



# DURANGO NATURAL FOODS

A Co-operative Market

*Established 1974*  

## Durango Natural Foods Co-op

Board of Directors – 2018 Candidate Information Packet

Revised February 21, 2018

All applications are due Monday, April 9, 2018 by 5:00 p.m

**Thank you** for your interest in joining the Board of Directors (BOD) of Durango Natural Foods Coop (DNF). We hope this packet will help you understand DNF's history, mission and current goals, as well as, the role of the DNF Co-op BOD.

575 East 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Durango CO 81301 970-247-8129

[www.durangonaturalfoods.coop](http://www.durangonaturalfoods.coop)

For over 41 years, DNF has been providing the community with quality natural, local and organic products, education and service. In 2009, the DNF membership voted to convert from a Colorado not-for-profit corporation to a Colorado cooperative corporation. DNF Co-op is governed by its members, for its members, and is supportive of the community at large. It has grown from a buying club to a member-owned retail store that is grossing nearly two million in annual sales.

In addition to a committed membership, a large part of DNF's success can be attributed to the loyalty and commitment of the store's General Manager (GM) and staff. Every day, their belief in DNF's mission, their customers and each other makes DNF a warm, inviting place to shop. Their knowledge of the products allows customers to leave more informed and better able to take control of their own health, as well as, the health and success of the local community and planet.

Another important part of DNF's success is the support of its Board of Directors. Each member brings a variety of professional and personal experiences to the group, forging a Board **committed to fulfilling DNF's mission, maintaining its quality and financial stability, and providing strategic planning for its future.** As such, it welcomes fresh ideas, energy and talent.

Sitting on DNF's Board of Directors is a responsibility and requires commitment. The right person needs to have a deep belief in the co-op's mission and the time to listen, learn, and contribute to its exciting future. All BOD positions are voted on by the membership, or by the standing Board, if the position is uncontested.

If you are interested in a seat on the board, please complete the application sheet on the back of this packet and either submit it to a cashier or email to [board@durangonaturalfoods.coop](mailto:board@durangonaturalfoods.coop).

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## **2018 Board Election Schedule**

- **Monday, April 9: Applications due in store or received digitally**
- **Monday, April 16: Candidate information for voters is available in store & online at [www.DurangoNaturalFoods.Coop](http://www.DurangoNaturalFoods.Coop)**
- **Sunday, April 29: Annual Meeting- Ballots available for in person voting**
- **April 30 through May 9: 10 additional days to vote in person or online**
- **Wednesday, May 9: Voting closes at end of day**
- **Monday, May 14: Election verified and results announced**
- **Wednesday, May 23: First board meeting of new board**

## Ends Policy (Mission Statement)

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DNF Co-op is a member-owned food cooperative committed to providing quality organic local products and educating our community on the value of healthy living. We:

- Engage the community in cooperative principles
- Participate in a sustainable local economy
- Educate consumers about the broad impact of their choices
- Provide tools for living a healthy lifestyle
- Respect the environment through our actions

## The Cooperative Identity

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**Definition:** A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet its common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

**Values:** Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of its founders, DNF cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

**Principles:** The cooperative principles are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice. DNF is a cooperative grocery store, founded on the Cooperative Principles.

- **Voluntary and open membership** Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use the services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.
- **Democratic member control** Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting the policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, cooperative members have equal voting rights (one member (household), one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are also organized in a democratic manner.
- **Member economic participation** Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.
- **Autonomy and independence** Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.
- **Education, training, and information** Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute to their effectiveness. They

inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

- **Cooperation among cooperatives** Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.
- **Concern for the community** Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

## History

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In the spring of 1973, a few grassroots visionaries chose to establish a local buying club to share lowcost, quality food and soon rented its first 10 x 30 ft. room located in the back and northern side of 700 Main Avenue. DNF operated on all volunteer. In 1974, it was legally registered with the state of Colorado to become Durango Natural Foods, Inc. In 1975, it moved to a 600 sq. ft. rented space in the alley of 2nd Ave. and 7th St. DNF invited a Social Services Program, the Single Purpose Application Referral System (SPARS), to initially share the premises.

In addition to manning the store, DNF volunteers worked with the community through SPARS by providing services and transportation for the elderly and the disadvantaged. Its first organic community garden flourished on the ground where The Mears House now stands. DNF organized a network of local farmers and producers to supply, as much as possible, its bulk grains, beans, nuts, seeds, fruits, vegetables, herbs, honey, beef, and eggs.

In order to accrue sufficient assets to buy its own building, DNF first invested its savings in a duplex at 3100 & 3104 West 2nd Ave. Using this property as collateral, members stepped forward to loan the down payment in March 1979, and purchased the northern half of its current 575 East 8th Ave. property. Community involvement continued through helping the Local Organic Produce Project (LOPP), the Soup Kitchen and San Juan Resource Recovery, among others. Education, too, has been one of DNF's priorities so throughout its history, informative newsletters have been sent plus a wide variety of classes and training videos have been offered.

In July 1987, DNF planned a parking expansion and improved handicap accessibility by first selling the duplex in order to buy the adjoining property to the west; it built a wheelchair ramp entrance and removed the house on the west property in August 1990. In January 1999, DNF purchased the adjacent property including an older house to the south. After removing the older house, it constructed a new adjoining building for larger retail and storage areas including a deli.

In 2006, the BOD planned to install automatic glass sliding front doors, to refill the depression in the parking lot and to paint the outside of the building. Most existing member loans were consolidated and the commercial bank loan was increased by an additional \$50,000 to pay for the improvements.

In 2009, members voted to replace the membership structure with an owner-equity system. Patronage dividends (the profits of the business) may be shared with member-owners in profitable years.

In 2015, DNF Co-op was selected as the recipient of the 2014 Green Business Leadership Award presented by the San Juan Citizens Alliance's Green Business Roundtable for demonstrating leadership, risk, and innovation in utilizing environmentally responsible, healthy and profitable business practices.

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The award recognized, among other efforts, the Co-op's participation in 4CORE's Resource Smart Business Program, undergoing a comprehensive sustainability audit and investment in energy efficiency.

Currently under Tsewang Sherpalama "Sherpa's" management as the General Manager, the store is looking toward a positive future and is continuously making strategic decisions to better serve its owner-members.

## **DNF Co-op BOD Responsibilities**

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The Board of Directors governs in a way that emphasizes vision, strategic and proactive leadership; it provides clear distinctions of BOD and management roles and deliberates in many voices but governs in one voice.

### **The BOD's job is to:**

- Create a shared vision and "ends" that guide strategic planning
- Develop effective communication between the cooperative and its member/owners
- Hire a GM and direct and evaluate the GM's performance by monitoring against written policy
- Perpetuate itself through recruitment, training and ongoing professional development, including monitoring and self-evaluation.

The DNF Co-op Board of directors operates using Policy Governance, a governing style that clearly defines the role of the BOD and GM. This style of governance allows the BOD to have its arms around the store without having its fingers in it. *It should be noted that the BOD is NOT involved in the day to day operations of the store.* Training will be provided to new BOD members in this system of governance.

The BOD receives support and training as needed from the National Cooperative Grocers (NCG).

## **Frequently Asked Questions about Board Service**

### **How often does the DNF Co-op board meet?**

BOD meetings are generally held on the third Wednesday of the month, from 5:30-7:30 pm. The meetings are currently held in the DNF Office.

### **As a board member, how much time am I expected to commit?**

Outside of monthly BOD meetings, a minimum of 5 hours a month, depending on your schedule, working on other BOD tasks, readings and committees. DNF board members serve 3 year terms with staggered start dates to allow for continuity of leadership

### **How many DNF Co-op Board members are there?**

The bylaws currently state a requirement for 7 BOD members.

**Do I have to be a member-owner to join the DNF Board of Directors?** Yes, cooperative ownership-membership is required.

**What does it cost to be a DNF Co-op member-owner?**

A full-share owner pays an investment of \$100 (either in one payment or in installments) and is then eligible to participate in elections and hold elected office in addition to being eligible for other owner benefits such as member sales, discount days, and in profitable years, a dividend based on patronage at the store.

**Do DNF Co-op Board members receive any additional benefits?**

Currently, BOD members are eligible for bulk purchasing discounts. And they have tons of fun!

**Durango Natural Foods Co-op  
2018 Board Application Form**

**The following information will be used to create the board election ballot and an election brochure to help educate the voters about you. Phone number, mailing address and email will be used internally only. Please print clearly.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Your occupation:

Your education:

**Please print clearly or attach a printed digital version of your response with this form.**

Previous Board of Directors experience or related experience:

**Please answer the following question in 300 words or less:**

Why do you believe DNF owners should choose you to represent them?

(Include skills, expertise and resources you bring to board service; what areas you think the board should be focusing on over the next 3-5 years; anything else you would like to share with owners.)

Responses will be posted in the store and on the DNF Co-op website. Additionally, email a photo of yourself for the brochure.

**Please submit this form to a cashier in the store or send via e-mail to [board@durangonaturalfoods.coop](mailto:board@durangonaturalfoods.coop) by April 9, 2018.**