

PLEASE JOIN US AT OUR

2017 Annual Member Celebration



Saturday, September 16, 2017

The Afternoon's Schedule...

at Concord Food Co-op • 24 S. Main Street • Concord, NH

- 1:30 pm** Gates Open- First 250 members to arrive will receive a complimentary goodie bag
Become a Member Sign up Table Opens – Meet the Board
- 1:45 pm** Welcome & Business Meeting Begins
- Chris Gilbert, General Manager**
Cathy Menard, Board President
Peter Delault, Finance Manager
- 2:00 pm** Board Balloting Closes
Meet the Farmers Tent Opens
Vendor Tables Open
Strings & Things Band
- 2:30 pm** Local sourced barbecue style menu provided by the Co-op
- 4:30 pm** Ballot Results are Announced
Event Ends

BALLOT ENCLOSED

Candidates

The Questions:

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?
2. What experience and expertise would you bring to the Board?
3. Please describe skills you have that would directly contribute to achieving the overall vision of the Co-op.
4. Describe an experience where you worked on a team. What did you offer the team? How did you compromise for the team's benefit?
5. What do you see as the most important issues facing the Co-op in the coming five to ten years?
6. Why do you believe Member-Owners should choose you to represent them?

Five directors are to be elected by our Member-Owners in 2017. Please choose up to five of the following:

PETER ENGEL

Current Profession: Retired; former Director of Store Operations NH State Liquor Commission Education Lives in Concord, NH

Our family has been involved with the Co-op since it was located on State Street, and has enjoyed the selection of products, co-op employees expertise, and shopping experience through the years. I now have the time, and would be very pleased to share my retail experience with this organization.

With thirty-six years of experience serving in a fast paced, ever changing high volume retail environment, I will bring a strong retail perspective to the Board. My experience in merchandising, marketing, store design, store budgeting and over all store efficiency will assist the Board in moving the Co-op forward at the speed of retail in the future.

My experience has provided me with a skillset that allows me to analyze all business-related data and trends, and to discover opportunities for growth and efficiency, leading to increased profit. As a Board member and team builder, I will be an advocate for the Co-op based {employee} ideas to drive sales and improve customer service.

One facet of my past experience was to be part of a three-person design team that selected new retail

locations and designed the store layout, which included everything from shelving types, checkout design, flooring and ceiling design and material selection, as well as lighting design and selection. I brought my ability to challenge my two teammates to think outside of the box as we brainstormed ideas to design new and unique retail environments. I motivated them to create award winning design ideas that were new to both the agency and the industry. Compromise was the keystone to the success of this team, as all egos were" put in our back pockets" with plenty of give and take of each design segment, with the common goal of success always in sight.

The most important issue facing the Co-op is its ability to maintain and grow its market share. Product availability, realistic pricing, optimum customer service, and an ever-growing active membership are key to a thriving retail Co-op environment. The Co-op has to observe, acknowledge, react, and adjust to the ever changing retail environment, at the speed of retail. The Board is the instrument of reviewing and establishing the retail policies that will allow this to happen.

The Board currently consists of hard working and well-intentioned individuals from many backgrounds. Going forward, given the challenges that the Co-op faces, and with the growth and development of the Co-op as the primary goal, I believe that it is imperative that a member with a strong retail background be added to the Board.

Candidates

TRACIE SPONENBERG

Current Profession: Senior Vice President, HR at The Granite Group

Lives in Concord, NH

We had been members of the Co-op years ago, but gave up the membership as life and family events got in the way. About three years ago, my husband and I made a commitment to get healthy for ourselves, and for our family. We changed the way we ate, started exercising and consequently lost a lot of weight. About a year later, we decided to start to eat more organically and naturally, and started shopping at the Co-op regularly. Though we went on occasion, we made a commitment to eat as locally as we could, and purchased a membership to the Co-op again. We live in Concord, I shop regularly at the Co-op, and would like to be more involved in my community, and truly believe in what the Co-op represents.

As a Human Resources professional with over 20 years of experience in HR, I will bring strong knowledge of HR issues. As a strategic business professional, I have worked in various companies alongside the CEO, CFO and other senior professionals to drive the business forward, and connect the people to the mission, vision and values of the company. I understand the importance of health and wellness not only in my companies (in my past two companies, we have undergone major transformations in the wellness programs), but also in families. As a mom of three, my husband and I try to ensure our kids eat as locally as possible, and as healthy as possible. Often an uphill battle, but we keep trying!

Although I personally connect to all aspects of the Co-op's mission and offer the skills mentioned above, I can

most contribute to the portion of the mission that mentions "act as a supporting and caring employer." Through my experience in HR, I have gained knowledge on best practices in employee engagement.

At my last employer, I was a member of the Senior Strategic Team. As the HR Director, and only member without direct responsibility for a portion of the initiative, I offered an outside perspective on creating new areas of the business. I attempted to include an HR-focused portion in the strategic plan but in the end, compromised in removing it, for the sake of driving the initiative forward. As HR Director at The Concord Monitor, I worked as part of a team to overhaul the Customer Service function, and bring four distinct areas together into one. Ultimately, I compromised on my vision for the project, after much discussion with the team.

I believe that consumers will want to shop locally, even more than they do today, but cost will be a major factor. Many people know the right thing to do, and the right way to eat, but feel they cannot afford to. Those who can, should, and eventually may drive down the cost to an affordable level for everyone.

As an HR professional, I offer a unique employee-focused perspective. The Co-op can best grow and thrive if its employees are engaged and connected to the business. I can help drive that connection, and offer best practices in the HR arena. I can also offer the perspective of a consumer, and a consumer with children of varying ages.



CATHY MENARD

Current Profession: Controller at Riverbend Community Mental Health Services & CPA

Lives in Concord, NH

It's been fun to be part of recent progress at the Co-op. I feel good about the results of our staff survey which indicate an improvement in the work environment. We are truly fortunate to have so many dedicated and talented folks working at our two stores. The Board was glad to have staff members at some of our recent meetings!

With the very capable Chris Gilbert in the role of General Manager, the Board can now operate at a more strategic level. Coming up at our September meeting, the Board will seek to answer the questions: Is the Co-op headed in the right direction overall? How are we doing on our goal of offering fair prices for local and organic food? I can't wait to learn the actual statistics which measure our percentage of foods purchased from local farmers and the portion of overall sales which are local. This information will be incredibly helpful to tell the Co-op's story and show our true impact in Concord, New London and surrounding towns.

We have to get better at telling our story in the face of

increased competition in the grocery industry. On the plus side, Main Street in Concord is busier than ever with more foot traffic and people enjoying outside dining. Membership at the Co-op is also growing!

I think the biggest challenge is balancing these three goals: livable wages for our employees, fair prices for members and fair prices to farmers and producers. That's the heart of what the Co-op is about for me. The Co-op incurred debt to make badly needed kitchen improvements and to renovate the Concord store. We are making progress paying down this debt.

Please vote for me for another term on the Board. I was Treasurer last year and am currently serving as President. My technical skills are in finance and management; I work as Controller at Riverbend Community Mental Health Services and am a CPA.

My family has shopped at the Co-op for almost all of our groceries for many years; I joined as a member in 1983. I am married to Betsy Black and live in Concord on the modest end of Auburn Street.



Candidates

“A co-op is as strong as the members who own and participate in it.”

FINIS WILLIAMS

*Current Profession: Attorney
Lives in Concord, NH*

I have been serving on the Board for several years and am seeking an additional term on the Co-op's Board of Directors and would ask for your support. I have served as President of the Co-op for 2 terms from 2013 to 2015. I was involved in investigating our past general manager and served on the Hiring Committee which hired our present general manager. I am currently serving as treasurer which I am proud to do because I believe our most important goal is to keep the Co-op financially viable following the Main Street Reconstruction Project.

My goal has always been to help the Co-op assist with our new management, maintain our focus on cooperative values, and attend to the needs of employees and customers. I have always been strongly committed to the Co-op's mission of providing locally grown organic food

to our customers. I also support the Co-op's mission of being owned by its members which is not being manipulated by the industrial corporate system.

I am an attorney and have maintained a solo practice for almost 30 years. I am a past president for the New Hampshire Association for Justice. I have also served as legal counsel to the New Hampshire Democratic Party from 2002-2008 and in 2006 was one of the attorneys handling the civil matter regarding the phone jamming case.

I would like to continue to participate in assisting the Co-op in preserving its mission and staying financially strong in spite of increased competition for the sale of natural and organic foods. I would appreciate your support.



DEREK OWEN

*Current Profession: Farmer
Lives in Hopkinton, NH*

I am interested in the Co-op's growth and especially its increased activities in community service with the connection of health and good food. I have served as a Representative to the General Court of NH (i.e., a State Rep) sitting on the Environment and Agriculture Committee for nearly 19 years, taking part in deliberations concerned with the raising and processing

of food among other things.

I also have chaired the Hopkinton Conservation Commission for nearly 20 years. Some of its duties include looking after wetlands and current use designation. These activities do require working with others and arriving at a consensual agreement. I find the promotion of good healthy food and involvement in the community a very noble cause.

