



WILLIMANTIC
FOOD CO-OP
a community market

2020 Annual Report

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**Annual Meeting &
Board Election Info >>>**

Welcome to the 2021 **ELECTION** for our
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 Below are our candidates' information, instructions, and a ballot.



Steven Bachiochi

Steven has been a Co-op member since moving to town. He is the owner of Grounded Coffee Company in Willimantic. He also works for Horizons Inc. He has developed a connection to this community over the last five years. He loves the Co-op and thinks it is a fantastic place. You will often see him, his wife Victoria, and daughter Beatrice wandering the aisles. He is very invested in the community and will use his time on the board to further enhance the Willimantic and food co-op community.



Natasha Sheer

Natasha joined the board in December 2019. She has been a member and a big fan of the Co-op for several years and is looking forward to training and learning from the Co-op's current Board members. She views membership on the board as a means for personal growth and community engagement. Natasha is a locavore who is passionate about sustainability and environmental conservation. She benefits greatly from all of the bulk items the Co-op has to offer. Natasha is a Montessori teacher who currently directs the after-school care program at Oak Grove Montessori School in Mansfield. She lives in Storrs with husband John, her 9 year old daughter Willow, her dog Gigi, and her cat Coal.

In keeping with our bylaws, members can vote for the Board of Directors by submitting the provided ballot. An authorized officer of the Board will serve as your proxy to cast the vote that you indicate.

The results will be announced at our Virtual Annual Meeting on May 23rd at 5 pm. All ballots must be received at the store by May 19th. No voting will be done at the virtual meeting.

HOW TO VOTE:

- 1 Use the ballot below. Copies are also available at the store.
- 2 Mark your vote. You can vote for the recommended slate, or for 0 to 2 individuals.
- 3 Write the last 6 digits of your Member Number (including the tiny one at the end) in the space provided. This is the number below the bar code on your membership card. This is to ensure "one member, one vote."
- 4 Drop off your ballot at the store or mail it to the Co-op: **Willimantic Food Co-op**
 91 Valley St.
 Willimantic, CT 06226
- 5 Ballots must be RECEIVED at the store by: 5/19/21 (if mailing, please allow for delivery time)



Kathleen Krider

From the Board President

I admit I don't know where to begin. The year had so many "do overs" and new beginnings, fresh starts and "we've never done this before" moments. While the struggles were real, there is much we can celebrate and be proud of. I'll start with a thank you to the 400 new members who joined the Willimantic Food Co-op in the midst of a pandemic. Whether it be about a solution in a moment or the beginning of a long relationship, thank you for seeing the Willimantic Food Co-op as a community resource. And then a thank you to the 7000+ existing members who purchased over half a million dollars in product from local producers, keeping our local economy going. And of course, there is no bigger thank you than the one that goes to the staff. 37 dedicated people who figured it out, kept us safe, kept each other safe, got us our food, created new systems, supported other co-ops, and did it with good cheer (and lots of pizza).

During this pandemic year, despite the occasional sensation of drinking from a fire hose, things got done. The Board Executive Council and the Co-op's management team met weekly, providing support in both directions. This, along with regular monthly Board meetings, meant that the ongoing operational and governance needs of the Co-op continued. The Board also met monthly with our Columinate consultant Todd Wallace, who helped us to maintain calm, gave us a broader perspective, and advised us during the pandemic. We actually had a retreat in October! Todd Zoomed in for the morning session and then we met outside in the afternoon. Board members also attended training, met in subcommittees, and logged hours in webinars.

To finish with gusto! The Board attended peer-to-peer dialogs, JEDI training (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) and attended one national conference and one regional conference, virtually. We also put out an RFP to support member engagement work that was a direct result of our retreat in October. I even managed to take a walk with Danny Spear, the Board President from Fiddleheads, just to check in. I don't want to repeat this past year. At the same time, it is nice to know that we are capable of drinking from that fire hose.

400 new members	\$16,000 invested in cooperatives &...
89% of sales were to members	...\$5000 contributed to agricultural organizations...
Employees identifying as non-white: 27%	...through donations and memberships.

WILLIMANTIC FOOD CO-OP GLOBAL ENDS POLICY

The Willimantic Food Cooperative strives to provide its members, shoppers and the greater community a retail food store which:

- Supports and increases sustainable agriculture, locally, regionally and globally, with a strong emphasis on local and regional agriculture and food processing.
- Works towards reducing our environmental impact. This includes showcasing our coop as a model of sustainability in the retail food world, with aspirations for zero waste.
- Ensures inclusivity and represents our diverse community.
- Demonstrates the economic and social value of the cooperative model by maintaining financial sustainability and viability.



Election of November 2021
Directors of the Willimantic Food Co-operative

MEMBER NUMBER
 4 0 3 6 1 1

The Board of Directors recommends the following slate of candidates:

1. Natasha Sheer (3-year term)
2. Steven Bachiochi (3-year term)

I vote for the slate of two candidates (on the left)
 OR
 I vote only for the candidates I have marked below.

Natasha Sheer
 Steven Bachiochi

Thank You to Our Staff...

Total wages paid: \$1.2 million



Anto Ben Brandon Bruce Caitrin Corry



Marissa Michelle Mark Sasha Steve S. Maxwell

Average wage: \$20.20 (includes \$2/hr hazard pay)

Total employees in 2020: 37



Chris Isabel Avery Jaron Damien Chad

Employees who were members: 18

Employees, full time: 19 part time: 17



Gabi Joe John Julio Eion Jeff



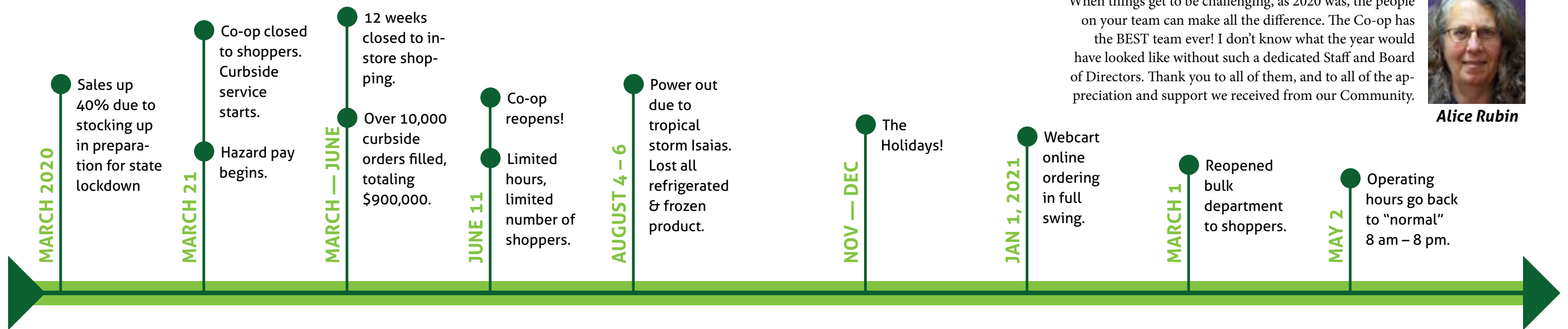
Lilia Patty Steve M. Vicky Nancy Kathy

Total staff discount: \$59,000



Jessie Saige Wendy Matt Susan Kara

TIMELINE: MARCH 2020 — MAY 2021



...From the General Manager

When things get to be challenging, as 2020 was, the people on your team can make all the difference. The Co-op has the BEST team ever! I don't know what the year would have looked like without such a dedicated Staff and Board of Directors. Thank you to all of them, and to all of the appreciation and support we received from our Community.



Alice Rubin

Treasurer's Report



Joanne Todd

The Co-op ended 2020 well financially, but we could not have predicted that outcome in early 2020. Covid19 created uncertainty for all of us including the Co-op. Would we be able to remain open? How would we keep staff and members safe? Would the supply chain break down? How would we keep supporting local farmers? Would we be able to meet member needs? These are just a few of the questions as the pandemic took hold and sales dropped significantly. This uncertainty led the Co-op to pursue a Payroll Protection Program loan for \$243,440 to ensure the Co-op could safely continue its role as an essential service, a vital employer, and a good steward of members' investment even as sales dropped and expenses increased.

In response to the pandemic, Co-op management took a different approach to meeting member needs by going completely curbside. Although this maintained a safe environment and met many of our members' needs, it soon became apparent that the system had to be improved, and Webcart was developed. Building these new business models while working through the pandemic was not in the 2020 plan, but the Co-op's amazing staff went above and beyond and DID IT! All staff were kept on payroll and received hazard pay during the pandemic. The Co-op was also able to continue support of local organizations whose needs deepened. The Co-op donated \$25,941 to local organizations in addition to \$35,000 in charitable donations made by individual members.

At the end of 2020, the co-op satisfied all the requirements of the PPP loan and the proceeds became income. This resulted in strong 2020 net income and positions the Co-op to face more uncertainty in 2021. While performance is improving, sales continue below pre-pandemic levels and pandemic expenses continue, but management expects 2021 performance to be closer to break even.

The Co-op's 2020 performance is remarkable. Thanks to staff and management, the Co-op navigated the pandemic thus far with the capacity to remain strong and continue to serve members and the community.

Balance Sheet

	2020	2019
Cash	1,187,036	882,828
Inventory	271,191	302,963
Property and equipment	787,317	823,577
Other assets	248,951	229,227
Total Assets	2,494,495	2,238,595
Liabilities	399,261	410,807
Members paid in equity	1,044,448	1,008,432
Retained Earnings	1,050,786	819,356
Total Equity	2,095,234	1,827,788
Total Liabilities & Equity	2,494,495	2,238,595

Income Statement

	2020	2019
Sales	5,509,266	5,846,529
Cost of Sales	3,553,877	3,845,748
Gross Profit	1,955,389	2,000,781
Expenses	2,011,586	1,904,386
Income from Operations	(56,197)	96,395
Other Income	285,066	8,959
Income Before Income Tax	228,869	105,354
Income Tax	2,561	(27,807)
Net Income	231,430	77,547

\$25,000
donated to
local causes

\$94,186
purchased
with SNAP
benefits

\$36,000
new equity
invested

\$31,434 paid
in property
taxes to
town of
Windham

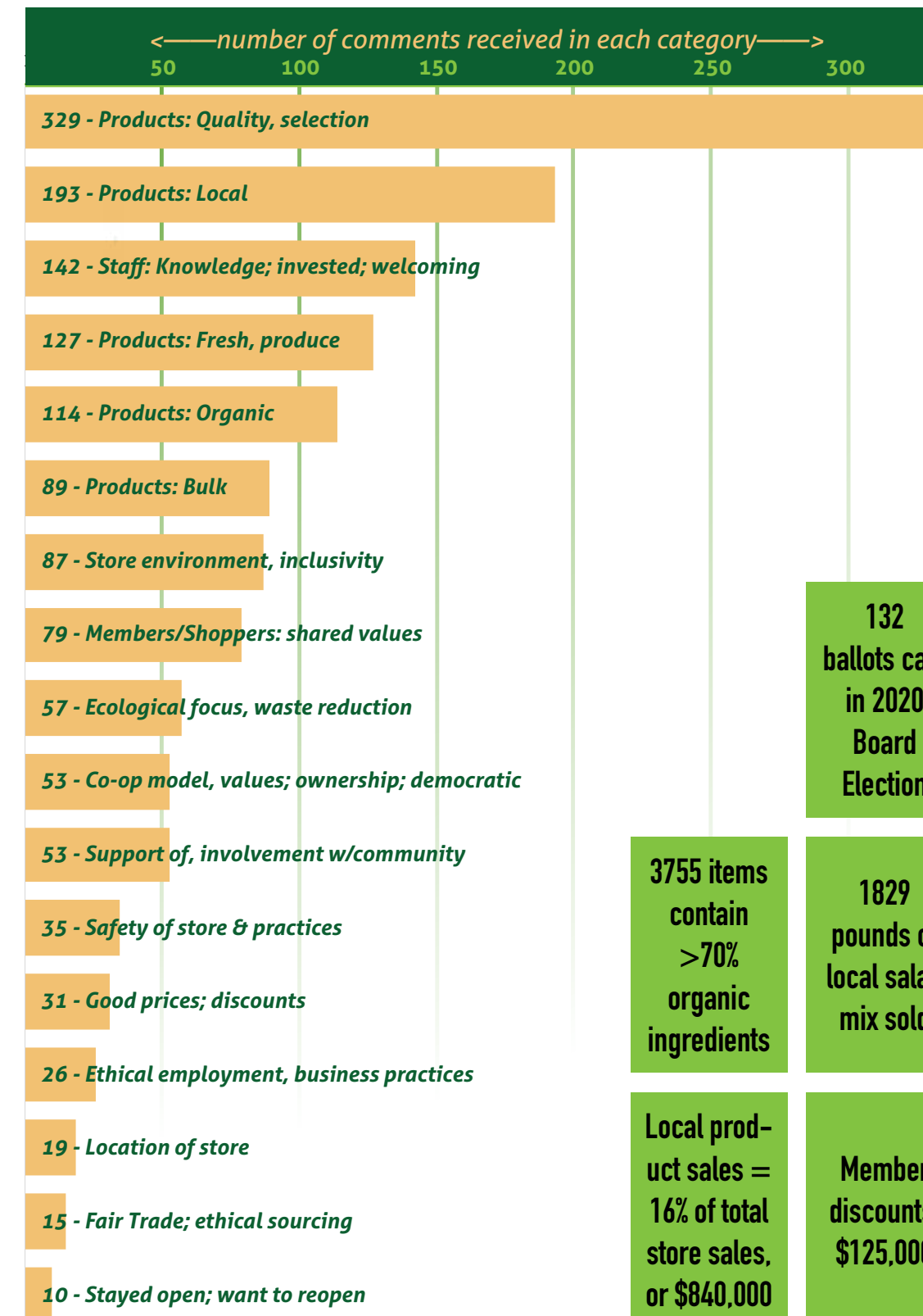
Members
donated
\$35,000
through
round-ups

32 local
& regional
organiza-
tions
supported

Member Survey Results, May 2020

Thanks for your responses. We love to hear from you!

"What are the one or two most important things about the Co-op to you?"



19,260
rebates
given for
reusable
containers

14,000
dozen local
eggs sold

Fresh dairy
meat, sea-
food, & pro-
duce sales:
\$2 million.

132
ballots cast
in 2020
Board
Election

\$565,000 in
purchases
from 109
local
producers

3755 items
contain
>70%
organic
ingredients

1829
pounds of
local salad
mix sold

Sales of
Fair Trade
Certified
products:
\$343,000

Local prod-
uct sales =
16% of total
store sales,
or \$840,000

Member
discounts:
\$125,000

8098 mem-
ber owners,
4396
paid-in-full
(\$120)



Please join us on
Sunday May 23rd from 5pm – 6:30pm

for the Willimantic Food Co-op's first ever

Virtual Annual Meeting!

**Learn more about your Co-op,
how we made it through a challenging year
and how you can have input into our future.**

Please go to willimanticfood.coop to register for the meeting.

If you are in need of assistance to join us electronically or don't have a computer,
please call the store at least 1 week ahead of time
and talk to Alice or Patty. 860-456-3611

See inside for Board Election Information and Ballot.

Willimantic Food Co-op
91 Valley Street
Willimantic, CT 06226