



2024-2025 Board Candidate Packet

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Dear La Montañita Member,

La Montañita Food Co-op (La Montañita) started as a small food-buying club in 1976. That club eventually incorporated as a food cooperative giving members the ability to steer the direction of the business to meet the community's needs. Over the past four decades La Montañita has grown to more than 15,000 members throughout the state, with stores in Albuquerque (2), Santa Fe, Gallup and a Distribution Center, collectively generating more than \$42M in sales per year.

In addition to our unique structure as a cooperative, La Montañita also differentiates itself by carrying and promoting local and organic products. For these reasons, La Montañita and its members have contributed greatly to the development of a sustainable food system in New Mexico.

The La Montañita Board of Directors helps protect our cooperative by providing monitoring and oversight of operations and helping guide La Montañita's long-term goals and visions. If you are passionate about La Montañita, local food systems, building community, a just economy and stewarding an important self-governing community resource, then serving on La Montañita Board of Directors might just be for you!

The members of La Montañita elect board members during an election season in the fall of each year. The next election will take place **November 1 - 14, 2024**. The board has a total of nine members. This year there are three 3-year terms to be filled, two of which may be filled by La Montañita staff.

Candidate applications are due **September 5, 2024**.

LA MONTAÑITA ENDS

La Montañita is a thriving cooperative business where people can buy great food, knowing their purchases make a difference.

- Make healthy food and goods accessible
- Promote environmental sustainability in our practices and products
- Champion local food systems
- Create a workplace based on dignity, opportunity, and fair compensation
- Welcome and celebrate our whole community

POLICY GOVERNANCE

The La Montañita Board uses policy governance, a board governance model that emphasizes long-range, strategic planning; enables accountable board leadership; and provides a process for monitoring and oversight of organizational performance. Policy Governance keeps the La Montañita Board from getting involved in operational details; directors do not direct the way the store operates, personnel decisions, product choices, or other similar matters. Instead, the La Montañita Board ensures the success of the co-op by working together effectively, empowering and holding accountable La Montañita's General Manager, providing strategic leadership, and perpetuating our democratic organization, which is one of the seven cooperative principles.

LA MONTAÑITA BOARD OF DIRECTORS JOB DESCRIPTION

Board Member Responsibilities

Being on the Board of Directors is a very big responsibility. Board members are the fiduciaries who steer the organization towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as by making sure La Montañita has adequate resources to advance its mission.

- Take care of La Montañita by ensuring prudent use of all assets, including facility, people, and good will; and provide oversight for all activities that advance the cooperative's effectiveness and sustainability.
- Make decisions in the best interest of La Montañita; not in the Board member's self-interest.
- Ensure that La Montañita obeys applicable laws and acts in accordance with ethical practices; that the cooperative adheres to its stated purposes, and that its activities advance its mission.
- Hire and set the compensation of La Montañita professional general management, who runs the management activities of the organization. Board members provide foresight, oversight, and insight rather than steer the boat by managing day-to-day operations.
- Attend the Board's monthly meeting (currently held virtually on Tuesday evenings), be a member of at least one Board committee, and attend various trainings and additional meetings.

Required Qualifications

A Board candidate must:

- Be an honest and caring person
- A current member in good standing
- Have been a member for at least one year within past five years
- Be committed to the La Montañita Ends
- Be committed to understanding and following the La Montañita Board governance policies
- Be committed to 8-15 hours of service per month for a three-year term
- Have strong communication skills
- Be committed to teamwork
- Have basic proficiency with email and standard computer business tools (e.g., MS Teams, Zoom, MS Office)
- Meet New Mexico State requirements for businesses holding a license to sell alcohol
 - At least 21 years of age
 - Not be a convicted felon
 - Agree to a background check and to be fingerprinted

La Montañita employees who are directly supervised by the General Manager are not eligible to serve on the Board of Directors.

Compensation

Each director receives a discount on purchases at La Montañita equal to the company's staff discount policy, currently 25%. Staff Directors (who already receive this discount benefit) are given a stipend of \$150 per month.

Additional Experience and Skills That Make You a Good Fit:

- Volunteer experience
- Business management experience
- Financial experience
- Collaborative decision-making skills
- Long-term planning experience
- Leadership and facilitation skills
- Cooperative experience

HOW TO APPLY TO RUN FOR THE BOARD

Email your completed and signed application along with a photo to elections@lamontanita.coop by 11:59pm MST, September 5, 2024.

Applications must be submitted as either a fillable PDF file or an MS Word document, both available at lamontanita.coop/election.

Candidate photos must be high resolution (300 dpi) and either a .tiff, .jpeg, or .png.

No hard copy applications will be accepted.

If you need assistance with this process, please contact us at elections@lamontanita.coop.

Please note that your application information (except for your personal contact information and references) will be shared with La Montañita members to support the election process.

We strongly encourage all candidates to attend at least one monthly Board of Directors meetings. Observing our meetings will clarify and demonstrate the Board's governance role and will give you a good idea of what to expect, should you serve. You can also dig deeper and read our Bylaws, Board Policy Manual, and prior meeting minutes, all available on lamontanita.coop/board-of-directors.

CANDIDATE RULES FOR CAMPAIGNING AT STORES

1. Contact the Store Team Leader of the particular La Montañita location where you would like to campaign. We ask that you provide at least 72 hours notice, as there may be reasons your campaigning cannot be accommodated on a specific day.
2. Each time you arrive at the store, check in with the Store Team Leader or Manager on Duty. Each store manager will determine the details of where and how you campaign at that particular store.
3. When you solicit a shopper, never stand in their path as they approach. Always stand to the side of the shopper's path. As the shopper approaches, ask politely if you may talk to them about the upcoming Board election.
4. Inquire if they are a member. If they are, remind them voting takes place November 1 – 14.
5. Campaigning is limited to 3 times per week, with your choice of which days you campaign. You may campaign for a maximum of 2 hours each time, with your choice as to what time of day.

**Questions about the election process?
Contact elections@lamontanita.coop**