



2021 Oshkosh Food Cooperative Board of Directors Statement of Nomination

Name: Brenda Haines
Address: 1235 Wisconsin St., Oshkosh, WI, 54901
E-mail address: brenda@bluedoorconsulting.com
Phone number: (920) 470-5267

Brief Biography (150 Words or Less):

As co-founder/co-owner of Blue Door Consulting, I co-lead a team of nearly 40, working with organizations nationwide on branding, marketing strategy and execution. (Blue Door Consulting has twice been named to the Inc. 5000 fastest-growing, privately held companies list.) An Oshkosh Food Co-op Board member since our 2013 founding, I've served as Board President since 2018 – leading/co-leading the Site, Capital Campaign and Co-op Grow-op teams. (Co-op Grow-op won a national award and became a model for start-ups nationwide.) My volunteer experience includes board service for Oshkosh Rotary Club, American Marketing Association – Northeast Wisconsin Chapter, Women's Fund of the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation and Verve, A Credit Union. My husband, Alex Hummel, and I have lived in Oshkosh since 2000. I am a summa cum laude graduate of Wartburg College, Waverly, IA (Bachelor of Arts – Communication Arts/Electronic Media, Political Science) and UW Oshkosh (Master of Public Administration).

Please provide a written nomination statement that addresses the following questions. This will be shared with your fellow member-owners and posted on our blog. Recommended length not to exceed 2 pages:

1. What would you bring/offer to the Oshkosh Food Co-op Board?

Simply put: I will bring experience, knowledge and passion to the Oshkosh Food Co-op Board. When Co-op Founder Bridgette Weber asked me to attend a meeting with others who might be interested in starting a food co-op here, I was excited to do so. From that first conversation, it was clear this would be a multi-year education, engagement and planning effort to bring a community-owned grocery store to Oshkosh's central city. I served first on the organizing team and joined the Board of Directors when the co-op became a legal entity in 2013. Throughout our formation, I have listened to the hopes and dreams of our member-owners and community – and, if re-elected, will serve as a Board member with those hopes and dreams in mind. In addition to historical context with the food co-op, I bring professional experience in helping organizations

craft vision, growth plans and strategies – which I believe will be crucial during this next phase. Opening the store is only the first step. Making it successful is the next crucial phase. From my professional and volunteer board experiences, I'll bring leadership, governance, compensation, growth and fiscal management strategies to the Board.

2. **What is your dream for the Oshkosh Food Co-op?**

My dream is yours: Bring the Oshkosh Food Co-op's vision – strengthening the local economy, promoting health and building community – to fruition. This vision has been crafted with the input and guidance of our member-owners over the last 7 years. Opening a community-owned grocery store is the means to that end. To that end, I picture a store that embodies community:

- Teeming with friendly faces, welcoming both member-owners and first-time shoppers from all parts of the community, all backgrounds and all walks of life
- Featuring a wide range locally grown and sourced goods and highlighting local producers
- Offering a range of organic, natural, local and conventional groceries - giving shoppers the ability to make healthy food choices
- Attracting shoppers from the neighborhood, community and throughout Northeast Wisconsin

I envision local producers growing their businesses via a seven-day-a-week retail outlet. I see shoppers spending an extra minute or two engaging in conversation at the Chatty Checkout or enjoying a cup of coffee or a snack in indoor or outdoor seating areas. This is just the beginning. Long-term, I will challenge us to innovate and find more ways to build a more just food system.

3. **Why do you think the Oshkosh Food Co-op is important to the greater Oshkosh community?**

The Oshkosh Food Co-op can help strengthen the local economy by helping attract/retain talent in our community, bringing shoppers to the central city and providing a market for local growers/producers. By offering healthy food options in a USDA-designated "food desert," the co-op can play a role in improving our community's health and wellbeing. Perhaps most importantly, the co-op can be a place where diverse members of our community feel welcome to come together and build a more just food system – over community dinners and shared conversations.

4. **Why cooperatives?**

Growing up in Western Wisconsin, cooperatively owned businesses provided utilities, financial services and agribusiness markets. Co-ops are in my DNA – both my grandfathers and mom served on co-op boards. I've witnessed cooperatively owned businesses help people do together what they could not do alone. Our co-op is no exception. While an individual co-op owner may not have started a grocery store in Oshkosh's central city, we can do it together, by sharing the workload and risk. Cooperatively owned businesses answer to their owners. As such, they can be responsive to community needs. Co-ops connect people and strengthen communities.

5. **Please offer any additional thoughts you would like Oshkosh Food Co-op member-owners to know about you.**

Please know that I am grateful to all member-owners who have contributed to this effort. It would be an honor to continue to serve. And, I can't wait to shop at the store with you!

Please note that the OFC Board of Directors or its Governance Committee may modify the format but not content of self-nominations to ensure all self-nomination documents are consistently presented to member-owners for consideration.