

2015 High Five Co-op Brewery, Inc. Board of Directors Election

Candidate Questionnaires

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About the Elections

A total of nine directors serve on High Five’s Board of Directors. Two directors are currently in the middle of serving two year terms, leaving a total of seven open directorships available. Running for the board this year are five member-owner candidates and four incumbent directors serving one year terms and seeking reelection.

At the May 31st Annual Member’s Assembly meeting held at Farmlink, a quorum of member-owners unanimously voted in favor of delaying the start of elections to June 7. Elections will take place online via electronic ballot. On June 7, all member-owners will be sent an email to their address on file with the co-op. The emails sent will contain a link to vote for up to seven candidates. Every member-owner has an equal vote. Voting will close at 11:59 PM EST on June 21st. The four candidates who receive the most votes will serve two year terms, while the next three will serve one year terms. After the election has closed and the winners have been announced, the new board of directors will vote among themselves to determine who will serve as President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Each candidate was asked to affirm their desire and eligibility to run for the board and to answer five questions. Their answers are given in their own words.

Laura Barbrick

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors of the Co-op?

I have been a member-owner since October 2013 and have served on the board for the past year. As a board member and also as part of the Marketing Committee, I've been adamant about spreading the word about High Five by promoting monthly meetups, implementing a referral program, getting our mug club offering off the ground, and working on a new website. I want to continue working towards growing the membership, raising capital, and helping the Co-op achieve its goals.

2. What goals would you like to see High Five Co-op achieve in the next year? Five years?

I'd like to see the Co-op membership grow substantially in the next year through more events and encouraging members to recruit new buy-ins. I'd also like to see the Co-op reach its funding goals through an investment offering so we can secure a location and start building our brewery. In five years, I hope we are a well-known success story not only in West Michigan but in the craft beer scene as a whole. I hope we can make "Beer City" proud to have a successful member owned Co-op brewery in its town.

3. What qualities and past experience do you have for serving on the High Five Co-op Board of Directors?

I've served on High Five's board for the past year and would like to be considered for re-election. I have a BBA in Marketing from GVSU and have been working as a marketing professional in the corporate environment for over 19 years. I'd like to help the Co-op with its marketing efforts to build brand recognition, increase social media presence, continue communication among members, and promote more events. Also, as a woman, I feel it's important to have more female representation in the craft beer industry. We love beer too!

4. Name one way in which you'd like the High Five Co-op Pub and Brewery to stand out from other local brewpubs.

There's no question that there is a lot of competition in West Michigan when it comes to breweries. High Five has already produced a number of fantastic beers by collaborating with local breweries. Continuing that quality, and building our brand with a little creative marketing is essential, but more importantly we need to teach people how the co-op concept is different than any other brewery in town. High Five is member-owned which allows people from the community to come together to learn about brewing, make great beer, and drink with other enthusiasts.

5. What is your favorite Co-operative Principle and why?

I like the 5th principle: Education, Training and Information. I've learned so much about craft beer in the last five years by serving on the board, visiting breweries, reading articles, and attending events. Personally, I'd like to continue to learn about brew techniques, hop varieties, and the industry itself so I not only appreciate what I'm consuming but I can also speak knowledgeably on the topic of craft beer. I love that education is also a key component to High Five's future and that there are plans to offer training to the community.

Doug Petteys

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors of the Co-op?

This opportunity to create a co-op brewery in Grand Rapids makes sense on so many levels to me that I joined quickly and remain committed. The general Grand Rapids conviction to individual effort and hard work, the Beer City USA title, Michigan's natural resources. A co-op brewery is meant for Grand Rapids. Current and past board members have lead High Five through the groundbreaking legal requirements and built the foundations of this co-op. Now the push is for new Member-Owners and new capital to complete the task, I want to be there to make this work.

2. What goals would you like to see High Five Co-op achieve in the next year? Five years?

Lacking a real brewery to call home, we can still grow a tighter community. Let's expand activities like meetups, brewery tours, brew days, and recipe exchanges to remind ourselves that we are a co-op community. Our online presence can grow with videos and accessible knowledge exchanges.

Our home will be open and we will host classes and events and work with local farms and businesses promoting co-ops and Michigan beer. Taps will include several Member-Owner offerings giving everyone at High Five bragging rights.

3. What qualities and past experience do you have for serving on the High Five Co-op Board of Directors?

It starts with liking good beer and I think everyone can relate to a "like" becoming a "passion". Personally, I have a degree in journalism with an advertising/marketing concentration that I've put to use with the High Five marketing committee. Much of my work history has been in an engineering environment where I coordinate differing agendas, work with a milestone approach to projects and adhere to and develop company policies. I see that as a solid combination of skills that could be used by High Five.

4. Name one way in which you'd like the High Five Co-op Pub and Brewery to stand out from other local brewpubs.

It's more than just the beer you can take home; it's education and knowledge too. Imagine a working knowledge base of beer appreciation and brewing to share with the public. For a homebrewing Member-Owner to learn and expand their personal craft and have the opportunity to size-up and work with a big system would be symbolic of High Five. A certain part of the allure of each brewery is their experimental nature. High Five has the potential to break this wide open.

5. What is your favorite Co-operative Principle and why?

I believe the co-operative principle of education creates a huge differentiation from a traditional business. Internally, Member-Owners educating and training each other serves as a personal and business benefit. It's not just brewing beer either. It's restaurant management, cooking for larger parties, marketing, and more. Externally, a business sharing this knowledge is almost unheard of. What auto mechanic or furniture maker is going to show you how to do their job? High Five can share their wealth of knowledge to inspire and encourage others.

Nick Duesbery

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors of the Co-op?

As a beer drinker and long-time home brewer, I have witnessed a revolutionary change in American brewing over the last 25 years. To my mind, the co-op represents the next logical step in this revolution. It is an opportunity to lower barriers and provide curious, motivated individuals with access to great recipes, quality ingredients, and a top-notch brewing facility. I don't know what will happen, but I want to be part of that process.

2. What goals would you like to see High Five Co-op achieve in the next year? Five years?

Working backwards from a bricks-and-mortar vision, in the coming year I would like to see us put together a concrete business plan with defined goals and milestones. Implementation of this plan should lead us to open doors on our brewpub within the next 5 years.

3. What qualities and past experience do you have for serving on the High Five Co-op Board of Directors?

I have home-brewed for more than 30 years. I am a cell biologist with research experience that can be applied to yeast culture and cryopreservation. I have management experience as a former Deputy Director at the Van Andel Institute and as a lab head for more than 15 years. I am community oriented; I volunteer as a coach for the Griffins Youth Hockey Foundation, I am a member of the PTSA at my daughter's high school where I served as treasurer (>\$100K budget) for two years and auditor for 4 years, and I am a regular blood donor with MiBlood.

4. Name one way in which you'd like the High Five Co-op Pub and Brewery to stand out from other local brewpubs.

That is simple. Brew-on-premises will distinguish us from the crowd of awesome brew pubs in the area. Give everyone the opportunity to brew quality beer using our collective brewing experience, quality equipment, local ingredients, and best recipes. Throw in live music and good food...how can you go wrong?

5. What is your favorite Co-operative Principle and why?

This is another easy question. I favor the first principle that membership is open to all persons without gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, social, racial, political or religious discrimination. If we can't embrace this, then our interests do not align and I am not interested in being a part of this. I am intrigued by the African philosophy of Ubuntu - the concept that my humanity is derived from my interactions with those around me. Diversity in all aspects makes us all stronger and more secure.

Jim Jones

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors of the Co-op?

I'm looking forward to helping High Five Cooperative develop as both a premier brewer of craft beer in Grand Rapids, and also as a strong community of member-owners who are empowered to guide their own enterprise. High Five must be an excellent brewpub to succeed, but in addition, it should be a strong cooperative where people are valued for their contributions and participation, rather than seen as just "customers."

2. What goals would you like to see High Five Co-op achieve in the next year? Five years?

In the next year, I would like to see a successful capital campaign, securing of a prime location, and the start of our brewpub. This will be a critical year for our cooperative, and we will need to mobilize both our membership and the broader community in order to succeed.

3. What qualities and past experience do you have for serving on the High Five Co-op Board of Directors?

I have served for the past year on the board of High Five, and for more than 44 years as a staff member or director for numerous co-ops in Michigan, Texas and nationally. While most of my experience has been with housing cooperatives, I was on the founding boards of Wheatville Food Co-op in Austin, the University of Michigan Credit Union, the North American Students of Cooperation, and the National Cooperative Business Association.

4. Name one way in which you'd like the High Five Co-op Pub and Brewery to stand out from other local brewpubs.

I would like to see High Five stand out from the crowd of local brewpubs as a member controlled organization, responsive to member needs and part of a growing cooperative movement. I believe user-ownership will always bring a better result, and that cooperatives are tools we can use to meet our needs.

5. What is your favorite Co-operative Principle and why?

This is a hard one – I love them all. But Principle #6, "Cooperation among Cooperatives" is particularly important to me. Because I see cooperatives as a tool for solving problems, I have to believe that a community of cooperatives working together can achieve more than any one acting separately. High Five, working with other co-ops and credit unions, can define our community as more than just a place to live, but rather as a place where the average person can make a difference.

Jorel Van Os

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors of the Co-op?

I've been participating in organizing and running the co-op since day one. For the past two years I've served as Vice President of the Board, and together we've made a huge amount of progress towards our dream of starting the first cooperatively owned brewery in the Midwest. I strongly desire to see that dream come to fruition, and by continuing to serve on the Board I believe that together we can make that happen.

2. What goals would you like to see High Five Co-op achieve in the next year? Five years?

Ideally, in the next year High Five will have raised sufficient funding, secured equipment and a building, and opened its doors to the public. Realistically, I hope at the very least we have secured the necessary funding and equipment while we await regulatory approval to begin brewing beer for public consumption. In the next five years, my goal for High Five is to have opened the brewery to the public, increased to 500+ members, and become profitable enough to pay dividends to our member-owners, employees, and investors. I already see High Five becoming a model for many other startup co-op breweries.

3. What qualities and past experience do you have for serving on the High Five Co-op Board of Directors?

I've served as High Five's Vice President for the past two years. I hold a Bachelor's degree in Management and Certificate in Nonprofit Board Leadership from GVSU. In addition to my involvement with High Five, I am a full-time technology professional, as well as co-founder and secretary of WORK+SHELTER, a women's shelter based in New Delhi, India. I registered designed, and hosted our current website. I take an active role on the board, proposing and influencing our policy. I have years of experience serving on a number of boards, and I'm well-versed in parliamentary procedure, the history of the co-op, the Democratic Rules of Order, and our corporate bylaws.

4. Name one way in which you'd like the High Five Co-op Pub and Brewery to stand out from other local brewpubs.

Other breweries say they have a local mission and that their community is important to them, and that's true, but no one will be as community-oriented and pro-employee as High Five. We won't have to compromise when it comes to making great beer and treating our employees right because our only stakeholders are our members, employees, and community. All of High Five's profits will go right back into the co-op, or will be distributed to our member-owners and employees. When we're financially able, I want our employees to be among the best compensated in the entire industry.

5. What is your favorite Co-operative Principle and why?

Concern for Community is huge to me and has consistently been a big part of High Five's mission, but I'm going to have to say Democratic Member Control. The one member, one vote system, and democratic nature of co-ops has always been appealing to me. Democracy and equal membership is what binds co-ops together with their membership, and distinguishes co-ops from other types of organizations. I love that if you're a member, you automatically have just as much say as everyone else--that's a unique level of equality that only really exists in co-ops.

Joshua Smith

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors of the Co-op?

I'm interested in running for the High Five Board of Directors because I've been involved with the co-op since the very early days and I'm highly motivated to help see the co-op through to its fruition. I've been a huge supporter of the idea from the start and feel a strong personal obligation to help make it become a large operational brewery.

2. What goals would you like to see High Five Co-op achieve in the next year? Five years?

In the next year I would like to see the High Five Co-op launch its initial investment share offering and begin its long journey of raising enough capital to sign a lease on a building and begin building it out with everything we need for an operational brewery.

In the next five years I would like to see the High Five Co-op Brewery up and running. I'd like to see the co-op break even in year two, reach the 1000 member mark within 5 years, and showcase the incredible talent of the West Michigan homebrew scene.

3. What qualities and past experience do you have for serving on the High Five Co-op Board of Directors?

Some qualities that I have that benefit the Board of Directors is strong motivation skills, great organizational skills, e-mail marketing experience, an understanding of High Five's Bylaws, an understanding of High Five's business plan, a clear understanding of High Five's vision, a college education in business management, and a strong knowledge of craft beer and brewing.

4. Name one way in which you'd like the High Five Co-op Pub and Brewery to stand out from other local brewpubs.

One way I want the High Five Co-op to stand out from other local brewpubs is to showcase the talent of our member-owner home brewers.

5. What is your favorite Co-operative Principle and why?

My favorite co-operative principle is education and training, because I think it's important in any work situation to be able to continue to learn. Plus, it's a lot of fun to learn about beer so I think there's a great opportunity for us to capitalize on this principle with the High Five Co-op.

Cynthia Cooper

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors of the Co-op?

I'm excited and passionate about the ideals behind High-Five. I want to be a part of organizing, marketing, and taking the next steps towards opening the brewery doors.

2. What goals would you like to see High Five Co-op achieve in the next year? Five years?

In the next year I would like High-Five to be able to break ground on a site and open its doors to the public.

In five years I would like to see us expand to a new building, build up a bigger brewery, and recruit more members to help us sustain an open community along with that type of growth.

3. What qualities and past experience do you have for serving on the High Five Co-op Board of Directors?

For the past 7 years I have run my own design business. I have experience working in professional organizations as part of a team.

4. Name one way in which you'd like the High Five Co-op Pub and Brewery to stand out from other local brewpubs.

I like the idea of openly sharing recipes, brewing together, and helping people to learn how to brew. For me, it all comes down to the ideals of the community spirit - working together.

5. What is your favorite Co-operative Principle and why?

Voluntary and Open Membership. I love the idea of creating a brewery that everyone can be a part of, that people work together on, and that allows everyone to have a say. I think it's something that people can and should get excited about.

Nathan Phenicie

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors of the Co-op?

I want to be able to use my business knowledge and networking skills to connect High Five to business leaders and capital markets in Michigan. As a board member, I will be taken more seriously than simply being a member owner.

2. What goals would you like to see High Five Co-op achieve in the next year? Five years?

I would like to see High Five sign a lease on a building so we can begin to acquire serious capital investors, and quickly bring on the next 100 members. Five years? I would like to see the Brewery open, fill up our tasting room with members and guests alike, expand our brewing capacity and begin distributing our beer around Michigan.

3. What qualities and past experience do you have for serving on the High Five Co-op Board of Directors?

I have experience running my own business, managing employees, and talking with business professionals. I can find consensus among competing views. I can rally people around a common idea. I am very good at selling ideas, which is important to get investors.

4. Name one way in which you'd like the High Five Co-op Pub and Brewery to stand out from other local brewpubs.

I want High Five to stand out by getting the community involved. This can be offering brewing classes, by allowing tours to see our brewing process, and by involving the community in our growth and expansion.

5. What is your favorite Co-operative Principle and why?

I want to focus on the 3rd principle, member economic participation. I would like to see investment opportunities made available to our coop members so we can all help raise startup capital and all benefit in any future gains.

Keith Evenhouse

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors of the Co-op?

I very much would like to see the High Five Co-op succeed, and anything that I can do to help achieve our goals, I am more than willing to apply my determination to help keep us on course to meet the goals that we have set, as well as to help push the margins and help keep motivation high both on the board as well as in the membership.

2. What goals would you like to see High Five Co-op achieve in the next year? Five years?

The next year should be the most productive as far as seeing the early and middle stages of going from a dream to a reality. I would like to see the funding in place through investors as well as through the commitment of members.

3. What qualities and past experience do you have for serving on the High Five Co-op Board of Directors?

In the past I was the driving force in the start of the Greenridge Dream Team Foundation as well as its first President, and later Treasurer. In our second year, we became the largest funder of "Make a Wish" wishes in the state, passing General Motors. I have an ability to keep people on an even keel, and to find creative solutions to problems.

4. Name one way in which you'd like the High Five Co-op Pub and Brewery to stand out from other local brewpubs.

I believe that the "Own your Beer" concept is one that will be extremely popular with our members, and as with any co-op, one is invested both financially and can also be as engaged and involved as one chooses to be, or not to be. I believe that with group consensus, we will have the highest quality beer, the finest food, and the happiest employees of any other brewery in town.

5. What is your favorite Co-operative Principle and why?

Don't be a #@%& is one of my favorites taken from the not to be discussed video. I truly believe that those involved have a common sense of community, and the co-op model by design mandates that this is not a top down operation, but one where every member has equal say, and all voices are equally important, and add value.