



Board of Directors Election Information 2017

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Dear Potential Board Director,

Thank you for your interest in serving on the Austin Cooperative Business Association's Board of Directors.

We ask that you read over the enclosed materials carefully and contact us with any questions about board service before submitting your nomination materials. Please feel free to contact our Board President, Nicole Renaux at nicolereaux@gmail.com with any questions or concerns.

The ACBA Board of Directors is composed of nine directors. We strive to achieve diversity on our Board, with co-op size, sector and type, startups versus established co-ops, age, gender and race. In 2017 there are 3 open seats, each of which will serve a 3-year term.

Meetings are scheduled monthly at a time and location determined by the Board of Directors at the previous meeting. Meeting schedule is subject to change, depending on the newly elected Directors' schedules. Newly elected Directors will be expected to attend the May 9th ACBA Board Meeting, where they will be officially seated.

In order to declare your intent to run for the ACBA Board of Directors, please submit a short personal biography, a recent photo, and a candidate statement outlining why you want to serve on the ACBA Board of Directors. All materials should be emailed to Nicole Renaux at nicolereaux@gmail.com by 11:59 pm on April 3, 2017. Candidate biographies, statements and photos will be posted on the ACBA website, as well as on social media, and will be visible to the public.

Member Co-ops will begin voting for Board candidates in early April, and the election shall remain open for 30 days. Again, we sincerely thank you for considering service on the ACBA Board of Directors.

In Cooperation,

Nicole Renaux
Board President, ACBA

Statement of Cooperative Identity

What is a Co-op?

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Cooperative Values

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

Principles

The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

1st Principle: Voluntary and Open Membership

Co-operatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control

Co-operatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership.

3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership.

4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter to agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

5th Principle: Education, Training and Information

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

6th Principle: Co-operation among Co-operatives

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7th Principle: Concern for Community

Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

ACBA Mission

The mission of the ACBA is to build and expand the cooperative economy in Central Texas.

To accomplish this mission, ACBA shall adhere to these guidelines:

1. Mutual Support
 - a. Connect and engage the network of cooperatives in Central Texas to support shared goals.
2. Cooperative Growth
 - a. Support the vitality and advancement of our member cooperatives and the expansion of their role in the regional economy.
3. Visionary
 - a. Create a robust community of prosperous business owned and controlled by people who benefit from their services.

Duties of Directors

ACBA's Board acts as trustee of the organization's assets and ensures that the organization is well managed and remains fiscally sound. In doing so, the Board must exercise proper oversight of the organization's operations and maintain the legal and ethical accountability of its staff and volunteers.

The main legal responsibilities of ACBA's Board can be summarized in the "three Ds":

Duty of care: Board members are expected to actively participate in organizational planning and decision-making and to make sound and informed judgments.

Duty of loyalty: When acting on behalf of the ACBA, Board members must put the interests of the organization before any personal or professional concerns and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

Duty of obedience: Board members must ensure that the ACBA complies with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and that it remains committed to its established mission.

In addition to its legal responsibilities, the Board acts in a fiduciary role by maintaining oversight of the nonprofit's finances. Board members must evaluate financial policies, approve annual budgets, and review periodic financial reports to ensure that the organization has the necessary resources to carry out its mission and remains accountable to its donors, its member organizations and the general public.

Board Director Job Description

Purpose

To provide leadership and guidance that supports the ACBA's mission, vision, and goals on behalf of the Member Co-ops through personal responsibility and effective governance.

Status

Board Directors are volunteers who assume a fiduciary duty to the Member Co-ops of the ACBA, and commit to working between 10-20 hours a month.

Responsibilities

DIRECTOR EXPECTATIONS:

- Attend monthly board meetings.
- Attend Board and ACBA events.
- Attend Annual Membership meeting.
- Abide by and uphold existing governance policies and Bylaws.
- Actively participate in Board meetings and on the Board email list.
- Maintain confidentiality when required.
- Review all meeting materials and be prepared for meetings.

GENERAL:

- Support the mission, vision, values, principles, goals, and objectives of the ACBA.
- Support and establish (when necessary) policies.
- Think critically.
- Follow through on commitments.
- Have a willingness to learn about co-operatives.
- Act in the best interest of the member co-ops, and the ACBA, as a whole, at all times.
- Avoid overriding conflict of interest with the ACBA.

LINKAGE TO MEMBER CO-OPS:

- Keep the general membership of ACBA and the cooperative community informed about the affairs of the ACBA.
- Maintain a linkage with the member co-ops. Consider at all times Member Co-ops' input in decision making.

COMMUNICATION:

- Listen openly and share opinions respectfully.
- Check and respond to ACBA related emails within 48 hours.

Board Director Qualifications

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Member or staff member of a current Member Co-op in good standing
- Able to commit to meeting all the Director expectations outlined in the “Responsibilities” section of the previous job description

DESIRED QUALITIES:

- Ability to guide the ACBA toward our vision through carefully written policy, advocacy and action
- Research skills
- Prior board and/or volunteer experience
- Desire to learn about co-operatives

Application Requirements

Designated representatives of ACBA Member Organizations should submit a brief candidate statement (500 words or less), a short bio and photo by Monday, April 3rd. A representative of the Nominations Committee will contact each Candidate to schedule a brief interview. Once the ballots are posted, voting will take place for 30 days from April 6th-May 6th. Newly elected Directors should expect to be seated at the May Board of Directors Meeting.