

Dear Potential Board Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in serving on the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op's (MNFC) Board of Directors. Remember that **you must be a member-owner of MNFC in order to run for the Board.**

Our board strives to be actively anti-racist and inclusive. We welcome participation from community members who share a commitment to anti-oppression work.

This packet provides you with an overview of the Board's functions and responsibilities to help you make your decision about running for the Board. Please contact Board Development Committee Chair, Barbara Hofer (she/her), at board@middlebury.coop or 802-388-7276 x377, or any member of the Board if you have any questions.

Here are our Ends; they guide us in our day-to-day work, inform our decision-making, and serve as a constant reminder of our purpose as a cooperative:

MNFC exists to help our member-owners, customers and the community benefit from:

Healthy Foods
A Vibrant Local Economy
Environmentally Sustainable and Energy-efficient Practices
Cooperative Democratic Ownership
And Learning About These Values

- The Board is made up of 11 directors. Each term of office is three years, and terms are staggered so no more than 4 terms expire each year. Currently, there are no term limits.
- The Board of Directors is the legal representative of the member-owners of MNFC and is therefore responsible for the overall financial well-being of the Co-op.
- The Board exercises its responsibilities through its relationship with the General Manager, whom it hires and oversees.
- The Board is responsible for the strategic direction of the Co-op, engaging with member-owners, and monitoring management performance. The Board delegates all operational decisions to the General Manager through a system called Policy Governance. To learn more about the Policy Governance system, please read more at columinate.coop/policy-governance-quick-guide/.
- The board is made up of community members who bring a variety of personal and professional experiences. No board member is expected to be an expert or to represent anything other than their own experience.

DETAILS:

Requirements for Directors

- Make a three-year commitment to the Board of Directors.
- Participate in Board orientation.

- Attend a workshop for cooperative boards in the first year of your term (paid for by MNFC).
- Be familiar with MNFC's bylaws and Board policies.
- Attend the Co-op's Annual Meeting each year.
- Keep information and materials confidential when appropriate.

Monthly Requirements for Board Members At-Large (average 5-10 hours)

- Prepare for and attend monthly Board meetings. Board meetings are currently scheduled typically for the third Wednesdays of the month from 6-8pm (extended until 8:30 when necessary), with timing revisited annually. In person attendance is encouraged but we have hybrid options.
- Keep up-to-date on board communications between meetings and respond in a timely manner.
 - The majority of communication between board meetings takes place via the internet using email, video conference, and an online platform called Basecamp. If this would be an obstacle for you, we still welcome you to apply. Please contact Barbara Hofer at board@middlebury.coop or 802-388-7276 x377 to discuss options to meet your needs.
- Attend annual board retreat(s) - estimated two retreats per year.

Powers and Duties

Work to perpetuate the cooperative by:

- Monitoring the General Manager's performance through the policy governance board model (store operations are the sole responsibility of the GM)
- Monitoring financial statements (no financial experience necessary; training provided)
- Monitoring, revising, and creating appropriate policies on an annual basis
- Communicating with the member-owners
- Monitoring Board performance

Optional Duties for Board Members

- Attend Co-op Community Events (e.g. Member Appreciation Days, Harvest Festival).
- Join a committee(s) and attend sub-committee meetings (1 hour/mo).
- Participate in workshops and board development opportunities as appropriate (paid by MNFC) - recommended one per year per board member for ongoing board professional development.
- Consider serving as a Board Officer.

Compensation

In recognition of the time and commitment required to prepare for and attend meetings, required trainings and events, directors receive a stipend (currently \$798/year 2024) plus a 10% discount on all purchases (except alcohol) at the Coop. Committee chairs and Board Officers receive additional stipends. We also have a fund available to help make board participation possible for all, by covering such costs as childcare, transportation, and elder care, when needed.

Please Apply! We strive to be welcoming of everyone inclusive of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, transgender status, national origin or ancestry, place of birth, disability, and genetic information. Racism or discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated.

Before You Apply To see if being an MNFC Director is the right fit for you, please come and:

1. Attend a board meeting (always open, year-round, to our member owners)
2. Read a monthly board packet (available by contacting board@middlebury.coop).
3. Meet with a member of the board.

Note that these suggestions are *not required*; however, they will help give you a better understanding of the Board’s process and role in the Co-op.

**Application for Candidacy
Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op
Board of Directors**

Name:	_____
Address:	_____
City, State, Zip:	_____
E-mail:	_____
Telephone:	_____
Pronouns (optional):	_____

Please write one statement that answers the four questions below. Feel free to include any information you believe is important for member-owners to know (e.g., how your skills and experiences would enhance your ability to be an effective board member).

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?
2. Briefly describe any experience you have had with co-operatives, not-for-profit organizations, and justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI).
3. What has been your experience working with groups and what is your approach to group dynamics?
4. Is there anything else you would like the membership to know about you?

Please limit your response to 350 words total, and submit your application by March 10, 2025. 350 words is a strict limit.

* Email to the Board Development Committee, board@middlebury.coop

* Mail to: Board Development Committee, c/o Middlebury Natural Foods Coop, 1 Washington Street, Middlebury, VT 05753

Your statement will be printed in the MNFC E-newsletter, as well as in a special mailing to all members, and will be posted in the store and on the MNFC website.

Please submit a photograph of yourself to be posted with your statement.

Voting takes place by members-owners during the month of May, all ballots must be cast by Saturday, May 31, 2025 at 7:00PM. Results will be communicated to all candidates by the end of the day on June 1, 2025.