

Re: Response to June 18th Email

Michael [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Sat, 23 Aug 2025 19:46:10 -0400

To "board" <[REDACTED]>

Tags WW

Hi Board,

Thanks for the clear presentation of your answers to my questions. I find this helpful.

For my article, I have some follow-up questions. As a person with Autistic Spectrum Disorder, I'd like to humbly request both patience and specificity.

[Editorial Note: The reader might be confused by the numbering system of the following paragraphs. I have labeled the first three sections 1a, 1b, and 1c. The paragraphs below these first three sections are numbered 2 through 9.]

1a. You wrote that you do not believe that I hold the view that our office staff and The Board are not human beings who are acting in good faith.

Q. Could you please explain why you felt a need to write the following to me?

"The office staff are human beings who are acting in good faith, just as the board members are."

1b. You wrote that you believe that I named and blamed a specific Board member.

Q. Can you please let me know, specifically, in what way I did that?

Point of Information: You wrote, in part, "...as stated, we believe that you named and blamed..."

Q. Can you please let me know on what date you stated this accusation?

1c. Thank you for letting me know that you don't think that I've done something wrong. This has been weighing on me heavily. You wrote that you believe that my "...approach in this instance could have been more in line with the co-op's values of constructive communication and mutual respect".

Q. Could you please let me know exactly what I did that you feel wasn't "in line with the co-op's values of constructive communication and mutual respect"?

2. In the email to which I am replying right now, you wrote about our Internal Waiting List. I'll address that in a separate email.

3. Thank you for letting me know that communications between Members and office staff are not automatically confidential.

Q. Should I consider communications between the Board and myself to be automatically confidential?

You continued to write, in part, "...courtesy should be maintained in all exchanges, including actions taken with the communication post-exchange".

Q. Did you mean to imply that I have done something wrong? If so, can you please be specific?

4. Thank you for letting me know that you acknowledge my request that you avoid speculating about my feelings, and that you will focus on addressing the content of my messages.

5. You wrote, in part, that "...the Board does not find the standardized test scores or education status of members to be relevant when responding to communication..."

That's good to know but, on June 18, 2025, I implied that you might think that I am stupid. I wrote "We Autistics are not necessarily stupid". I'm sorry for not having been more clear. That was my mistake.

I feel that you have treated me with condescension repeatedly, and continue to do so. I have cited many examples of this. As an autistic, I have to remind myself that my interpretations of the words of others might be wrong. Perhaps you have not treated me in a condescending manner.

Q. Do you think that you have treated me with condescension?

6. Thank you for acknowledging the fact that I am aware that Board decisions are collective, and that volunteers contribute significantly to the Co-op.

On June 16, 2025, you wrote, "The Board wanted to remind you that this proposal was not made by the treasurer individually. It was created by the Finance Committee, approved by the Board, and recently by the membership."

Q. Can you please explain, with specificity, why you felt a need to explain this to me?

7. On June 16, 2025, you wrote, "Please consider the co-op's values and the impact of your actions when communicating in future."

As an explanation for your choice to write this to me, you wrote, "This statement was intended as a general reminder of the co-op's principles and the importance of constructive communication. It was not intended as an accusation of misconduct but rather as guidance to support effective and respectful dialogue within our community."

My guess is that you haven't informed all Woodsworth Members in this way individually.

Q. Have you sent similar guidance to every Woodsworth Member individually?

Obviously, the answer is No but, for my article, I'd like an answer.

Q. Could you please let me know, specifically, why you felt a need to write to me, "Please consider the co-op's values and the impact of your actions when communicating in future"?

8. Thank you for confirming my understanding that you have not accused me of Harassment. (As you know, on June 18, 2025, I wrote, in part, "...I'll ask that you please not use the word 'harassment' in connection with my name".)

I am deeply concerned about the fact that you have accused me of creating "...conditions in which a Board member could be subject to harassment."

I believe that this is a very serious accusation.

Q. Could you please let me know, specifically, what I have

done that has created "...conditions in which a Board member could be subject to harassment"?

You wrote that your intention was not to "...label [me] personally as having engaged in harassment".

Q. Have you written to every Woodsworth Member, individually, in order to "...encourage awareness of potential impacts..." on this topic?

Obviously, the answer is No but, for my article, I'd like an answer.

9. I believe that it is natural for a Co-op Member to feel threatened if/when you offer unsolicited and potentially inappropriate guidance about Harassment.

What am I to think when I receive such missives? This is a rhetorical question.

You wrote that "It is, in fact, an obligation of the Board under our Bylaws, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Our intent in raising these matters is to fulfill that responsibility, not to cause you distress."

I believe that you have not contacted all Woodsworth Members, individually, in this manner.

Q. Have you contacted all Woodsworth Members, individually, in this manner?

Obviously, the answer is No but, for my article, I'd like an answer.

Thank you, in advance, for your help with my article.

:) Michael

Michael [REDACTED]

Unit [REDACTED]

---- On Wed, 13 Aug 2025 20:34:42 -0400

<[REDACTED]> wrote ---

Dear Michael,

Our sincere apologies for the delay in following up. Thank you for bringing this back to our attention.

Re: your June 18 emails: Display Case & Access to Internal Waiting List". We appreciate the time you have taken to share your thoughts, and we have answered your points directly below.

1. Questions in your first email

You asked three specific questions:

1. *Do you think that I believe that our office staff and the Board are not human beings who are acting in good faith?*

o No, we do not believe that you hold this view.

2. *Do you think that I have named and blamed specific people?*

o Yes, as stated, we believe that you named and blamed a specific Board member.

3. *Do you think that I have done something wrong?*

o No, but we believe that your approach in this instance could have been more in line with the co-op's values of constructive communication and mutual respect.

2. On the internal waiting list

The Board's position is that the format of the Internal Waiting List is determined collaboratively, but operational implementation is the responsibility of staff. If you wish to suggest a different system or presentation of the list, we welcome you to bring that suggestion forward in a public forum such as a members' meeting or the Weekly, ideally framed without accusations about others' intentions. This will help ensure the discussion is constructive and more likely to gain community support.

3. On communications with staff and confidentiality

Communications between members and office staff are not automatically confidential. However, courtesy should be maintained in all exchanges, including actions taken with the communication post-exchange.

4. On interpreting feelings and intentions

We acknowledge your request that we avoid speculating about your feelings in our written communications. We will keep our focus on addressing the content of your messages.

5. On references to intelligence

The Board did not have any prior knowledge of, nor did we make any mention of, your intelligence in our communications. We appreciate the information you have shared about your background as a gifted student with a high IQ. For your information, the Board does not find the standardized test scores or education status of members to be relevant when responding to communication and so it was not a factor in how we responded to you.

6. On the Board's decision-making

We understand that you are aware Board decisions are collective and that volunteers contribute significantly to the co-op. Our prior comments in this area were intended as clarification, not as an implication about your intelligence or awareness.

7. On the statement "Please consider the co-op's values and the impact of your actions when communicating in future."

This statement was intended as a general reminder of the co-op's principles and the importance of constructive communication. It was not intended as an accusation of misconduct but rather as guidance to support effective and respectful dialogue within our community.

8. On harassment

We have not accused you of harassment. Our concern is that your actions in a particular situation created conditions in which a Board member could be subject to harassment. The intent in raising this was to encourage awareness of potential impacts, not to label you personally as having engaged in harassment.

9. On your statement that you feel threatened

Advising on how to prevent harassment of members and staff is not intended as a threat. It is, in fact, an obligation of the Board under our Bylaws, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Our intent in raising these matters is to fulfill that responsibility, not to cause you distress.

We hope this clarifies the Board's position on the matters you have raised. Our shared goal remains ensuring that the co-op operates in a respectful, transparent, and collaborative manner for the benefit of all members.

Thank you,
Woodsworth Board of Directors