

Northampton Community Cooperative Market, Inc.
Annual Meeting Minutes Zoom video-conference
Thursday Dec. 16, 2021 6:00-7:00 PM

Board Members Present: President Dorian Gregory, Vice-President Abby Getman Skillicorn, Clerk Alex Risley Schroeder, Angus Brewer, Steve Bruner, Gary Schaefer, Wendy Messerli

Others Present: 67 plus co-op owners and guests

Absent: Treasurer Mark Devlin, Emily Laine

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, Norwotock, 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 their ongoing existence and influence. We commit to 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

- JM Sorrel (2422) moved and Nicole LaChapelle (39) seconded a motion to approve the December 2, 2020 minutes. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

II. 6:10-6:20 PM President Dorian Gregory President

Overview of Board of Directors work over the last year:

- Attended training sessions with LaDonna Sanders-Redmond, our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion consultant. This resulted in some revisions to Board Policies as well as some changes to the Bylaws.
- Supported our GM in opening the second store in Easthampton.
- We held a Board Retreat which included reflection on the ways that our system of governance has built trust, excellent performance and ability of the co-op to respond to a rapidly changing world and focused on perpetuating good governance moving forward.

- Directors reflected on the vision for our expansion plans and the goals for it to strengthen our co-op's capacity to fulfill the mission of serving our community needs while also building our economic resilience in the increasingly consolidated food industry.

III 6:20- 6:30 PM GM Report Rochelle Prunty

- Grateful to our amazing staff, co-op owners, local vendors, Board of Directors and our local health department during this challenging year of operating our co-op during a pandemic.
- Special thank-you to our building team: our general contractor Wright Builders, Thomas Douglas Architects, Berkshire Design Group, Co-op Power, Solar Design Associates, EOS Energy Systems, PV Squared, NCG Development Co-op, Monica Nunez our project manager and the many local subcontractors, city officials, consultants, and other organizations and community members who came together to open the Easthampton store.
- Thank you to bank ESB our lead lending partner as well as our economic development funding partners including MHIC, VRV, NCIF, COCRF. Other lending partners included the Cooperative Fund of the Northeast, the Twin Pines Cooperative Foundation, and the hundreds of co-op member lenders that participated in financing the Easthampton store.
- Thank you all our employees in both stores as well as our administrative office team for the tremendously challenging work of preparing to open the Easthampton store while also keeping our Northampton store working well through another year of the pandemic. We especially want to recognize our Director of Operations and Easthampton Store Manager Liesel deBoor for her leadership through this transition as well as our Northampton store manager Jason Caron. Expanding to two stores is known to be the most challenging step, (other than the original co-op start-up step), that a food co-op takes in its organizational development.
- Our annual report goes into detail about our journey building the Easthampton store while operating the Northampton store in a pandemic. It includes many stories that show how our Board, staff, building team and the strong co-op owner and customers support resulted in a successful Easthampton store opening in spite of the challenges.
- We had a 97% increase in our SNAP sales which tells you a lot about the pressures our community was under last year due to the pandemic.
- We are happy to report we've also had over 2,500 new co-op owners join since the co-op began working on the Easthampton store project and sales have increased over 40% compared to last year since we opened on July 1st, 2021.
- By shifting grocery sales from corporate food systems to grow our cooperative business we are building resources to support a more sustainable local food system to serve our community needs.

IV. 6:30-6:55 PM Panel Discussion: Envisioning a Cooperative Economy

Jade Barker, a founding River Valley Co-op Owner, former River Valley Co-op Board Member and President of the Board, and current Columinate cooperative consultant will be moderating. The panelists include:

- Leslie Watson, a cooperative consultant with Columinate and organizer of the NorthEast Investment Cooperative
- Carolyn Edsell-Vetter, the Business Support Officer for the Cooperative Fund of New England
- Easthampton Mayor Nicole LaChapelle
- Q&A followed the presentation

V. 6:55 7:00 PM Adjourn

Dorian thanked staff, board, co-op owners, our general manager Rochelle Prunty, Director of Marketing Natasha Latour, tech support Joel Brock, Jade Barker and our panelists Leslie Watson, Carolyn Edsell-Vetter, and Mayor Nicole Lachapelle, our Board Candidates Elizabeth Appelquist, Sarah Axe, and Angela D'Souza. She also thanked the retiring Board Members for their service: Steve Bruner, Emily Laine, and Mark Devlin.