

Voter Guide

Please use this guide to aid your decision in casting this year's ballot. The board's hope is to provide additional, transparent information about candidates.

	KARAH BARR Communication Consultant	COREY LAHM Self-employed	CASSANDRA MEYER (INCUMBENT) Engineer	TABITHA MONTGOMERY Nonprofit Executive Director	ELIZABETH LIDDIARD WOZNIAK Self-employed
In a sentence, what do you think is the most important role of the board?	The most important role of the Seward Community Cooperative board is to provide strategic oversight and policy direction that supports a healthy community while empowering management to effectively implement operational objectives.	To react to the needs of the community and the members and implement and create change for the better of the co-op and the community.	Being accountable to the owners and in turn holding the GM accountable, to see our co-op fulfill our Ends Statement and benefit our communities into the future.	A board member's ability to center the mission of the organization as it takes steps to understand the organization's work and impact, with the help of staff, supports the board's ability to provide missionally aligned guidance in relation to a wide range of contexts and situations.	To oversee the business of the co-op, and support the general manager in operating the business
In a sentence, what do you think is the most important role of individual directors?	The most important role of individual directors on the Seward Community Cooperative board is to actively contribute to shaping strategic policies, ensuring organizational alignment with the Co-op values and principles, and representing the interests of the owners by thinking critically and asking good questions.	To maintain an open mind, and to work well with others to advance the goal and the agenda of the co-op in a creative and inclusive way.	Bringing all your expertise to help the co-op thrive, and engaging in policy analysis and monitoring.	An individual board member's ability to actively and consistently engage with staff and their fellow directors during board meetings is essential, and allows the necessary conversations to occur, which helps missionally guide the ongoing work of the organization.	To work cooperatively to ensure effective leadership to the co-op
What top two skills, qualities, or expertise would you bring to the board?	My work as the former Seward Co-op Marketing manager has prepared me to be a co-op ambassador, bring an ownership voice to the governance role, and guide the big-picture vision for the co-op. Additionally, my skills in data-driven decision-making will help the board leverage insights to craft effective policies and drive organizational growth.	Experience in running/owning several wholesale companies including wine and spirits, gourmet food and cannabis.	Thoughtful attention to detail, and focus on equitable community-based solutions.	From a variety of experience, professional and personal I have determined that to lead well, you must first love well. My approach to past and present board service, which has fostered ongoing and deep relationships, is the result of my ability and willingness to authentically present myself in my words and actions, and the joy I exhibit from working alongside those doing the work, in service of advancing the organization's mission.	Communication and cooperative leadership
In a sentence, what is your vision for Seward Co-op?	My vision for Seward Community Co-op is to build on its strengths as a vibrant, inclusive community hub while leveraging innovative strategies and owner collaboration to drive sales and impact for the next 50 years.	To reflect the values and the hopes of the diverse community that the coop services and increase ownership through community outreach	Staying rooted in cooperative values while evolving to meet market challenges, equitably supporting local economies, supporting our staff, and uplifting new co-operators and communities with healthy food and relationships.	As an organization fueled by centering people and collaboration, I envision these principles fueling the next chapter of structural and financial health for the coop, which can unleash a new season of community wellbeing based on cooperative ingenuity and innovation.	A thriving, healthy business that serves our communities
How long have you been an owner of Seward Co-op?	I have been an owner since 2013.	5-7 years	Shopper since the '90's, owner since ~2006	One day.	30+ years
Have you ever served on a board before? If so, where? What boards do you currently serve on?	I have never served on a board before. However, in my previous Seward Co-op role I supported and interacted with the Board of Directors and am familiar with policy-governance.	I served on the board of Listening House, a day shelter in St. Paul from 2011-2013.	I am currently on Seward Co-op's board serving as board president.	Currently: 1. Upstream Arts (2017-present), 2. Midtown Global Market (2018-present), 3. Meet Minneapolis (2021-present). Past: 1. Ace in the City (2016-2023), 2. Mixed Blood Theatre (2010-2021), 3. Alzheimer's Association MN/ND (2013-2019).	I do not have previous board experience
Do you have any potential or perceived conflicts of interest serving on Seward Co-op's board?	No	No	No	None	Not that I'm aware of