



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICIAL CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACKET

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Letter from the Board

Dear Member,

La Montañita Food Co-op began in 1976 as a small food-buying club, a grassroots effort grounded in cooperation and community values. That club soon incorporated as a food cooperative, giving its members a voice in the direction and priorities of the business. Today, more than four decades later, La Montañita has grown into a vibrant cooperative of nearly 16,000 members across New Mexico, with retail locations in Santa Fe, Gallup, and two in Albuquerque, as well as a robust Distribution Center and Support Office. We collectively generate over \$49 million in annual sales while continuing to invest in the values that sparked our beginnings.

What sets La Montañita apart is not just our cooperative structure, but our unwavering commitment to local and organic products. Together with our members, we have become a cornerstone of New Mexico's sustainable food system, fostering deep relationships with local farmers, producers, and communities. Your membership supports a just, regenerative economy and a resilient, regionally-rooted food supply.

The Board of Directors plays a vital role in stewarding this vision. Through governance, oversight, and long-term planning, the board helps ensure La Montañita continues to thrive in alignment with our mission and values. If you are passionate about local food systems, cooperative enterprise, community-building, and preserving an important self-governing resource, we encourage you to consider serving on the La Montañita Board of Directors.

In this packet, you'll find valuable information about:

- Our board structure and governance model
- The scope of board service and responsibilities
- How to apply to run for the board
- How we conduct our annual elections

If you have any questions or want to learn more about what it's like to serve, please don't hesitate to reach out. Email us at **Elections@lamontanita.coop** — we're happy to connect with you and support you throughout the process.

Thank you for being part of La Montañita's story. Your voice and participation help shape a stronger, more sustainable future for us all.

In cooperation,
Your Board of Directors

La Montañita Ends

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

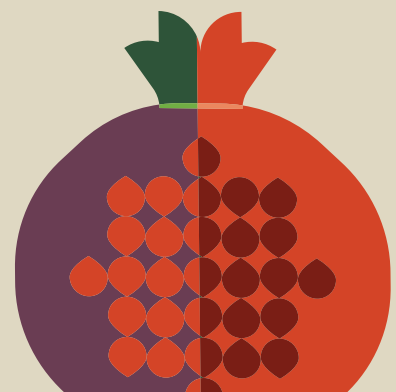
**MAKE
HEALTHY FOOD
& GOODS
ACCESSIBLE**

**PROMOTE
ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY
IN OUR PRACTICES &
PRODUCTS**

**CHAMPION
LOCAL
FOOD SYSTEMS**

**CREATE
A WORKPLACE BASED ON
DIGNITY, OPPORTUNITY
& FAIR COMPENSATION**

**WELCOME & CELEBRATE
OUR WHOLE
COMMUNITY**



La Montañita Board Structure

This board is made up of nine (9) elected members. Up to three (3) seats may be filled by La Montañita staff. Term lengths are three (3) consecutive years. Board chairs are determined annually after each election and voted on by the full board.

At anytime, if a board director leaves their position, the board may choose to appoint individuals to fill the vacancy until the next election cycle. Appointed directors must run for the board in the next election cycle.

During the following election, appointed director(s) may choose to run, and seat term lengths will be reduced by the years already served, regardless of which member-candidate is elected to the seat. (See election example scenario, pg. 5)

Board Governance Model

Our board follows the policy governance model, a leadership system that emphasizes long-range strategic planning, accountability and clear processes for monitoring and overseeing 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 our 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.

Board Director Job Description

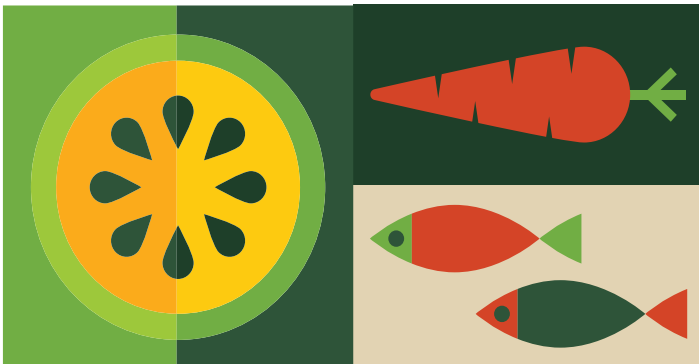
Serving on the La Montañita Food Co-op Board of Directors is a very rewarding and big responsibility. Board directors are the fiduciaries who steer the organization towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as by making sure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

Responsibilities:

- Ensure prudent use of all assets, including facility, people, and good will.
- 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 director's self-interest.
- Ensure La Montañita obeys applicable laws and acts in accordance with ethical practices; that the cooperative adheres to its stated purposes, and that activities advance its mission.
- Hire and set compensation of La Montañita professional general management, who run the management activities of the organization. *Board directors provide foresight, oversight, and insight rather than steer the boat by managing day-to-day operations.*
- Engage at monthly board meeting.
- Join at least one (1) board committee.
- Attend all training and additional meetings as needed.

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



Required Qualifications

- Must be an honest and caring individual.
- Must be a current member in good standing.
- Must have been a member for at least one year within the past five years.
- Must be committed to La Montañita's Ends.
- Must be willing to commit 8 to 15 hours of service per month for the full term.
- Must possess strong communication skills.
- Must be committed to teamwork.
- Must have basic proficiency with email and standard business software (such as Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Office and Zoom).
- Must meet New Mexico state requirements for individuals involved with businesses licensed to sell alcohol.
 - Must be at least 21 years of age
 - Must not be a convicted felon
 - Must agree to a background check and fingerprinting

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 staff discount. Staff directors who already receive the discount are given a \$150 monthly stipend.

Application Process

The Nominations & Elections Working Group, part of the Board Election Nominations & Development Committee (BEND), reviews this information packet and the candidate application annually. Updates are made as needed based on the current board's identified priorities and needs.

If you are a current member considering a run for the board, we encourage you to carefully review this packet. It provides essential information about the board's responsibilities, governance practices, and qualifications for candidacy. Additionally, you're encouraged to review our [Bylaws](#) and [Policy Manual](#) available at lamontanita.coop/board. Gaining a clear understanding of these expectations will help you determine whether board service aligns with your interests, values, and capacity.

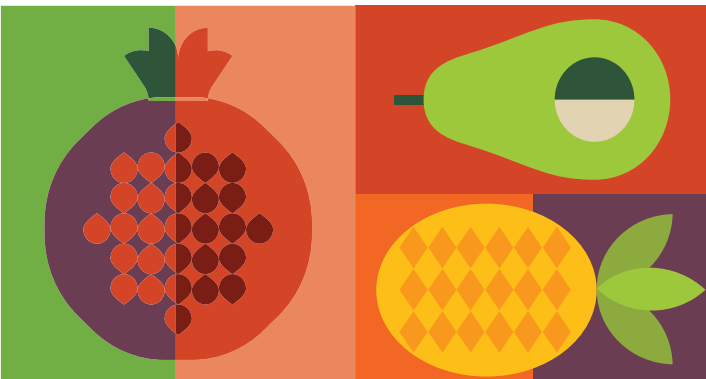
Once you've decided to pursue candidacy, complete the Candidate Application available here, lamontanita.coop/elections.

Completed applications will be submitted to the membership department and reviewed by the Nominations & Elections Working Group. All applicants who meet the required qualifications will undergo a general background check, conducted by AB Global, an independent third party.

Note: This background check does not include a financial review and will not affect your credit report. It is a standard requirement for all La Montañita senior staff and board members to help ensure responsible leadership.

You will receive an email at the address provided in your application from AB Global, with instructions for completing the background check. You'll have **72 hours** to complete this step.

Once completed, the results will be sent directly to La Montañita Food Co-op's Human Resources Department. HR will provide a simple "yay" or "nay" finding (pass/fail) to the membership department and the Nominations & Elections Working Group. From there, these groups will notify individual candidates of their status and begin preparing promotional materials for the election and its candidates.



Election Process

The La Montañita Food Co-op membership department is responsible for administering the election in a fair and impartial manner. Responsibilities include promoting the election and its candidates, managing ballot distribution and collection, and ensuring ballots are counted accurately. Final election results are submitted to the general manager and full board of directors for review and formal acceptance.

The Nominations & Elections Working Group serves as the oversight body for the election. This group supervises all key tasks, including candidate communication, application review, development of promotional materials, and ballot counting to ensure transparency and integrity throughout the process.

The board of directors is available to support candidates during the election. You are encouraged to connect with the full board at **TalkWithTheBoard@lamontanita.coop**, or with the Nominations & Elections Working Group at **Elections@lamontanita.coop** for guidance on submitting your application, tips on campaigning, and information on what to expect.

The membership department acts strictly as the executor of the election and cannot provide individualized support or advice to any candidate. However, questions regarding application status, background checks or promotional materials may be directed to **Membership@lamontanita.coop**.

Each annual election may include multiple open seats and may also include policy or bylaw amendment votes. The board may have up to three (3) staff members at any given time. When staff seats are open, staff-member candidates may run and will be identified with "(S)" next to their names on promotional materials and ballots.

All candidates will be listed alphabetically by last name, with incumbent candidates listed first and identified with "(I)." Incumbents who also hold a staff seat will be noted with "(I-S)."

During the election, current members may cast one (1) ballot. Ballots include instructions on how many candidates can be selected. Candidates are elected based on the highest to lowest number of votes received.

When varying term-length seats are available, the member-candidate receiving the most votes is elected into the longest-term seat, followed by candidates in descending vote order, regardless of incumbent or staff status.

Example Scenario:

Three Available Seats:

- Two 3-year terms
- One 2-year term
- One seat open to staff

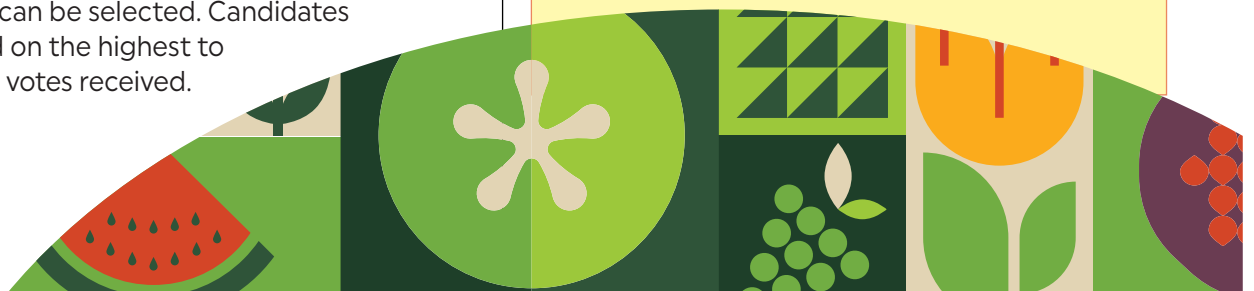
Five Member-Candidates Running:

Candidate	Votes	Result
Gabriel (I)	490	3-year term
Lizzie (I)	485	3-year term
Sophia	415	2-year term
Robert (S)	409	Not elected
Mya	320	Not elected

In this scenario, Gabriel and Lizzie, both incumbent candidates, received the highest number of votes and will each serve three-year terms.

Sophia, a new candidate, will serve the remaining two-year seat, previously held by an appointed director who did not run in this election. This seat would normally be a three-year term, but because one year had been served previously, Sophia's term length is reduced.

Robert, a staff member-candidate, and Mya received the fourth and fifth-highest vote totals, and will not serve on the board this year because only the top three candidates are elected.



How to Campaign

Member-candidates are encouraged to actively campaign before and during the election period. Campaigning increases visibility and helps drive voter turnout, which supports a more participatory election process.

Candidates may choose their own campaign methods, including but not limited to personal outreach, social media, digital communications, or printed materials. However, **all campaigning must follow La Montañita Food Co-op (LMFC) guidelines** when occurring at or near La Montañita locations.

Rules for Campaigning on La Montañita Property

- 1. Request Permission in Advance**
Contact the **store team leader or director** at the La Montañita location where you wish to campaign. You must submit your request **at least 72 hours in advance**, as space or staffing limitations may prevent accommodation.
- 2. Limit Campaigning Frequency**
You may campaign **no more than three times per week** at any single La Montañita location, and for a **maximum of two hours** per session.
- 3. Check In Upon Arrival**
When you arrive to campaign, you must **check in with the store team leader, manager on duty, or director**. They will provide guidance on appropriate locations and procedures specific to that store.
- 4. Be Respectful to Shoppers**
You may not block or obstruct any shopper's path. Always be courteous and respectful of people's time and personal space.
- 5. Leave No Trace**
After campaigning, leave the area clean and in the same condition in which you found it.

Any candidate found to have engaged in misinformation during or after the election may be removed from the ballot or, if elected, the board.



Timeline of Events

The following timeline outlines the key milestones for La Montañita Food Co-op's annual board of directors election process.

Election Preparation & Candidate Period

First Friday in July

- **Candidate Application Period Opens**
Interested members may begin submitting applications to run for the Board of Directors.

First Friday in September

- **Candidate Application Period Closes**
All candidate applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. MST on this date to be considered.

Second Friday in September

- **Candidate Background Checks Completed**
Background checks for all applicants will be finalized by this date, as required for eligibility.

Campaign & Election Period

First Friday in October

- **Election Promotion Begins**
La Montañita begins promoting the election and candidates across its platforms.
- **Official Campaign Period Opens**
Candidates may begin campaigning in accordance with La Montañita campaign guidelines.

November 1–14

- **Election Period**
Members may cast their votes during this two-week window. Ballots and voting instructions will be distributed and made available.

Post-Election Review & Results

Four Business Days After Election Closes

- **Vote Tally & Results Review**
The membership department will tally votes and submit results to the general manager and board of directors for review and formal acceptance. The added days prior to count provide enough time for any mail-in ballots postmarked on the final day of the election to arrive.
- **Candidate Notification**
All candidates will receive official election results via email from the Membership Department and the Nominations & Elections Working Group.

24 Business Hours After Candidate Notification

- **Public Announcement of Results**
Final election results will be published and shared with the general membership and co-op community.

Board Transition & Onboarding

Second Saturday in December

- **Headshots Due**
Elected candidates must complete a headshot session, arranged and provided by La Montañita.

December Board Meeting

- **New Directors Seated**
Elected candidates are officially seated at the December board of directors meeting and begin their term of service.

