

1. **First and Last Name:** Kelly Matthews

2. **Address:** 817 Waugoo Ave Oshkosh WI 54901

3. **What would you bring/offer to the Oshkosh Food Co-op board?**

*I bring **trusted leadership**. Currently serving as board president, my board has entrusted me with an officer position for the last two terms I have served. I've helped lead our board through significant transition as new board members have come on the board and our tasks have increased significantly in complexity and scope.

*Having been with this project from early conversations to now, over 560 households strong, I bring **institutional knowledge** about the process and tasks that have been completed and what's on the docket yet to complete.

*I have built **strong relationships** with many Member-Owners and enjoy communicating with them. I also have a strong relationship with Jacqueline Hannah, of Food Co-op Initiative, the organization that has been exceptional in their professional insights and skills in helping us organize this work.

*I bring **dedication** – I've turned down other board opportunities and other volunteer positions because I want to keep my focus on getting the doors to our store open.

*I bring **needed skills**, like public speaking, writing and messaging, task assignment and completion tracking, critical and creative thinking, seeing the big picture while not losing the details, and more. I've learned so much about Co-ops in the last 6 years, and I plan to keep on learning so we can do our best due diligence for our membership.

4. **What is your dream for the Oshkosh Food Co-op for the coming years?** I want the Oshkosh Food Co-op to strengthen our local economies and participate in changing the food systems in the Fox Valley. I want a thriving store that can re-invest the profits back into our Communities. I want a store that pays producers, farmers, and employees fairly. I hope eventually we have a presence on the UWO campus and help supply the child care center there. I want our store to be a place where our community gathers, and that the benefits the store creates are shared. In the decades to come after our store is open, I want people to see real change in the well-being of Oshkosh and the surrounding areas because of our store.

5. **Why do you think the Oshkosh Food Co-op is important to the greater Oshkosh community?** Because we will be an economic engine for our area. We have the opportunity to help bring over \$7 million dollars into our regional economy over first ten years the store is open. We have 350-400 farms in a 90 mile radius – those farmers and producers deserve a partner that respects the work they do and helps get their products and food into the hands of people who want it. Downtown is in an exciting upswing with renovations and reinvestment happening. We want to capitalize on that

synergy and help people continue to see Oshkosh as a destination worth visiting as well as a great place to live.

6. Why cooperatives? Cooperatives are a powerful business model because it puts the power of the business into the hands of many and not just one. Cooperatives are “small-d” democracy in action – the people here own it and because of that, the business isn't likely to up and leave. Cooperatives cooperate with others to be stronger and to share their expertise and skills for the benefit of many. And our business profits are reinvested back in our store and our membership and our community instead of being consolidated among a few rich stockholders – our bottom line is more expansive and inclusive of well-being for many, not just for a single CEO.

7. Please offer any additional thoughts you would like the Oshkosh Food Co-op Member-Owners to know. I moved here 9 years ago and immediately asked, “Where's the Co-op?” because in my experience, it's one of the best places to be a part of, for so many reasons. Co-ops run on principles that include transparency and people working together for the benefit of many, and those are values that resonate with me strongly. I know the power that Co-ops have to help transform communities, not just with excellent food, but excellent service and community care that extends beyond the walls of the store.

We have been recognized nationally for the work we are doing to get our store open, from branding design to membership events. One of our grant applications was scored higher than any other in the nation – which means we are being thoughtful, smart, innovative, and doing good work on your behalf.

My work with the Co-op has been incredibly rewarding and the board members I have worked with are talented, smart, caring, and dedicated to opening this store smartly, so it can be here for decades to come. I often keep this proverb in mind: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” **Let's go far, together!**