IN THE STAIRWELL

Ann Herpel provided updates as one of five General Coordinators. Regarding the larger space for a BDS vote, “we are making progress,” she said. The Coop is negotiating with a venue, and although an agreement isn’t finalized, “it looks promising… hopeful,” she continued.

> “CHILDCARE WILL NOT BE RETURNING TO THE COOP,” ANN HERPEL ANNOUNCED. THOSE INVOLVED HAD BEEN WAITING TO HEAR BACK FROM A FINAL INSURANCE BROKER AND WERE UNSUCCESSFUL IN SECURING COVERAGE.

“Childcare will not be returning to the Coop,” Herpel announced. Those involved had been waiting to hear back from a final insurance broker and were unsuccessful in securing coverage. The “landscape around insurance has changed dramatically,” she continued, and “would now require a license to operate [childcare].” The Coop will repurpose the room for operational needs.

In another shift from pre-pandemic times, the stairwell leading up to the office used to be covered in flyers announcing things like shows, rooms for rent and kombucha SCOBYs to share. That practice is not going to return, Herpel declared. The New York City Fire Department (FDNY) and New York State Insurance Fund (NYSIF—which the Coop gets inspected by) declared that fire exits have to be "unobstructed."

Herpel is working with the staff liaison to the *Gazette* to create a digital listing for community events, things for sale or trade, etc.

TREASURER'S REPORT

General Coordinator Joe Holtz presented the preliminary 52-week Financial Statement, provided online with the agenda for the GM. He explained that the financial statement needs to be audited, and there are usually not many changes.

> ONE OF THE "EXTRAORDINARY THINGS" ABOUT THE COOP, GENERAL COORDINATOR JOE HOLTZ EFFUSED, IS THAT WE HAD A COMPLETE INVENTORY TURNOVER OF 62 TIMES THIS YEAR. PLENTY OF STORES HAVE TURNS OF 14 TIMES A YEAR.

One of the "extraordinary things" about the Coop, Holtz effused, is that we had a complete inventory turnover of 62 times this year, exceeding the year prior. Plenty of stores, he continued, have turns of 14 times a year. "Our dried mangos are less hard," he mused.

REPORT ON NEW LABELS AND FUTURE NCG SAVINGS

General Coordinator Joe Szladek explained that new electronic shelf labels appearing in the produce aisles (and soon to spread throughout the store) will provide more accuracy in pricing, as prices change often. This is due to purchasing from a vendor at a different wholesale price or when United Natural Foods, Inc. (UNFI) has a deal on some items.

Szladek continued that he hopes the electronic shelf labels will save a few hours a day of staff time daily by not having to reprint and post new labels. He also expects the Coop to implement a National Cooperative Grocer program called Coop Deals after the deployment of electronic shelf labels is complete throughout the store. With Coop Deals, members will see savings on particular items of 20–30% off every two weeks, from Kettle brand potato chips to yogurt. Currently, staff are "too busy to handle all the labels" in order to comply with requirements NCG has set, but electronic shelf labels will solve some of those issues. Additionally, utilizing NCG resources would save staff time previously spent negotiating prices.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMITTEE PRESENTS REVISED RULES

Deb Magocsi, Helen Koh, and Grace Protos from the Dispute Resolution Committee presented the sole proposal on the agenda, "Revisions to the Procedures that Govern the Coop's Disciplinary Process."

Magocsi explained that the original rules were written in 2005, revised in 2012, and again in 2018. The nature of disputes has changed and committee members have "seen many opportunities to make the process better," she continued. She described the process as unnecessarily adversarial and legalistic, and the intent of the new rules to be "more reflective of a cooperative institution."

> DEB MAGOCSI FROM THE DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMITTEE DESCRIBED THE HEARING PROCESS AS LONG, "ARDUOUS AND PAINFUL FOR EVERYONE," "HUMILIATING FOR THE ACCUSED," AND SHARED THAT THE "HEARING GROUP FELT IT WAS A WASTE OF TIME AND ENERGY."

The disciplinary process involves the Dispute Resolution Committee, which investigates complaints and recommends actions; the Hearing Administration Committee, which organizes and administers hearings; and the Hearing Officer Committee, which

runs hearings. In summary, when the DRC receives a report of member misconduct, it assigns a member to investigate, and the full committee decides by consensus how to respond, typically a warning letter—but potentially the maximum penalty: being asked to resign. See also: How the Dispute Resolution Process at the Coop Works; Inside the Coop Hearing Process; and Coop Member Expelled After Repeated Mask Wearing Violations.

The goal, Magocsi explained, is to use "more accessible language," to have a "clearer definition of member misconduct," and to recommend "mediation as the first option" thereby "[avoiding] hearings and judicial style process." Hearings would still be available to members wishing to appeal serious DRC decisions, but the rule change would mean instead of the hearing group, three members of the HOC would determine whether the misconduct took place, rather than Coop members selected at random.

Magocsi described the hearing process as long (up to five hours), "arduous and painful for everyone," "humiliating for the accused," and shared that the "hearing group felt it was a waste of time and energy."

Jesse Rosenfeld then proposed an amendment to "various '-isms'" in Article III sec D Part 6, which reads: "Racist, sexist, homophobic, ageist, discriminatory, or other harmful conduct." He said that "harmful conduct is a good start" but urged the members to "add to it" after the "Trump administration normalized a lot of hatred." Specifically, he asked to add: "xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia."

Member Abdi, who is Muslim and Somali, countered that he "[feels] protected by the amendment as is." Others chimed in for or against. A vote on the amendment was held and the "nays" had it.

The meeting then returned to discussion of the proposal of the Committee. George, a floor monitor, argued that we "need a process that allows more informed, deliberative decision-making."

There was a move to table the vote, followed by a Robert's Rules check. (Robert's Rules of Order are the parliamentary procedures used by many voluntary organizations for governance of meetings.)

A point of information was made and Koh explained that the agenda item was presented for discussion at the previous meeting. A vote to table was held, and the "nays" had it again. Discussion continued on the proposal.

David Moss of the Chair Committee argued that it's a "good proposal and there's no f—ing way to get a group of people to read 20-page documents before they come to the meeting." Member Jim concurred that there are "a lot of holes in the democratic process overall," but he believed that it's important to be fair to those who invested time in the agenda item. "In a democracy," he continued, "it's on us to be informed and to come to the meeting prepared. As we move forward, there are a lot of discussions to be had about procedures." Dan agreed and reminded the room of the process already in place: Vote on the item tonight, propose an amendment if there are any issues, and resolve those later.

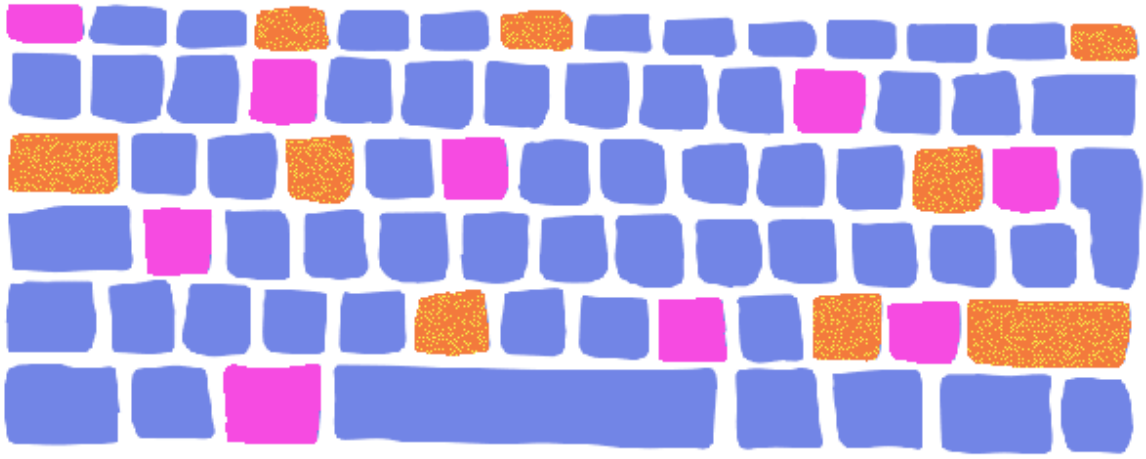
In the end, 115 voted in favor of the new guidelines and five opposed. The Coop board accepted the advice of the members and the meeting was adjourned.

Jess Powers works in emergency management and enjoys adventures in nature and cooking. She's on IG @foodandfury.

APRIL 9, 2024

September 29, 2026

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



PROVENANCE PLEASE FOR ALL COOP PRODUCTS

Dear Fellow Members:

Can we add country of origin as dedicated information on shelf labels? On house-wares, on dry goods—the Coop is about educated choices. I know we make a sign

when we're proud of something, usually involving fair trade, but I would appreciate this information for all items, especially as the tech team programs labels like we now have in produce.

Thank you,
Lisa Guido

REFINING MEMBER USE OF THE PAGING SYSTEM

Dear Fellow Members:

While many of the initiatives to improve the Coop's sonic experience, from a "Shift DJ" discussion item at a GM a few months ago to a PSFC Spotify channel, are music-oriented, there is one simple thing that every member who is able can do to go easier on the ears of your fellow shoppers and workers.

Our awesome paging system enables anyone using it to be heard using our "inside voices," but there is an enormous difference between ending a page with a finger and the amplified collision of plastic that blasts everyone at the Coop when a page is ended by hanging up the phone.

For many, this is one more piece of noise pollution, like sirens and hydraulic bus brakes, that we simply tune out. But for others, it is an unnecessary aural assault that can be avoided with a small amount of mindfulness.

Please. If you use the paging system and you are able, use your finger to hang up the quiet way.

Thanks,
Brian Shuman

WHAT'S THE PLAN FOR WORKING PARENTS?

Dear Editor:

Two years ago, the world—and our member work requirements—asked us to return to a version of the "way it was." A single mother of two—as hardcore a Food Coop member as you can get—told me she was leaving.

"What am I supposed to do?" she said.

Many families feel abandoned by the new policies of the Coop. With work, school, meals and bedtime, they find it increasingly difficult with the online platform to even schedule a shift, let alone worry about who'll care for their children while they do it. This leads to an increased work debt many are reminded of every time they need to buy food for their families.

"Why must I ask permission to shop at a store I've been a member of for over 10 years for having a lapsing grace period after being suspended for not doing shifts that are impossible to schedule?" is a sentiment I've heard more than once.

In the past few years, I've spent a lot of my (limited) free time and energy working to bring back childcare, and when we voted as a community, the item overwhelmingly passed. Then we hit a hiccup: our childcare insurance policy is impossible to renew.

So, what now? We've already lost many families, and we continue to fail to serve young families who are members, especially those in single parent households. The end of childcare should not mean the end of support for working member families.

As we move into the next 50 years of cooperation, we need to ask ourselves how will equity, in addition to cost efficiency and convenience, shape our idea of membership

and work requirements? How can we make it easier for families with young children to complete their required shifts?

Lauren Belski

HUMAN-SIZED PORTIONS, PLEASE

Dear Gazette:

Buying four bags of smoked paprika, three bags of peppercorns, five bags of parsley and so on, I would suggest a larger serving size in our member packed goods. If we could have a number of larger sizes of bags so I don't clear out the tamari roasted pepitas and smoked paprika in one run, I'd feel less guilty and I think many members with larger households would be happier, plus fewer wasted bags.

Here's my Coop spiced pasta recipe for a quick easy meal (feeds four):

Ingredients:

2-3 tbs of parsley
2-3 tbs of oregano
3-4 tbs of garlic
1-2 tsp of Aleppo pepper
Salt to taste
Freshly ground pepper to taste
½ cup of olive oil or whatever else you like
1 lb of pasta (I prefer Molisana brand but whatever works, gluten free can be fine too)
Optional: Fresh grated Parmesan or Romano cheese

Steps:

Boil 7 cups/1.7 liters of water in electric kettle and transfer to pot or boil on stove.

Pour pasta in water and give an initial stir, cover and bring to boil, drop to lowest flame that keeps it boiling, maybe smallest burner. Stir every couple of minutes so it doesn't get stuck together.

When the pasta reaches correct tenderness (which is usually indicated via the time shown on the pasta package), drain water over another vessel to save some pasta water.

Dump pasta in a big bowl, pour olive oil over it and add in ½-¾ cup of the pasta water.

Pour all the spices in and stir for a bit till everything is coated with oil and spices.

Serve into bowls and add black pepper, salt and/or cheese as needed.

Enjoy,
Mark Paperno

NATIONAL GRID? HA! NATIONAL GREED'S MORE LIKE IT.

To the Editor:

A Coop member since the 1980s, I raised my family in the neighborhood, and one of the changes I've become keenly aware of is the skyrocketing cost of utilities. Their rates are putting New Yorkers in debt; the greed of National Grid hurts us all. It makes exorbitant profits off captive ratepayers while poisoning those who live in their shadow with their product, a potent greenhouse gas.

It’s unconscionable that utilities across the country are building infrastructure we don’t need, don’t want and can’t afford at a time when the city and state of New York are passing legislation that will wean us off this high-emissions fossil fuel completely by 2050, a few decades into the future.

We must do this to have a livable planet. Yet, seeing the end of business as usual, National Grid is milking the system as fast as it can, expanding pipes and infrastructure because that’s where their profits lie. Money pours into the purses of executives and investors while the public struggles to pay bills. And methane, the main component of “natural” gas, is 86 times the heat-trapping gas as carbon dioxide, when measured over a 20-year period. We now experience unhealthy emissions in the air and from our stoves and pay exorbitant fees at the same time—all of which is contrary to the spirit that we stand for.

But we can do something.

While our Coop was established to provide healthy food at affordable prices, it’s up to us to stand up to National Greed and oppose their latest rate hike proposal, which translates to over $30/month more per household or a total of $3.8 billion. To make your voice count, call your legislators and Governor Hochul, and demand they pass the NY HEAT Act, S2016, which would limit utility bills for low- and moderate-income ratepayers to six percent of income.

JK Canepa

A NOVEL IDEA: BOYCOTTS AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Fellow Coop members,

Why spend the time, money, and emotional energy on renting out a large space, hir-

ing security, and debating a contentious issue endlessly when there is another possibility?

The people in favor of boycotting Israel would like to see their beliefs and shopping decisions forced on others. As a democratic institution, why are we looking for imposed mandates as solutions to divisive product issues when we have individual shopper decisions as a freer, more representative alternative?

I propose a novel idea: the individual boycott. What could be more democratic than each shopper making their own purchasing decisions based on their unique backgrounds and political persuasions? Products under minimal turnover thresholds due to these individual boycott decisions could then be removed from shelves.

Let's allow members to "vote" through their purchases, and we can avoid this whole *balagan* (commotion). How many of us really want to ruin an evening of our lives debating the conflict in the Middle East? Believe me, faster than you can say *gefilte*, I'll be the first to schlep my tuchus to whichever hapless venue the Coop finds to host a vote on the topic. But do I want to do that when I could be sitting on my couch munching on Bamba? Not really.

Do you want to single out the only Jewish state because you believe it to be the world's greatest evil as it fights a defensive war to return its hostages from a barbaric terrorist organization? Be my guest! YOU do not need to buy products from Israel.

I, for one, will proudly continue to stock my cart with Sabra hummus until the end of my days. Please, let's stop with this bupkis and focus on what unites our community instead.

Jonathan Aranov

POLITICS ARE PERSONAL

To the Editor,

I am dismayed to learn that the Coop and the *Gazette* are once again putting politics before the cooperation and respect that the Coop has embraced since its founding.

I have been a member for over 20 years, and it was this feeling of community, combined with the quality of food and respect for farmers and the environment that has made me proud.

I am a Jew who strongly supports the Palestinian cause. I show my support in many ways—personal ways. I don't need the Coop to tell me what products to buy or what products to boycott. I urge the Coop to permanently table this discussion. Sadly, if this political battle is allowed to rage at meetings and in the *Gazette*, or worse, if the Coop begins banning products based on political considerations, I will have to resign my membership.

In cooperation,
Helene Davis

BDS AND THE INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION

Dear Coop Members,

While I disagree with many points in Joe Holtz's recent Coordinator's Corner column, this letter addresses only his unsupported claim that the Coop can best "welcome"

members by avoiding a vote on boycotting Israeli products. How can anyone anguished over Israel's genocide in Gaza (including, by the way, Palestinian members) feel welcomed by Joe's preferred approach?

Writing "on behalf of the General Coordinators," Joe insists that a BDS boycott would transgress the International Principles of Cooperation. He paraphrases the first IPC principle as "essentially stat[ing] that coops welcome people" from divergent backgrounds. The actual language is: "Co-operatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination." Joe relies on the slippery word "welcome," used in the sense of "make comfortable." But being free from discrimination has nothing to do with being sheltered from controversy. If a boycott is enacted, the Coop will remain just as open to members who dislike that provision as it currently is to BDS advocates. A healthy cooperative must be resilient enough to accommodate serious disagreements, using democratic methods to decide a course of action.

Broadly hinting at the GCs' distaste for those methods, Joe writes: "Regardless of [a potential] vote's outcome, thousands of members could feel unsupported by their Coop and may choose to withdraw their membership." These are scare tactics, given that a tiny, vocal group of people desperate to shield Israel from legitimate criticism appears to constitute the "anti" side of the debate. Joe correctly notes that "The GCs… are obligated to support the Coop's democratic processes." I urge them to take their thumbs off the scale as we address this vital matter.

Jan Clausen

BOYCOTTING A BOYCOTT

Dear Editors:

Letters, opinions related to the Hamas war are wholly inappropriate and must be rejected.

Letters, opinions related to Hamas's terrorism and war are wholly inappropriate and must be rejected.

Boycotts, especially those against those that FIGHT anti-American, anti-Western Jihadi terrorism have NO PLACE in Park Slope.

We've had ENOUGH division and polarization in America, in American Politics, in Park Slope, and in the COOP.

THANK YOU FOR REJECTING any such offensive and objectionable initiatives.

J. Anthony Levy

INCLUDE MEMBER INPUT IN LETTERS POLICY CHANGES

To the Editors:

As a group of proud Jews particularly affected by *Gazette* standards, we feel that your Letters policy changes required input from us. We needed to be consulted on your new standards for Letters to the Editor and Member Contributions so that the new standards would allow all members to see in print that we feel welcome at our own Coop.

You made clear with your suspension of letters that content in letters and contributions are a very real problem to be considered, and we agree one hundred percent. A

respectful dialogue between the Gazette editors and our group in the same room would have been productive.

Instead, the Editors took about a week, seemingly without consulting anyone but themselves.

That Israel is criticized is not the issue. Israel is subject to more legitimate criticism by Israelis than anyone else. Yet we read a great deal of illegitimate criticism in the Gazette, and our harsh and deadly history shows us the veiled anti-Semitism underneath. Some of it is not veiled at all, just taking new forms that may be unrecognized for now by others. Our group cannot know what is legitimately offensive to other Jews and other groups of people in general until we are told. And others cannot know what is legitimately offensive to us unless they are told. More dialogue, not less, can bridge this gap in understanding.

The only litmus test in this regard for submissions to the Gazette is whether a Coop member feels unsafe and/or unwelcome in the Coop. This group of proud Jews have collectively felt both since October 7th of 2023.

Jesse Rosenfeld (+150 signatories)

Editor's response:

The change in policy regarding letters was further amended in early March. Letters and member contributions concerning the ongoing violence in the Middle East and its potential impact on the Coop are no longer restricted.

A RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS OF OVERREACH

Dear Members,

I would like to respond to Kristian Nammack's February 28 letter on the subject of the vote to dissolve the Committee Oversight Committee (COC).

Mr. Nammack charges that the vote was based on "untruths." Having witnessed the formation and actions of the COC as a member of the Agenda Committee until October of 2023, I would like to address the alleged "falsehoods."

Firstly, he asserts that the COC "never attempted to arbitrate committee disputes—that is the job of the Dispute Resolution Committee." That is incorrect; the DRC concerns itself with the actions of individuals, not committees. The COC's own previous description of its mission on the Coop website declared it would serve as "a liaison between committees, members and staff," suggesting that the COC would indeed try to mediate between various groups.

Secondly, he says that the COC never claimed that it would reduce the staff's workload. This was a part of the original proposal passed at the January 2022 GM: "Importantly, the proposal is intended to increase the ability of committees to reduce staff work."

Thirdly, the COC did attempt to take on work credit management. In response to the Structure and Reporting Requirements for New Coop Committees at the April 2022 GM, the COC again declared its mission: "Supervise all committee reports and requirements including scheduling updates and tracking work credits." Left unaddressed and unresolved was that the Coop already had systems in place for reporting all work credit. Even so, further encroachments upon staff time and member privacy occurred when the COC took it upon itself to try to inspect the past work records of thousands of members, not just those on Initiative committees. The purpose of these investigations was unclear, but the inappropriateness of this endeavor, the lack of any mandate and the enormous demands on the staff were suggested at the GM.

Mr. Nammack ignores why the resolution to disband the COC passed by a near 3 to 1 margin. As staff member Jana Cunningham's presentation made clear, the COC failed

to perform its mission to have committee members of both Essential and Initiative committees report to the Gazette, GM, and website their information and activities. Instead, the COC took upon the task of forming a complaint desk and investigating the decisions made by Essential committees. There was no language anywhere in the final item approved by the GM to authorize these activities. It was only after the October 2023 GM that the COC removed from the Coop website its self-declared mission to "investigate committee activities as requested." The COC's staff liaison, Joe Holtz, has never explained why this language appeared on the website in the first place or why it was promptly removed after Ms. Cunningham called our attention to it at the October GM. Notably, he didn't defend the COC's activities at either GM where the fate of the committee was being determined.

As was her prerogative, Ms. Cunningham took the feedback she received at the October GM and modified her item to specify for a full dissolution of the Committee Oversight Committee. Surely, the January GM and Mr. Nammack's letter make clear that, given the COC's gross overstepping of its stated purpose, she was right to do so. Casting doubts on a longtime and highly respected staff member who went far beyond the call of duty to do what she felt was right for the Coop, Mr. Nammack has provided only further justification for disbanding the Committee Oversight Committee.

In cooperation,
Cynthia Payne

JANUARY GM: MEMBERS VOTE TO RAISE THE WORK REQUIREMENT AGE TO 22

September 29, 2026



ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE



ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE

By Walecia Konrad

There was a lot of voting going on at the January Park Slope Food Coop General Meeting, held in person at the Picnic House in Prospect Park. Members voted to raise the work requirement age from 18 to 22, giving PSFC households with college students much sought-after clarity on how young adults should be represented.

In another vote, members voted yes to disband the Committee Oversight Committee,

a member committee designed to make sure other committees were meeting their work slot and reporting requirements. Going forward, Coop staff will provide that oversight.

OPEN FORUM

Before the votes, the meeting kicked off with the Open Forum, a time reserved for members to ask questions or bring up concerns not included in the meeting's agenda. During this time, a group from the Park Slope Food Coop Members for Palestine took turns voicing their concerns about the war in Gaza and asking Coop staffers to consider an online meeting to discuss a boycott of Israeli goods. This issue has come up during Open Forum in several recent GMs.

The speakers pointed out that more than 1,000 members had signed a petition in support of a boycott. Many asked for a status update on the General Coordinators' efforts to find a venue to discuss the matter that is large enough to accommodate the anticipated number of members expected to attend. Others reiterated their request to have an online meeting for discussion and voting, adding that the emergency in Gaza required this approach.

One Coop member for Palestine asked about fact-checking at the *Linewaiters' Gazette,* pointing to a recent letter that claimed—erroneously according to the speaker—that the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement promotes violence. Later, the letter's author, Jesse Rosenfeld, defended his submission, saying the included links proved his assertion.

AT THE MOST RECENT GENERAL MEETING, MEMBERS VOTED TO SAY GOODBYE TO THE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.

THE GENERAL COORDINATORS' RESPONSE

General Coordinator Joe Holtz then took the mic for the Treasurer's report but began by answering some of the questions from the Open Forum.

Holtz said the General Coordinators were looking to rent a space large enough to accommodate a BDS discussion, which would likely include 2,500 members. So far coordinators have been turned down by places like the King's Theater, BAM, and many Brooklyn schools, Holtz said. In addition, Holtz reminded members that the Coop held a meeting at Brooklyn Tech High School in 2012 to discuss the referendum to join BDS, and voted no. At the end of the meeting, police asked Coop staff to inform them if the Coop ever had a meeting like that again, he said. Holtz also said that the police told the Coop to hire private security and that Brooklyn Tech said we should have alerted them in advance as to what we would be discussing.

Because of that 2012 event and the limited space, the coordinators took an "extraordinary action" shortly before the November General Meeting and removed the boycott discussion item from the meeting's agenda, Holtz said.

He added that in-person general meetings are mandated by the Coop's bylaws, which require the Board to meet in person at a time that members are invited to join them. As a result, having a Zoom meeting to discuss the boycott issue couldn't happen without a change in the bylaws.

During COVID, GMs were held on Zoom because of the emergency nature of the pandemic and the fact that public spaces were locked down. "We had guidance and rules on that from three governments," Holtz said.



ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE

COOP FINANCES

Holtz then moved to the Treasurer's report. The Coop's finances continue to recover nicely after the pandemic. Sales for the 48-week period ending Dec. 31, 2023 were $50,533,000—a $6.5 million increase from the same period last year. The Coop reported $181,201 in operating income, a significant increase from the slightly more than $266,000 loss reported last year. Holtz also reported that the Coop lowered its markup from 25% to 24% in late January, which was ahead of schedule.

Holtz also pointed out that the Coop's gross margin increased to 19.75% from 19.5%. The increase is great news, Holtz explained, because gross margin is crucial for the Coop's financial sustainability. He encouraged members to consult page two of the Jan. 30, 2024 financial summary for a detailed explanation of gross margin and its im-

portance to the Coop.

During the question and answer period after the Treasurer's report, a member asked if it would be possible to access current and past financial reports and GM agendas on the website. Holtz answered that he would discuss this with the other coordinators and look into this good suggestion.

CHILDCARE UPDATE

Next, General Coordinator Lisa Moore updated members on the Coop's longstanding attempts to bring back childcare after last year's vote to restart the service. Coordinators have not been able to find an insurer that will cover childcare at the Coop because it is not a licensed New York State childcare facility. Licensing requirements are quite stringent and the Coop's childcare room does not meet requirements.



ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE

After many frustrating attempts to find an insurer that will cover a non-licensed facility, Moore reported that the coordinators recently got a bid from an insurance company for $3 million per year, nine times the $335,000 the Coop is paying for business insurance now. Since then, the coordinators approached three insurance brokers look-

ing for help. One said no, another didn't reply and the third said they are working on it. Moore said she is hoping to hear more from that broker soon.

COOKING CLASSES ARE IN FULL SWING—BUT STILL ON ZOOM

Jeff Bonar of the Food Coop Cooking Class squad reported that the committee has conducted six online cooking classes in the last six months. The next one, featuring "Personalized Chili" will be held on February 22. Bonar also announced that the committee is looking for guest chefs to lead future classes in return for work slot credit. For more information on guest chefs, future classes and links to past recipes, Bonar encouraged members to check out foodcoopcooks.org. He also said the committee is looking forward to holding classes in person soon.

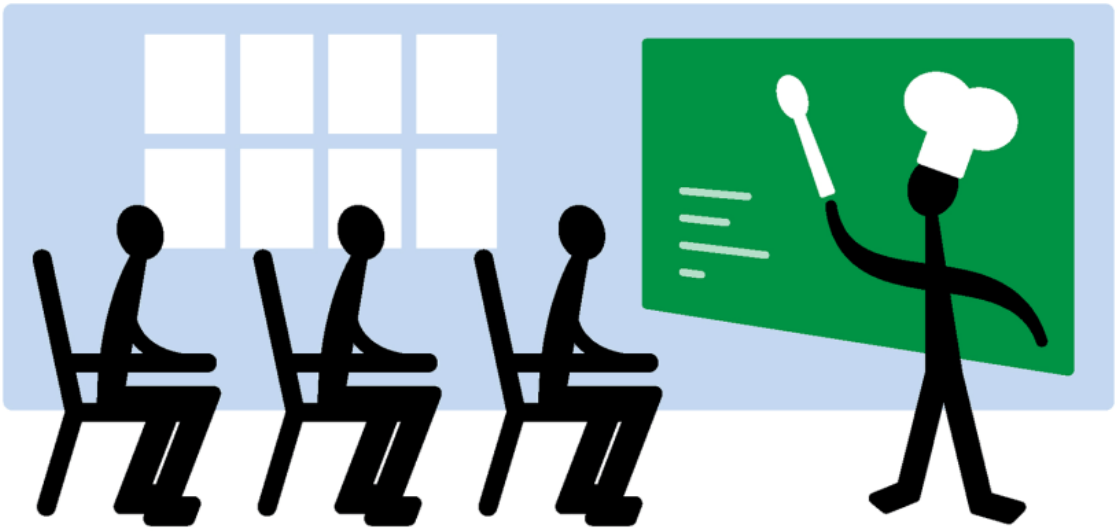


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE

DOES THE PSFC NEED A COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE COMMITTEES?

Coordinator Jana Cunningham presented the first agenda item up for a membership vote: her proposal to disband the Committee Oversight Committee (COC). As the proposal describes, the COC was started almost two years ago to reduce Coop staff time

spent overseeing member committees, to make sure committees post their mission statements on the Coop's website and to assist committees with reporting requirements and tracking work slot credit.

Cunningham explained that the COC oversees member-originated "initiative" committees, such as the Environmental or Food Safety committees, and not the operational or essential committees that make up the vast majority of work slots at the Coop. Only 80 members are part of an initiative Coop committee.

The COC is not meeting its objectives, Cunningham said, using a report card to make her point. While the COC has ensured that about 60% of committee mission statements are posted, in 2023 very few committees met the requirements to report to a General Meeting once a year (10%) or publish submissions in the Linewaiters' Gazette twice a year (1%), Cunningham reported. She also said that the Committee has not been effective in tracking work slots and thus was not saving staff time. As a result, Cunningham asked members to vote to disband the committee.

During the discussion period, the chairman of the COC vigorously defended the existence of the committee and expressed his surprise that the committee was "on the chopping block." There was also some discussion that disbanding the committee, which was started by longtime and extremely active member Rachel Porter, who has since passed away, would hurt her legacy at the Coop.

The vote was taken and the proposal passed 84 in favor, 34 against.

A NEW MINIMUM AGE FOR COOP MEMBERSHIP

Holtz presented the final agenda item—a proposal to amend the age for working at the Coop, which would help clarify the definition of a Coop household. Holtz explained that after hearing from many members that the current household requirement for 18-year-olds to join the Coop could be confusing and cumbersome for families with college-age children who were living away from home, the general coordinators decid-

ed to propose some changes.

Holtz proposed defining an adult person as someone who has reached the age of 21, and that all adults in a household are required to join the Coop and fulfill membership requirements. In addition, any person between the ages of 18 and 21 who wants to join the Coop will be allowed to become a full Coop member, but they will be exempt from the work requirement.

Holtz explained that the work exemption would apply to all 18-to-21-year-olds, even if they were a household of young people who were, for example, working or attending Brooklyn College and wanting to join the Coop. “We wouldn’t make some 18-year-olds work just because they’re not living with their parents. That wouldn’t be fair,” said Holtz.

During the discussion period, several members took exception to the work exemption for all 18-to-21-year-olds, arguing that if someone lives in the community and is a Coop member, it isn’t an unfair burden for them to work.

One member pointed out that many 21-year-olds are still in college, so 22 might be a better age for the upper limit. Holtz agreed and changed the proposal to age 22.

Members voted to amend the age to join the Coop from 18 to 22, with 69 in favor and 50 opposed.

The Board of Directors then voted to accept the advice of members and the meeting was adjourned.