

Transition letter:

Dear Co-op Members,

It is with my warmest regards that I inform you that I have stepped down as president of the Oshkosh Food Co-op. I want you to know that my decision is not made out of lack of support, but because the timing is no longer right for me to lead this project. I recently graduated from UW-Oshkosh and will be gearing up for the next phase of my life. I will be moving at the beginning of April, and want to make the transition as smooth as possible. I have faith that this project will continue to progress with the infectious, positive energy that the new president, Kelly Matthews, will bring to the table.

The first time I met Kelly, I knew she had passion to start a co-op like no one else. Even before she came on board, she was drumming up positive support. I can't wait to come back to Oshkosh and shop at the co-op with you all!

In the last 3 1/2 years, I have had the pleasure of working with so many wonderful people through my leadership on this board, and I am thankful for every single interaction. It has truly changed my life in so many positive ways and I am so grateful for that. Some of my fondest memories in Oshkosh are the days spent chatting with the community about sustainable food options and the idea of cooking demos and abolishing the food deserts. I always left farmer's markets with so much energy it felt like I had just ran a marathon. That kind of feeling is stronger than any coffee. ☺

And that is what I believe cooperation is all about, engaging and empowering each other. My hope is that you find a way to become engaged. Help the co-op by hosting a home party to connect them with potential members in your network, who will reach out to their network and so on. In my latest study abroad travels, we learned about a philosophy that believed engaging in shared work projects resulted in personal enlightenment. Their motto is, "as we build a road, the road builds us." As we work with one another, we don't only improve the ability to get healthy food in our homes, but we improve our minds and our hearts and are able to reach even further to creative the positive change that is necessary.

It is the board's responsibility to create opportunities for engagement and I hope that you join them as we build this road together.

It's been a pleasure getting to know you all!

Bridgette

Hello Co-op Members and Interested Community:

Let me take this moment to introduce myself – my name is Kelly Matthews, and I am Oshkosh Food Co-op member #5. I have been on the board for two years now. I have offered to serve in the capacity of board president because I deeply believe in the work of this board and the Co-op members to bring a Co-op grocery store to our community.

Bridgette Weber has dedicated an incredible number of hours in service of this project, made numerous connections with community members and those interested in bringing healthy, local food to our city, and has led this project with a strong passion. She has met with me to help ensure a smooth transition and to ensure the Board has the information it needs to continue the momentum of the project.

We have met some key milestones in this project – our Founding Member drive success, funding our Community Survey and portions of the Feasibility study, helping to educate our city to the benefits of a Co-op and why Oshkosh would benefit from having its own here. Now, we are moving into a dedicated member drive – **we all want the doors to open, and in order to do that, we need more members.** Bridgette's call is the same as mine – host a house party, share our links and information, talk to people you know about becoming member, and *ask people to join.*

The power of a Co-op is in the name – cooperative. It is people like you and me, our neighbors and co-workers, joining together to create something to benefit the community. No one person can bring a Co-op to Oshkosh – that is both the challenge and beauty of the project.

I look forward to hearing from you, working with you, and navigating the work of bringing a Co-op to our city. I look forward to continuing working with this dedicated Board in my new position. And most of all, like you, I look forward to Opening Day at the Oshkosh Food Co-op and filling my basket with fresh, healthy, local food from our Wisconsin Farmers.

In cooperation,

Kelly