

**Northampton Community Cooperative Market, Inc.
Annual Meeting Minutes Zoom video-conference**

Wednesday, December 2, 2020, 6:00- 7:30 PM

Board Members Present: President Dorian Gregory, Vice-President Mark Devlin, Clerk Alex Risley Schroeder, Steve Bruner, Gary Schaefer, Emily Laine, Abby Getman Skillicorn, Wendy Messerli, and General Manager Rochelle Prunty

Others Present: 94 plus co-op owners and guests

Notetaker: Beth Skinner Co-op Leadership Administrator

Presiding: President Dorian Gregory

5:50 PM Introduce Board Candidates Dorian Gregory

Meeting convened @ 6:00 PM

Board President Dorian Gregory welcomed all and opened the meeting with a land acknowledgment: We are standing on and benefiting from land that has been seized, expropriated, and stolen from the Indigenous people by colonial settlers. For thousands of years, this has been Pocumtuck Land. This is still the homelands of the Pocumtuck, Norwottock, Woronoco, Agawam, Nipmuck, Abenaki, Wampanoag, and Narragansett. These Native Peoples and their descendants are still living here among us. Every time we gather here, we must acknowledge and respect that fact. We join them in seeking to heal and restore these lands and in working for peace and justice for all.

I. 6:00 -6:10 PM Local Music by The O-Tones (theotones.com) with Mary Witt and special guests Samirah Evans and Evelyn Harris. "Everybody Eats When They Come To My House" by Cab Calloway

II. 6:10-6:15 PM Agenda Review and Approve Minutes

- JM Sorrell (2422) moved, and Angus Brewer (10301) seconded a motion to approve the December 6, 2019, minutes. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

III. 6:15- 6:40 PM Keynote Address

Abolitionist Roots of Cooperation presented by River Valley Co-op's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Manager, LaDonna Sanders-Redmond, with a crankie theatre designed by puppeteer Gabriel Harrell and an encore appearance of the great bear puppet, Ursula Marjoram.

LaDonna's presentation connected the history of cooperatives to the history of the abolitionist movement of the 1800s and civil rights movements of the 1900s into today's ongoing work for social and environmental justice. Some highlights included:

- Racism and civil rights are an ongoing issue. A visual presentation scrolling through the names of Black People killed by police ending with George Floyd.

- Cooperating to meet our mutual needs has long been how people have worked together in communities and between communities.
- The 1844 start of the food cooperative by weaving factory workers in the northern England town of Rochdale is considered to be the food co-op that launched the modern cooperative movement. The organizers of the co-op were involved in the social justice movements of the time, including abolitionists, women's suffrage, and the labor movement. They had connections to US abolitionists including, Frederick Douglass, who helped inspire their cooperative's development based on values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity.
- In the 1840s in Florence, MA, Frederick Douglas was also one of the abolitionists that inspired the launch of the utopian cooperative abolitionist community named the Northampton Society of Education and Industry. It included a silk mill, sugar beet mill, and farmland in Florence. David Ruggles and Sojourner Truth were both a part of this community. This community's farmland is now the land owned by Grow Food Northampton in Florence.
- 1932, the Highlander Folk School, a cooperative social justice leadership training school and cultural center located in Tennessee, began. Known for its role during the Labor and Civil Rights Movements of the 1930s-60s, it included cooperative development training as a tool for addressing community needs for food, housing, education, and production of goods. Septima Poinsette Clark, Fannie Lou Hammer, Rosa Parks, John Lewis, and Martin Luther King, Jr. were among those trained as activists and cooperative organizers at the center.
- Cooperatives evolved along with our social justice movements and remain an important tool for working together to create a better future based on self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity.
- Today, the importance of working together for social justice as modern-day abolitionists is as important as ever. As cooperatives and cooperators, we need to acknowledge we stand on those who came before and honor their legacy moving forward.

IV. 6:40-6:55 PM President's Report Dorian Gregory

- River Valley Coop supports our community, the local economy, education, recognizing racism, and promoting social justice
- Dorian expressed deep appreciation for the work of the staff during a difficult year
- 170 co-op employees, our store staff are represented by the UFCW Local 1459 and have a livable wage, with a wage scale starting at \$15/hr.
- 70% of promotions to higher levels of responsibility last year were internal staff promotions
- Opening the Easthampton store will have a positive impact on the local economy with new jobs and increased local purchases
- Anticipating 3,000 new co-op owners with Easthampton store
- 2020 Annual Report is available online with many more details
- Thank you to all Board Candidates for running

V. 6:55 7:20 Easthampton Update

- Green Building Features with Jonathan Wright, founder of Wright Builders: eliminated fossil fuel in design except for kitchen equipment and back-up generator, energy efficiency throughout in lighting, refrigeration, air-based heat pumps for heating and cooling, highly insulated, solar tubes for daylighting, and air lock for entryway. Rooftop and parking canopy solar arrays with nearly 1 megawatt of annual production to offset all the co-op's electrical usage. Low and no VOC paints and finishes. The polished concrete floor needs minimal maintenance. Recycled barn wood from Hatfield for interior millwork and locally sourced wood timbers from Hill Town Land Trust and Lashway Lumber for the storefront. Also highly effective storm water management system for filtration of storm water.
- Virtual Tour of Easthampton store with Thomas Douglas of Thomas Douglas Architects

7:20 PM Dorian thanked all our co-op staff, Board members, co-op owners for their work over the last year. She also thanked General Manager Rochelle Prunty, Marketing Manager Natasha Latour, and Joel Brock (tech support) for their work in organizing the Annual Meeting.

Thank You Song. Local Music by The O-Tones (theotones.com) with Mary Witt and special guests Samirah Evans and Evelyn Harris.

7:30 PM Meeting Adjourned