2026 COOP BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN

December 30, 2025



ILLUSTRATION BY EVA SCHICKER

December 30, 2025

Serving on the Coop's Board of Directors is a meaningful way to deepen your engagement with and service to your Coop. There is one open Board position to be elected in 2026 for a three-year term. Members are invited to nominate themselves.

Nominations are due on Monday, March 2, 2026, at 5 p.m.* Candidates will be elected at the 2026 Annual Meeting on June 30.

BOARD STRUCTURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Park Slope Food Coop is governed by a Board of Directors composed of five members elected by Coop member-owners. All elected members serve three-year terms. In addition, the senior General Coordinator present at the General Meeting serves in an *ex officio* capacity.

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Regularly attend monthly General Meetings, the Annual Meeting and any other meetings as necessary.
- Thoroughly review all meeting materials in advance to participate responsibly at General Meetings.
- Follow the Seven Principles of Cooperation, the Coop's mission statement, the Coop's bylaws and the Guide to the General and Annual Meeting.
- Uphold fiduciary duties on behalf of the Coop and its member-owners. Board directors have legal and ethical duties to:
    - Act carefully: Make thoughtful, informed decisions and exercise the same care and concern for board responsibilities as any prudent person would in managing their own affairs. Avoid actions that could reasonably jeopardize the Coop's financial stability or its ability to operate.
    - Act loyally: Place the interests of the Coop ahead of personal interests, disclose

all conflicts of interest and avoid using Board service as a means for personal or commercial gain.

- Act lawfully: Ensure the Coop complies with all applicable laws and regulations and doesn't engage in illegal or unauthorized activities. Carry out the Coop's mission in conjunction with its purposes as stated in the Coop's governing documents.
- Act prudently: Exercise reasonable business judgment in managing financial resources and investments.

For more information about Coop governance, please see The GM and the Board of Directors *and* Amended Bylaws of Park Slope Food Coop*.*

BOARD DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AND MEETINGS

The Board of Directors is the legally required decision-making body of the Park Slope Food Coop. The Board convenes monthly at the Coop's General Meeting, to which all members are invited. The GM is the portion of the Board of Directors meeting during which members meet to discuss and vote on agenda items to provide advice to the Board of Directors on those items.

The GM has been an integral part of the Coop's decision-making body since our inception. Members play an active role in decision-making by submitting agenda items, attending General Meetings, voting on proposals presented at the GM and electing the Board of Directors. Members' votes on proposals are considered advice to the Board. At the end of the General Meeting, the Board will either accept or reject the members' advice. The Board's role doesn't overshadow or replace the member initiative, discussion and advice expressed through voting, which are at the heart of the General Meeting.

If you have never attended a General Meeting and are interested in a Board position, we encourage you to attend the upcoming GMs on January 27 and February 24.

HOW TO APPLY:

Submit a candidate statement of up to 750 words that includes your responses to the following questions. Your statement will be published in the *Linewaiters' Gazette*, posted in the Coop Corner and distributed to all member-owners.

1. What inspired you to consider serving on the Park Slope Food Coop Board of Directors?

2. Share any skills, interests and experience you would bring to the Board. Examples may be drawn from any personal, educational, work/professional or volunteer experience.

3. Describe your PSFC work slot experience briefly.

4. **At the time of application, are you aware of any endorsement of your candidacy by any Coop member-run group, or do you expect to receive any endorsement or organized support from such a group, including groups advocating for or against boycotts?***

5. PSFC is "good food at an affordable price for working members through cooperation." What does that mean to you?

Send your candidate statement and photo to gazettesubmissions@psfc.coop or drop off your application at the Membership Office. Please include your name and member number. If submitting electronically, attach a Word document or paste your statement in the email body. Include a head-and-shoulders photo if available; otherwise, your member ID photo will be used.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDACY

1. Submit your statement and the optional photo by **Monday, March 2, 2026, at 5 p.m.***
2. Attend the March 31, 2026, General Meeting, where you will introduce yourself and answer questions from members during the candidate presentation portion of the agenda.

KEY DATES:

Candidate Applications Due: **March 2, 2026***

Candidate Presentation at GM: March 31, 2026

Election Period: June 1–28, 2026

Annual Meeting: June 30, 2026

*** As of February 28, information above indicated with an asterisk has been updated. These updates are reflected in Question #4 and in the deadline date, which has been changed from March 1 to March 2.**

BOARD CANDIDATES: WHO THEY ARE AND WHY THEY’RE RUNNING

December 30, 2025

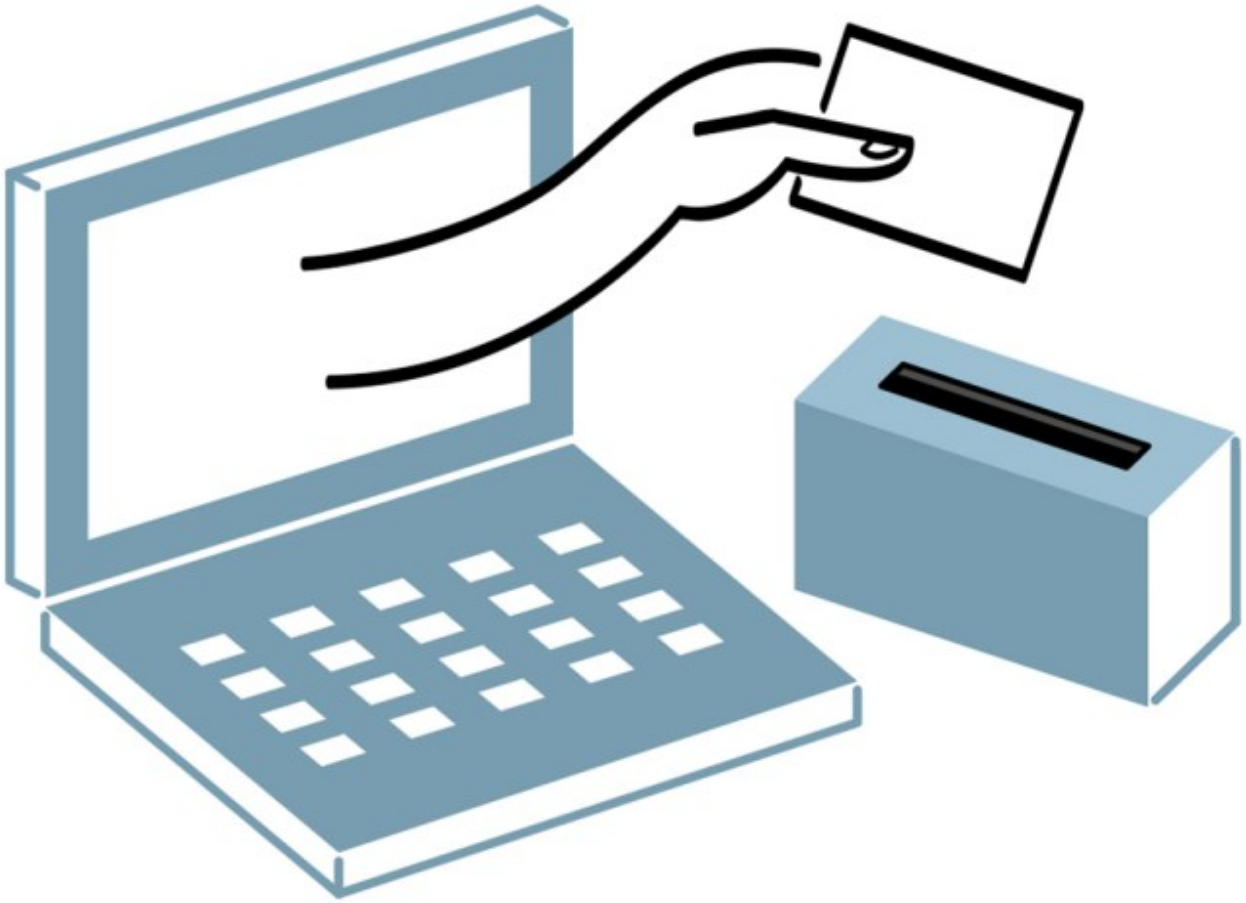


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SAVAGE

FIRST SOME BACKGROUND ON THE COOP'S BOARD

The Park Slope Food Coop Board of Directors plays a crucial role in running the Coop. The Board makes its decisions based on the advice of members who attend the monthly General Meeting. There are five seats on this Board, and each term lasts three years. Members submit their applications to run for open seats in March each year and candidate statements are published in the *Linewaiters' Gazette*. Nominees

will have the opportunity to introduce themselves at the March 28 General Meeting. All members can start voting online via a Coop-wide email that will go out in late May, and results will be announced at the Annual Meeting on June 27.

This year there is one candidate for one open seat. (There were two candidates who self-nominated by the deadline but one of them dropped out shortly thereafter.) Here is the 2023 candidate and his statement:

TIMOTHY HOSPODAR



When some mom friends asked if I was running for the Board, I hadn't really decided. Last year, I tried joining the Board without success. I had been on the fence about running again, despite my interest in supporting our community in a different capacity.

Coincidentally, Nikki and Anna are both elementary school teachers, and all our kids are close in age. They've been having difficulty scheduling shifts at the Coop because of the pause on Coop-provided childcare. While sharing a gentle reminder that child-

care is expected to return this year, I remembered that we can all think of a change we'd like to see at the Coop. Acknowledging that it's a rare exception for the Board to approve an action that didn't echo the consensus of the membership, I'd like to bring to the Board my experience with facilitating alignment for diverse stakeholders.

Maybe the Board needs a member that's a dad to a school-aged kiddo. I trust that the Coop's membership is made up of a significant number of parents, and electing a parent to the Board adds a dimension of representation that's important in community. In an interest to keep this introduction short, I'll reference last year's *Gazette* wherein I drew an analogy between parenthood and stewardship of the Coop and other passions. Rather than dig out digital archives, I encourage you to join March's GM and I'll rehash the bit. I also encourage all readers to join all the GMs, in case you weren't aware that attendance at the meetings needs a boost!

BOARD CANDIDATES: WHO THEY ARE AND WHY THEY RUN

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From the Editors

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There are six candidates for two open seats. Here is the 2022 slate:



IMANI Q’RYN

I was elected to the Board of Directors nearly 17 years ago and have continuously served in this capacity. I have served on the Board longer than any other elected member. I am also a member of the Chair Committee and have been so throughout my service on the Board.

Our Board of Directors is not a typical board. It was required by state law that the Coop have a Board of Directors. As a co-operative we liked our town hall style of governance, that every member has a say, every member has a vote. We wanted to continue that tradition. The Coop's attorney at that time came up with the idea that the Board should take the advice of the members on all subjects as a means of limiting the powers of the Board. It was written into our by-laws; most of the Board members that we've had since the Board was instituted decades ago have accepted this policy.

"I take the mandate to trust the membership and take their advice as a sacred duty. It's not my opinion, or my position on an issue that is important. It is vital that I respect and trust the voice of the membership. The membership guides my vote."

I wrote those words three years ago in my bid for candidacy letter. I take the opportunity to state that again. These last three years have been the most challenging for me as a Board member and most dangerous for our form of governance and possibly the Coop in General. We had to do things as a board that we had never done. We never meet outside of the General Meeting. During the beginning of COVID so much changed for the Coop and we were in uncharted territory. We got advice from our general counsel. We not only had to meet but we did so every week for hours! It was exhausting. We wanted the membership to have their voice, to weigh in and decide the direction that we would go as a co-operative. It is in crisis times like those that we could have lost what we had worked over 50 years to protect.

I was so proud and honored to be with that group of Board members: Bill P., Allen Z., Rachel A., Sukey T. and Joe H. We went through that fire and kept our word, our promise to the membership.

I ask for your vote one last time. I hope that more members will step up and choose to participate in our form of governance. It's easier now to come to our meetings, they are on Zoom! All the Coop laws are made here. I also hope that those that really understand our kind of board will consider running next time we have an opening.

I love the Coop and hope that it exists for generations to come!



TIMOTHY HOSPODAR

In October 2020, when our Coop introduced a new phase of member labor, we met with an online scheduler deployed to support it. I showed up on that very first day to contribute in a way different than I had ever worked before—on a truck-unloading

shift. Despite advance scheduling, a hiccup in the system prohibited me from working that first morning. And so, I showed up again on the very next morning, as scheduled, and I worked on the sidewalk at 5:30 AM. I was surprised to like the shift, as there was a reason that I had never tried the shift before, counter to my history of working a variety of FTOP shifts from CHIPS to childcare to cashiering. Well, here's an inconsequential fact about me: I greatly detest predawn roll calls, not to mention my distaste - for cold outdoor activities in general. Be that as it may, I made truck-unloading shifts a weekly practice and showed up 27 times across the eight months before the broader phase of member labor began in July 2021.

There's an analogy here as it relates to one thing fatherhood helped me learn. Early morning hours, before the babe awakens, are sometimes the only chance to devote one's free time to things that matter most. The Coop—as a market and as a community—has mattered so much to me, since joining twelve years ago and certainly in the last two. And its future, following these complicated times, is of grave importance. While my optimism helps me trust that survival is a given, I expect that our future state features exciting changes. I'd like to pledge my work shift to the Board and our membership at large, because I understand the General Meeting (as a whole) comprises the stewardship of change.

If granted the opportunity to serve our community in this role, I commit to employing several fair tactics I have learned in other roles. In the effort to mitigate bias, I'll exercise sensitive feedback tools of active listening, to ensure that the Board clarifies and validates as appropriate in addition to echoing the majority message. I'll help the Board identify any unsatisfied concerns to acknowledge disagreement around consensus. My prior work as a facilitator in decision-making sessions for executives has prepared me to promote a diversity of voices while encouraging dissenting opinions be taken into consideration. I respect that any upcoming changes can only result from an array of debate, and I am equipped to support the process. The timing is right, I believe, for me to support the Coop in this capacity.



AMY CAO

Fellow member-owners, my name is Amy Cao, and I humbly submit my candidacy to the Coop's Board of Directors. My growing passion for good food—its origins, its impact, its accessibility—I owe to the Food Coop. I was drawn to the Coop for the promise of delicious, affordable food, and over the years, I find myself becoming more and more attached to the less tangible aspects of what makes our community a true

collective—and how to nurture this spirit to help ensure its lasting success.

In my professional life, I am a communications strategist for nonprofits, schools, professional organizations, and public and private companies. This often positions me as an advisor to executives, faculty administration, public officials, and even board directors, to help them plan for growth opportunities, manage crises and minimize risks. Previously, the City contracted me to work alongside social workers as a financial empowerment counselor. This brought me face to face with struggling New Yorkers, as I helped them navigate scarce resources in unforgiving situations.

These experiences have exposed me to unique and diverse challenges at all levels of an institution. This formed an inclusionary perspective that informs my daily life. As a liaison to stakeholders at many levels, I am a good listener. I do my best to understand differing points of view, encourage dialogue to solve problems, and respond thoughtfully and decisively when the situation commands it. As a Board Member, I would do this by leaning heavily on my member community.

I believe an elected Board Member has a duty of responsibility to the membership. Over the years, I've had the privilege to speak with many of you over the course of countless shops, while stocking shelves, scanning your IDs and walking your groceries home with you. I am immensely proud of the Coop community, and I am committed to working together with you to secure its financial health and future sustainability, in service to our founding Cooperative principles. With your confidence in my ability to take your lead by heeding the advice of the membership to act in the best interest of the Coop, I hope to earn your vote.



BRANDON WEST

My name is Brandon West, I have been a member since 2009, when I first moved into the neighborhood, and soon after became a squad leader for stocking and receiving. I also recently ran for City Council in the community in 2021. For a career, I’m currently a labor organizer for local journalists and have worked in voting rights and organizing. I have always been very close to the Coop and its mission. It is incredibly challenging

to maintain large membership-led organizations. I have experienced that fact, not just as an active member of this Coop, but in other collective processes and while working in government.

As the pandemic put an incredible strain on the Coop, and some challenging decisions were made about how to plan for the present and future, I wished I had an avenue to be more directly involved with the Coop. Not just as a way to be more directly connected in a community important to me during a time when “community” is harder to find, but also so that we can bring more member input into some of the seriously important decisions this Coop will have in the future. My goal and intention of running for this position is to mainly focus on decision making, and helping work to build participation in the general meetings, which were once much larger.

We all remember the more contentious, but better attended meetings in the past 10 years. While we have progressed a lot in this time, I think the challenge our Coop faces as being large but also democratic is critical, especially when our membership numbers have dropped in light of the pandemic, and that we are in a more vulnerable state financially as we were before it started. I also pledge to work to make sure that members are brought more into major decisions in the future and support developing a process for how we rethink our democratic processes in the face of so much change to the Coop. Our leaders made several tough decisions quickly, and I believe the Coop is much better for it, but I think more tough questions are ahead, and there are a lot of unknowns. I think it’s important to try to bring as many folks into these decisions as we can, and make more members aware of the challenges we face as a Coop.

I think our mission is strong and widely felt and believe the next few years in the City will be challenging with a shift towards living with the pandemic. What that does physically and financially to the Coop remains to be known. We must make sure that our members who are most negatively impacted, and who struggle financially, should be centered as much as possible.

In addition to this, I think the fiscal health of the Coop is incredibly important, and I

will also work to make sure that the relationship between coordinators and staff is always a focus and highlighted. The Coop needs to be a great place to be a member and to work, and I will use my background in conflict negotiation to help mediate any issues if they come up, and contribute to mitigating conversations if needed.



GEORGE SARAH OLKEN

I knew the Park Slope Food Coop was magical when I saw the red sign-in books at La Louve Coopérative in Paris, which is not only built on our model but copied our store down to the color of the binders. There is a special pleasure in our rituals: calling out over the intercom “What are those little mushrooms in miso soup?” (enoki); the line painted on the backyard wall to indicate how high to stack compost buckets; walking a member and their cart up Seventh Avenue and learning how they came to New York in the 60s—or last month. The Coop is my happy place, I’ve made friends there, I run into friends there, I want it to flourish.

I would like to join the Coop Board of Directors to be a voice for that flourishing. I believe Board members, like coordinators and committee members, can use their position to influence discussions and decision-making in a positive direction, especially because the Board is our one elected leadership body. With a mandate from the membership, I will use this position to emphasize working together and building community.

Recently the Coop has had to make difficult decisions: How to run the virtual GM? How to re-organize member labor? How to support members struggling from the pandemic? There is no abstract entity “The Coop” to address these questions. We must address them through cooperation as members.

We need to re-educate ourselves about how our Coop functions and re-imagine our role within it. As we become more reliant on technology (goodbye red binders), we must find ways to make that technology accessible so that every member can learn how it operates. As our finances fluctuate due to unforeseen crises—the next pandemic or future supply chain breakdowns—members need to take an active role in the decisions of how we react.

This is work I’ve tried to do on an individual level as a squad leader, by bringing items to the GM, by joining with members of the unofficial Coop Study Group, and by speak-

ing with staff and community elders: What was the Coop like before we owned the building? How do we resolve disputes? How do you pick the perfect melon?

Since joining in 2007, I've worked on the shopping floor, in the basement, and in the office. In 2018, I became a shopping squad leader. I was heartbroken when the pandemic severed the relationships with my fellow squad members and with the members of the Coop staff who supported us. These relationships are as important as the smooth operation of our grocery store—they are what make the Coop what it is! I believe the GM and management should be guided by the goal of fostering greater connection among cooperators.

Outside the Coop, I drive the Bookmobile for Brooklyn Public Library, bringing library service to communities all over the borough. I live just south of Prospect Park with my partner Jenny and our cat Tahini (who never does her work shift). I look forward to answering questions at the March 29 GM and I hope I can continue to serve the Coop as a member of the Board.



JESSE ROSENFELD

A member since 2004, I have worked as cashier, cheese and olive bagger, FTOP stock boy, babysitter and in 2nd floor guest registration. My paid profession is that of Addictions Counselor on the Lower East Side. My free time has been galvanized by the 2016 elections; I have joined Get Organized Brooklyn and regularly do phonebanking to support voter-expansion drives.

Demonstrably supporting our cooperative goals of shared success, I have brought products to our shelves and successfully brought a proposal to the approval stage at our GM. Pre-pandemic, my work slot was Secretary for the General Meeting and I took the minutes every month. Our meetings are one special set of gears in the whole enterprise, and I was proud to have been re-elected yearly for eight years straight. I consider myself very familiar with the GM and AM processes.

I love it at the Coop. I meet people here I wouldn't usually encounter and discuss things I wouldn't ever know about. I shop every couple of days because of its warm familiarity, and I like being part of an organization that is a standard-bearer for food and environmental justice. The Coop is my chosen community and I feel a part of it every day when I walk down Seventh Avenue, seeing fellow members on their way to and from the store.

With a proven record of support for the health of our enterprise, I am running for the Board of Directors because I see the Coop as a business first. As such, the Board is obligated to remain alert to the legal and fiduciary responsibilities of the Coop rather than maintain advocacy for any particular issue. Members at the coming election will likely ask a version of, "How will you improve the Coop as a member of the Board-?" My answer will be, "There is nothing that a Board member should do outside of taking the advice of the membership on how to vote for proposals, which they have always done."

For any proposal that is problematic, I will ask myself the same questions as any Board member: Will a proposal ratified by the General Meeting put the financial and legal health of the Coop at risk? Does the proposal violate the spirit and letter of the Coop's own by-laws or NYS articles of incorporation, and our own mission statement?

Thank you and I look forward to your vote.

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We need to re-educate ourselves about how our Coop functions and re-imagine our role within it. As we become more reliant on technology (goodbye red binders), we must find ways to make that technology accessible so that every member can learn how it operates. As our finances fluctuate due to unforeseen crises—the next pandemic or future supply chain breakdowns—members need to take an active role in the decisions of how we react.

This is work I’ve tried to do on an individual level as a squad leader, by bringing items to the GM, by joining with members of the unofficial Coop Study Group, and by speak-

ing with staff and community elders: What was the Coop like before we owned the building? How do we resolve disputes? How do you pick the perfect melon?

Since joining in 2007, I've worked on the shopping floor, in the basement, and in the office. In 2018, I became a shopping squad leader. I was heartbroken when the pandemic severed the relationships with my fellow squad members and with the members of the Coop staff who supported us. These relationships are as important as the smooth operation of our grocery store—they are what make the Coop what it is! I believe the GM and management should be guided by the goal of fostering greater connection among cooperators.

Outside the Coop, I drive the Bookmobile for Brooklyn Public Library, bringing library service to communities all over the borough. I live just south of Prospect Park with my partner Jenny and our cat Tahini (who never does her work shift). I look forward to answering questions at the March 29 GM and I hope I can continue to serve the Coop as a member of the Board.



JESSE ROSENFELD

A member since 2004, I have worked as cashier, cheese and olive bagger, FTOP stock boy, babysitter and in 2nd floor guest registration. My paid profession is that of Addictions Counselor on the Lower East Side. My free time has been galvanized by the 2016 elections; I have joined Get Organized Brooklyn and regularly do phonebanking to support voter-expansion drives.

Demonstrably supporting our cooperative goals of shared success, I have brought products to our shelves and successfully brought a proposal to the approval stage at our GM. Pre-pandemic, my work slot was Secretary for the General Meeting and I took the minutes every month. Our meetings are one special set of gears in the whole enterprise, and I was proud to have been re-elected yearly for eight years straight. I consider myself very familiar with the GM and AM processes.

I love it at the Coop. I meet people here I wouldn't usually encounter and discuss things I wouldn't ever know about. I shop every couple of days because of its warm familiarity, and I like being part of an organization that is a standard-bearer for food and environmental justice. The Coop is my chosen community and I feel a part of it every day when I walk down Seventh Avenue, seeing fellow members on their way to and from the store.

With a proven record of support for the health of our enterprise, I am running for the Board of Directors because I see the Coop as a business first. As such, the Board is obligated to remain alert to the legal and fiduciary responsibilities of the Coop rather than maintain advocacy for any particular issue. Members at the coming election will likely ask a version of, "How will you improve the Coop as a member of the Board-?" My answer will be, "There is nothing that a Board member should do outside of taking the advice of the membership on how to vote for proposals, which they have always done."

For any proposal that is problematic, I will ask myself the same questions as any Board member: Will a proposal ratified by the General Meeting put the financial and legal health of the Coop at risk? Does the proposal violate the spirit and letter of the Coop's own by-laws or NYS articles of incorporation, and our own mission statement?

Thank you and I look forward to your vote.

JESSE ROSENFELD: BOARD CANDIDATE STATEMENT

December 30, 2025



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Thank you and I look forward to your vote. ■

GEORGE SARAH OLKEN: BOARD CANDIDATE STATEMENT

December 30, 2025



I knew the Park Slope Food Coop was magical when I saw the red sign-in books at La Louve Coopérative in Paris, which is not only built on our model but copied our store down to the color of the binders. There is a special pleasure in our rituals: calling out

over the intercom “What are those little mushrooms in miso soup?” (Enoki); the line painted on the backyard wall to indicate how high to stack compost buckets; walking a member and their cart up Seventh Ave and learning how they came to New York in the Sixties or last month. The Coop is my happy place, I’ve made friends there, I run into friends there, I want it to flourish.

I would like to join the Coop Board of Directors to be a voice for that flourishing. I believe board members, like coordinators and committee members, can use their position to influence discussions and decision-making in a positive direction, especially because the board is our one elected leadership body. With a mandate from the membership, I will use this position to emphasize working together and building community.

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demic severed the relationships with my fellow squad members and with the members of the Coop staff who supported us. These relationships are as important as the smooth operation of our grocery store—they are what make the Coop what it is! I believe the GM and management should be guided by the goal of fostering greater connection among cooperators.

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