



Norman Bock

Biography

I have called Oshkosh home my entire life, and it's where I have built both my career and my family. I work in the insurance industry, where I have developed a strong foundation in problem-solving, financial awareness, and taking care of people when they need it most. My wife and I have raised three children here, and we have also hosted exchange students, which has expanded our appreciation for different cultures and foods. I value being part of a community where people look out for one another and support what is local. Outside of work, I tinker, learn, and often flop spectacularly. I enjoy windsurfing (upright on good days), woodworking (measure twice, cut thrice..right?), and gardening (weeds usually win). And while I don't always get it right, those flops usually turn into lessons that make the next try better.

What would you bring/offer to the Oshkosh Food Co-op Board?

I tend to bring an analytical mindset to things and like to really understand how they work. I am comfortable with spreadsheets and financials, and I pay close attention to detail. In my work, that often means looking at risks, asking questions, and making sure decisions are grounded in good information. I am not afraid to dig in and take the time to get things right.

I am also someone who's willing to roll up my sleeves and help wherever needed. Whether that is working through an issue, supporting a project, or doing the less glamorous work behind the scenes, I am happy to contribute. I enjoy figuring things out and working with others to find practical solutions, and I'd bring that same approach to the co-op board.

What is your dream for the Oshkosh Food Co-op?

My main hope for the co-op is long-term sustainability, both financially and as a place people choose to shop regularly. I would like to see it continue to grow by creating an inviting and enjoyable shopping experience. A strong, vibrant produce section can really set the tone for the entire store and help draw more people in. Because our family has hosted exchange students, we have seen firsthand how food can be a bridge between cultures. I would love to see the co-op continue to celebrate and reflect the diversity of our community through cooking classes, themed dinners, and events centered around different cuisines. It is a chance to make the co-op not just a place to shop, but a place to connect, learn, and try something new together.

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a member-owned community grocery store





Why do you think the Oshkosh Food Co-op is important to the greater Oshkosh Community?

I think the Oshkosh Food Co-op has the potential to be more than just a grocery store. It can be a place that brings people together through events, education, and simply being a welcoming place to shop. In a community like Oshkosh, having a space that reflects local values, supports small producers, and encourages connection really matters. For families like ours, who enjoy trying new foods and sharing different culinary traditions, the co-op can be a natural gathering place. It's in a unique position to strengthen our local food system while also giving people a sense of ownership and belonging in something that benefits the whole community.

Why cooperatives?

I'm drawn to cooperatives because they are built around people, not just profit. The idea that customers are also owners creates a different kind of accountability and a stronger connection to the community. Decisions are not just about short-term gains; they are about what is best for the members and the long-term health of the organization. I also appreciate that co-ops keep more value local. They support local producers, provide access to quality food, and give people a voice in how the business operates. That combination of community involvement, shared ownership, and long-term thinking is what makes the co-op model appealing to me and why I am interested in being part of it.

Please offer any additional thoughts you would like Oshkosh Food Co-op member-owners to know about you.

As a current co-op shopper, I make a point to support it, even though it's not where I do all of my grocery shopping. I still go to larger stores for certain items because of selection, price, or convenience. When I notice those gaps, I tend to see them as opportunities. I like to understand how things work and think through practical ways they could be improved.

I am not the loudest voice in the room. I am more of a steady, do-the-work person than a spotlight person. I show up prepared, ask thoughtful questions, and follow through. I would bring a steady, practical perspective and a genuine interest in helping the co-op continue to grow and better serve the community.

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