



2018 Board of Directors Elections Candidate Statements

We had applicants for BOD answer the following questions:

1. What is your motivation to serve on Just Local Food's Board of Directors and what do you hope to gain through your participation on the board?
2. Describe any professional or relevant experience that you believe could benefit the Co-op's Board in doing its work.
3. Describe your experience working collaboratively in a group setting.
4. As a cooperative, Just Local Food follows the 7 cooperative principles. Please discuss an aspect of the seven cooperative principles you find interesting or meaningful.
5. What is your vision for the future of Just Local Food?
6. Have you attended a board meeting?

Please take the time to read each of their responses.

Kathy Mitchell

1. What is your motivation to serve on Just Local Food's Board of Directors and what do you hope to gain through your participation on the Board? I believe that providing local and organic food is an essential service for our community. Living only a few blocks from the store, I shop there regularly. I can see that the store needs to expand, and I am excited at the prospects for it to improve in quantity and quality. I would like to be part of that future through service on the Board.

2. Describe any professional or relevant experience that you believe could benefit the Coop's Board in doing its work. I have lived in the Third Ward for almost 40 years. I have a PhD in anthropology and worked at UW-Eau Claire for over 20 years. I understand the neighborhood and have some insight into the relationship between the University, its students, and the community. I have been very involved with the Randall Park Association and their efforts at neighborhood revitalization. I am familiar with the work of Invest Health and the goal of providing healthy food options. These experiences would be helpful, as the coop becomes part of a new neighborhood.

3. Describe your experience working collaboratively in a group setting. I have served on the City Council, the city Plan Commission, the Board of Health, and numerous advisory groups and Task Forces. I have worked with elected officials, staff members, people representing various professions, and people with a variety of beliefs, opinions, and priorities. I understand the importance of collaboration, patience, and listening carefully.

4. As a cooperative, Just Local Good follows the 7 cooperative principles. Please discuss as aspect of the seven cooperative principles you find interesting or meaningful. Member's economic participation is the key to our success. In addition to the membership contribution, members need to be encouraged to shop as often as possible. Given the new location, the Board might consider a temporary or annual membership for students or others in the neighborhood who want to try out their involvement.

5. What is your vision for the future of Just Local Food? Just Local Food will be the center for healthy food options in our area. It will encourage all people to shop in the store and experience the quality of local and organic food. With expanded space, there will be opportunities for education and for people to gather and share ideas (and maybe recipes). Membership will continue to grow. Just Local Food will provide options for low-income people.

6. Have you attended a board meeting? I have not attended a board meeting. I have attended several of the annual meetings.

Randi Jo Market

Overview of Professional Background: Experienced in Business Development, Strategic Marketing, Public Relations, and Media Production

Position Statement: The beautiful community of Eau Claire, WI, that we're all fortunate to share, has nourished me in countless ways since the day I was born. My motivation to serve on Just Local Food's Board of Directors is rooted in the desire to actively participating in the overall health, development, longevity and depth of our community. My personal life experiences in business creation and ownership as well as team management, marketing and public relations have birthed insights and perspectives I feel are valuable and worth sharing at this stage and place in my life. I hope to gain further insight into our community's ever-evolving needs in order to continue strengthening its foundation for the generations to come.

After attending UW-Eau Claire I was eager for change so I packed my car and ventured to the west coast. The community of Bend, Oregon then became my home for several years where I worked as the Sales and Marketing Manager for a luxury real estate developer. This work not only taught me a tremendous amount of professional skills in the world of strategic marketing and cost/value analysis, it also taught me how to work productively within and manage a diverse group of highly productive individuals from across the country. I learned a lot about myself as an individual during this time and I began developing my personal convictions and values as an adult. Upon reflection, I must say how fortunate I am to this day for the opportunity to meet, work with and learn from such a diverse and extremely talented group of individuals.

After several years serving corporate America I journeyed to the other side of the U.S. and landed in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania where I found myself immediately working together with city officials to improve the community's waste management and recycling programs (that seemed incredibly outdated after coming from Bend, OR, aka the "greenest" city on the planet!) as well as composting and recycling initiatives at local Wilson College. These initiatives then led me to the peace corps where I had the privilege of working at the Robyn Van En Center in conjunction with the Fulton Center for Sustainability Studies at Wilson College in Chambersburg. The Robyn Van En Center (Robyn is the founder of the CSA concept) is an international resource for farmers and communities worldwide. During my time there I helped manage and maintain the extensive database of CSA farms and also worked with students and community members at the Fulton Center on a variety of projects focused on environmental issues and solutions at the on-campus organic farm. Working collaboratively in a group was a serious struggle for me as a child and young adult. I preferred to work independently and didn't understand why so many teachers insisted on group assignments. What that signaled to me

was awkward discussion about *why* I was *right* and we should seriously just do it my way. Ha! There were times professionally when I was so stubborn, so unmovable on topics I felt passionately *right* about that I closed myself off to learning and growing. I've learned, thankfully, that no one wins when this occurs and even worse - everyone suffers. We don't always have to agree, but it's important we learn to respect and value one another as we are. Humility is a true treasure. Today, all of my professional endeavors rely heavily on collaboration and benefit greatly from humility, honesty and openness. I look forward to working with our members and the BOD in support of our collective desire to keep our community moving in a healthy and inclusive way.

Candidate Summary and Commitment: If elected, my commitment as a board member includes supporting the existing initiatives as well as focusing on the following three goals for Just Local Food:

1 - Strengthen Market Position: Strengthen our position as the community's leading source for local, organic, non-GMO products through an effective marketing strategy with a focus on utilizing new technologies, social media channels and website improvements to create a greater value for our members.

2 - Raise Community Awareness: Collaborate with area businesses to raise community awareness and support for local food production with business/brand partnerships focused on educational topics such as understanding the cooperative model, reducing our community carbon footprint and reestablishing a connection to our food.

3 - Make Healthy Food Accessible: Create ways to make healthy local food accessible to more low-income families through support of nutritional government food policy standards when using SNAP card, access to public transportation and/or food delivery, and weekly food "bundles" created to eliminate the misconception of the affordability of high quality food.

Linda Loff-Peterson

1. What is your motivation to serve on Just Local Food's Board of Directors and what do you hope to gain through your participation on the board? The first day I walked into the store I was greeted with a sense of community and belonging, we became members 10 minutes later. I believe in the values of JLF and would like to play a bigger role in helping the store grow. I think I would gain lifelong friends by participating on the board and having a more direct involvement with the co-op.

2. Describe any professional or relevant experience that you believe could benefit the Co-op's Board in doing its work. I have been involved in many organizations and committees over the years. I have been involved in Ducks Unlimited for 20+ years and served as the Co-President of

the women's chapter for 2 years. I have served on a variety of committees through the church and with my children's activities (Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, 4H, sports).

Through work at Xcel Energy I have lead a variety of teams, and have been responsible for organizing and coordinating large scale improvement efforts. I led a team responsible for implementing a large scale corporate safety program, which involved developing the program and training field resources companywide.

3. Describe your experience working collaboratively in a group setting. Daily, I work in a collaborative group setting. I am currently in a consultant/coordinator role; it is vital that I work well with others to complete department objectives. I am currently on a team responsible for implementing a multi-state project, impacting hundreds of field technicians.

I have worked for Xcel Energy for 20 years in a variety of jobs: Corporate Safety, Field Safety, Field Supervision, Nuclear Management, and most recently, Cyber Security.

4. As a cooperative, Just Local Food follows the 7 cooperative principles. Please discuss an aspect of the seven cooperative principles you find interesting or meaningful. The key take away for me on the cooperative principles is really cooperation and participation. I see JLF as a resource that works to fit the needs of the membership and community.

5. What is your vision for the future of Just Local Food? Grow. Grow well, grow thoughtfully, and grow together.

6. Have you attended a board meeting? I have not attended a JLF board meeting, but I look forward to having the opportunity.

Fred Sklenar

1. What is your motivation to serve on Just Local Food's Board of Directors and what do you hope to gain through your participation on the board? I am motivated to maintain being part of the BOD's to continue to make any and all possible contributions to help the continued success of the Coop. I live locally, shop locally, entertain locally, and enjoy our community locally and believe in local businesses and efforts. My work on this board and the many others I have had the pleasure of being part of in my life is personally fulfilling and rewarding by knowing that in what ever way possible, my experiences in our community and from my time in other communities is making a wonderful contribution to successful ends.

2. Describe any professional or relevant experience that you believe could benefit the Co-op's Board in doing its work. Firstly, I am currently on the board completing my first 3 year term. I came to the board in a time of transition when the board moved from worker ownership and management to community ownership and helped to establish not only a successful financial foundation but also to assist in the hiring of Maria our GM.

As the current board members know, I had sat on the Eau Claire Jazz Inc Board of Directors, ending my tenure there as their President a few years ago. I helped develop their very successful 52nd Street Event which is not only continues to be a great event in our downtown, but helps drive a wonderful economic impact in all local businesses each spring. I aided that organization in their planning structuring and organization. Specifically, that organization was more of a working board that made up the organizational activities, which are different from our coop.

Many years ago, living in Matawan New Jersey, I co-founded "The Downtown Matawan Community Committee" Which eventually evolved to become known as the Downtown Matawan Alliance. Across my 4 year tenure as their President, using the U.S. A. Main Street Program model, we established 4 key initiatives that helped drive downtown business vacancies from 70% to 30% as well as increase traffic to stop in and enjoy our downtown. The 4 key program initiatives were Promotion, Beautification, Events and Economic Development. We worked closely with the town's municipality, local police and fire departments as well as Departments of Public Works on all of our initiatives. I stepped down from the organization with pride and exuberance as the team of volunteers developed a wonderful energy and flow that had direction, drive and persistence and was, therefore, after my 4 years of involvement, well on its way to continued success.

Here at our Coop, I was instrumental in working with the team to help lower our immediate rent costs during a time that I would characterize as critically concerning economically - specifically because a huge coop had opened near rt. 53, another had gone out of business and overall the grocery industry was struggling, not only locally but regionally and nationally. My assistance as a board member in discussions of financial concern to our coop helped (as part of a team) to set up the currently being realized dream of expansion.

3. Describe your experience working collaboratively in a group setting. As my answer to question #2 demonstrates I have quite a lot of volunteering and board experience which requires positive energy and understanding of how other volunteers work and think. Diversity is a wonderful element to have on Boards and diversity in this context may be understanding where we come from and how we differ in our experiences as well as professional backgrounds. Our board is one that embraces the democratic nature of coop work and helps to guide Maria and her wonderful team using the Policies of Governance. Personally it had been difficult to make a hard transition from active participation to board guidance only because of my desire to help. Most other boards I have been involved with have been more of a working board in the sense of being responsible for the operations of the organization. Here, this board and our Coop's business model is different and yet operates very successfully. I see my personal contribution to be the voice of perspective. I seek to understand all of the backgrounds of our fellow board members and to find a means to contribute my experiences in a complimentary capacity, never in a contrary capacity. In all the groups I have worked in both as a volunteer and as a professional I understand group dynamics and always seek to help move the group toward our agreed-upon goals. I have worked at organizations of over a thousand people as well as have had the pleasure of owning numerous small businesses in my life.

4. As a cooperative, Just Local Food follows the 7 cooperative principles. Please discuss an aspect of the seven cooperative principles you find interesting or meaningful.

1. Voluntary Open membership, - I like #1 because this encourages our community to own the business that is dedicated to servicing our community - rather than being a global entity trying to understand our needs.
2. Democratic member control, - I like #2 because it is the embodiment of cooperative business and cooperative working together.
3. Member's Economic Participation, - As with all things, we need to work to improve our world and this includes locally. Economics is a wonderful subject that is not exclusive to money. Economics embodies the interaction of people, places, resources, efforts and many more. Focusing our efforts as members economically is fruitful in reward for all.
4. Autonomy and Independence, - I like this concept for the value of being independent of large corporate influence as well as the contextual emphasis on entrepreneurial activity on a local basis.
5. Education, Training and Information, - This subject is wonderful for its specific future objectives. With Education, Training and Information communication the coop can be a leading voice in our collective futures for generations to come.
6. Cooperation among Cooperatives, - Here we value the experience of others. In this case the idea that there are many who have gone before us, on this same journey and we can learn from their valued time in similar situations. And, working in our daily business with other cooperatives (for example if we were to purchase from an Agricultural Coop organization) has the net result of raising-all-boats.
7. Concern for the community. - In general this subject is the culmination of all the others. Working cooperatively together. The term "it takes a village" comes to mind for I believe, if working together toward the same end, any group of people can accomplish everything they see as important and on their goals' lists!

5. What is your vision for the future of Just Local Food? My vision stretches across many decades into the future and includes successful delivery of good food, good space, good people, good learning, good communication and the continuum of a business that has by then, a beautiful storybook of happy times for many. One that everyone can look back on and be very proud of.

Karlee Wallin

1. What is your motivation to serve on Just Local Food's Board of Directors and what do you hope to gain through your participation on the board? Ensuring Just Local Foods remains a valued, vital and thriving fixture of our community now and for future generations is what motivates me to reach beyond being a valued owner and pursue a spot on the Board of Directors. I want to deepen my commitment to the community by being a voice of the owners and contributing to the ongoing success and growth of JLF.

On a more personal level, my love for co-ops stems from being raised in a small community where growers, producers and consumers thrive from the support of many local cooperatives

(creamery co-op, feed / agronomy / hardware co-op, food co-op and credit union co-op to name a few). In addition, I am fortunate to have a mentor in my dad, who has dedicated nearly 50 years of his professional career to local co-ops, much of that time as a general manager, where he has made great strides for his community. I was raised in the driftless region where the value of the land, growers and community runs deep. When my husband and I planted our roots in the Chippewa Valley 12 years ago, it was an easy transition because so many of the same values are evident here.

2. Describe any professional or relevant experience that you believe could benefit the Co-op's Board in doing its work. I was fortunate to land a spot with a community focused, member owned and value driven credit union just months after moving to Eau Claire. My 11+ years with the credit union has instilled the importance of valuing our members because they are truly the backbone of the organization. As a result of my 6 years as a business loan analyst and my current role as a business lender I will be contributing a strong understanding of business financial statements, the key components of a successful business, and decision making skills to the JLF Board. My profession helps keep me in-tune to the local economy and economic development which will also be beneficial to JLF as expansion and growth are on the horizon.

3. Describe your experience working collaboratively in a group setting. I'm looking forward to having the chance to incorporate my passions and talents with the Board of Directors' and build relationships not only with the directors but with the owners as well. Throughout my career, I've participated with many committees and teams on projects that involve decision making, program development, process efficiencies and workflow; being a contributing member of the group is important to me and I believe I can make a positive impact on the JLF Board. My current community involvement includes serving as a member of JLF's owner engagement committee, the Advisory Board for Western Dairyland's Women's Business Center, Young Professionals of the Chippewa Valley and the Women's Giving Circle of the Eau Claire Foundation.

4. As a cooperative, Just Local Food follows the 7 cooperative principles. Please discuss an aspect of the seven cooperative principles you find interesting or meaningful.

5. What is your vision for the future of Just Local Food?

(4 & 5) My vision for Just Local Food is to become a destination and catalyst for future growth in downtown Eau Claire by creating a welcome environment for both owners and visitors. This aligns with two of the 7 cooperative principles - Open and Voluntary Membership and Concern for Community. Just Local Food is a place where all are welcome, owner or not, and we need to deliver this message by cultivating an inviting space. If we're successful, shoppers will feel they are experiencing something special; a community of people doing good things for the benefit of our local producers, the environment and the future of our community. Naturally, it will be difficult to ignore the pull to become an owner of such an amazing movement.

6. Have you attended a board meeting? I attended the February 27th board meeting.

Kyle Lehman

1. What is your motivation to serve on Just Locals Food's Board of Directors and what do you hope to gain through your participation on the board. My motivation comes from being a shopper at JLF and seeing how much of an impact JLF has to this community as well as the surrounding communities. I have always been driven to give back to my community, and through JLF I believe that I have an opportunity to bring my talents to the board and continue to strengthen the cooperative movement.

2. Describe any professional or relevant experience that you believe could benefit the Co-op's Board in doing its work. Growing up with a family of farmers, I have seen the hard work it takes to provide food for a community. With my experience on the farm and outside of the farm in marketing/content creation positions, I believe that I can play a part in educating our community as well as represent our vendors in the most authentic manner.

3. Describe your experience working collaboratively in a group setting. Collaboration is key to a successful project. Each of us have experiences and talents that can be used to cover all grounds and move the project forward.

4. As a cooperative, Just Local Foods follows the 7 cooperative principles. Please discuss an aspect of the seven cooperative principles you find interesting or meaningful. What is really special to me is the word *community*. The fact that Just Local Food is community focused and community owned is a wonderful thing to have in our city. We have a town that cares for one another and the food we eat. Open to all without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination. Anyone can shop. Anyone can join. We live in a city that works together to make sure our families are happy, healthy and growing together.

5. What is your vision for the future of Just Local Food? Multiple Locations! Growing up in a small town about a hour north of Eau Claire we had Sunday trips to town (Eau Claire) where my family would pack into the truck and buy bulk for the week or even month. I would love to see Just Local Food in other areas of Eau Claire as well as reaching families in other towns. Making their sunday trips to town a sunday trip to Just Local.

6. Have you attended a board meeting? I have not attended a JLF board meeting but I can't wait to!