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Alice Rubin

Management Team

Penny Barton-Zuckerman

Financial Manager

Wendy Jakoboski

Produce Manager

Bruce Oscar

Facilities Manager

Patty Smith

Operations Manager

Marissa Ocegüera

Front-end Manager

Corry Elm

Assistant Front-end Manager

Chris Dubis

Wellness/Merchandising

Manager

Staff

Sasha Bajjo

Vicky Bassett

Anthony Catapano

Susan Chasin

Jason Cheung

John Clark

Ben Coggins

Ashley Davis

Chad Dunnack

Kara Fodaski

Emily Foust

Jaron Gaier

Mark Giangrave

Avery Gratton

Saige Johnson

Samantha Lee

Joe Lemieux

Nancy McMerriman

Cari Nadeau

Jeff Nash

Arielle Passante

Kathy Perez Quinones

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Christopher Swift

Antoinette Thuillier

Chris Trudnak

Julio Velez

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Raluca Mocanu

Charlotte Ross

Joanne Todd

Manager Representative

Alice Rubin

Staff Representative

Nancy McMerriman

Newsletter

Ellen Embardo

Cooperators Advocacy

Susan Zimmerman



Cooperators, did you know you can make a difference in the legislation that allows cooperatives to be established in Connecticut? Senate Bill 138 would update Chapter 595 in the Connecticut General Statutes to bring our statutes more in line with those in nearby states and strengthen the basic principles of member-ownership, member-control, and member benefit for Connecticut cooperatives.

Things that the bill would change:

- Reduce the number of incorporators from seven to three
- Clarify Member Shares have par (face) value
- Increase the maximum share price to reflect inflation
- Remove individual liability of Members
- Provide Board of Directors more flexibility in allocating profits

This legislation is important to all of us at Willimantic Food Co-op because it would remove liability issues in the present statute and allow us to reincorporate under the cooperative statute. Moving from our current status as a non-stock corporation to a cooperative would also remove the restriction from distributing patronage rebates (a share of year-end surplus) to us as members.

Just as importantly, the changes to Chapter 595 would encourage other groups to form cooperatives in Connecticut. Currently only 25% of Connecticut residents are member-owners of a cooperative or credit union compared to 35% of the population of Massachusetts and over 50% of the population of Vermont. Wouldn't it be great to see more food and other retail cooperative businesses like ours in Connecticut?

There are some things you can do to make Senate Bill 138 a law:

Call your House and Senate representatives and tell them you support Senate Bill 138.

We have wonderful joint sponsors of the bill:

Sen. Catherine A. Osten, 19th Dist.

Sen. Mae Flexer, 29th Dist.

Rep. Linda A. Orange, 48th Dist.

continued on page 3

Cooperators *continued from page 2*

Rep. Susan M. Johnson, 49th Dist.

Rep. Gregory Haddad, 54th Dist.

Rep. Christine Conley, 40th Dist.

Let them know you appreciate their support of cooperatives in Connecticut.

If your Senator or Representative is not on this list, let them know about Senate Bill 138 and ask for their support.

If you need to find contact information for your state representative or senator, go to www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/cgafindleg.asp

Write testimony in support of the bill.

Sample testimony can be found on Willimantic Food Coop website. The date of the public hearing will be published on the website when it's known, but you can also send your testimony electronically to the Judiciary Committee where the testimony on the bill will be heard judtestimony@cga.ct.gov.

Write Letters to the Editor.

Explain the need for updating our cooperative statutes. Check with your local paper for guidelines on submitting Letters to the Editor.

Ask your Connecticut friends and family living outside Eastern Connecticut to advocate.

Statewide support for Senate Bill 138 will be needed for passage. The more legislators we call and the more testimony we submit, the better the chances for passage of this timely legislation.

If you want more detailed information about this bill, see, Google Senate Bill 138.

MORE FOOD CO-OPS EQUAL A STRONGER,
MORE RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEM. 🌱



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Expansion Update *continued from page 1*

Expansion Update Alice Rubin

When will the café open? When are we breaking ground? Let me know when you need to borrow money.

These are some of the things I hear or overhear, at the Co-op.

Some days it seems like it would be easier to tell you what isn't happening than telling you what is happening. Either way, I will attempt to update you all.

There is a flow to what needs to happen in making decisions about our path forward. The first step and the most important question is – can the Co-op remain a viable business in any of the expansion scenarios we have been talking about? I had been working with Bill Gessner, a Cooperative Development Services (CDS) Consulting Co-op consultant who specialized in Pro Formas - a financial planning tool used to assess the outcome of a business plan. It takes into account our financial history, how much a particular project will cost, where the money to pay for the project will come from and how much that will cost and all of the other factors that make a project appear to be a viable project, or not. Bill had helped us when we made our move from Meadow Street to Valley Street – and we all know how successful that project was! I definitely wanted to work with Bill again on the purchase of 87 Church Street, and how our Co-op could expand. He had been working on several different scenarios for us, assessing the financial wisdom of each idea. And then he unexpectedly passed away.

Bill was such an important part of the Co-op



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