

Board of Directors' Report (FY 2025)

Submitted by Colleen Cicotta, Board President

On behalf of the Syracuse Cooperative Market Board of Directors, thank you for another great year. The Board's role in the Co-op community is to uphold fiduciary duty to SCM's membership by monitoring financial health, practicing strong governance, and supporting community engagement. We're also entrusted with shaping and stewarding the Co-op vision of "great food, strong community, local economy." As you'll see in the report below, we've worked hard this year to understand and serve local interests and ensure access to healthy food.

Your attendance is critical at this year's Annual Meeting on **Thursday, November 6th** to approve our revised bylaws. We will also discuss the projects highlighted here, open voting for a new slate of board candidates, and prioritize the work that lies ahead.

Ends: "What does Healthy Mean?"

We are grateful to the dozens of you who joined us for coffee, sent us notes, and participated in meetings to understand how our community understands "healthy." Since our last report, the Board approved a new Ends Statement, which is similar to a Mission statement. This statement serves as our guide when making decisions about the future of the Syracuse Cooperative Market.

Approved in January 2025, the Syracuse Cooperative Market's new Ends Statement reads: *The Syracuse Cooperative Market will proactively work to create:*

- *A thriving, food-centric community demonstrating hospitality, kindness, and generosity*
- *A robust cooperative and local economy*
- *Access to ethically sourced, socially responsible, healthy food*

Again, we thank you for participating in this process last year. We are eager to keep you apprised of the Co-op's progress toward these Ends.

Legal Documents Review

Our legal documents review committee has revised the Co-op Bylaws and Certificate of Incorporation for 2025. Thanks to the work of the Legal Documents Review Committee, this process culminated in a Board-approved bylaws proposal that has now been submitted to our membership for official approval. Provided that a quorum (100) of members is present at our Annual Meeting on **November 6th**, we will call for a vote on our new and (we think!) improved bylaws. *Read more details about this in our Bylaws Report.*

Financial Health

For Fiscal Year 2025, the Board continued careful monitoring of SCM's financial performance and business strategy. We continue to engage an outside auditor to review Co-op financial processes. Renovations at Kensington have resulted in improved experience and sales. Salina continues to improve sales, continuing a growth trajectory with its most successful EBITDAP reporting since opening.

Community Engagement

Community engagement has become an energizing aspect of our Board work. We are eager to interface with members and prospective members. In 2025, we welcomed more than 200 new members to our Co-op, hailing from zip codes all across Syracuse. We collaborated with staff on a new initiative, “Board Picks”, an in-store sampling program where members of the Board distribute samples while engaging in conversation about the Co-op.

Cooperative Governance

The Board meets monthly to review reports, discuss operational trends and plans, and maintain a close connection with the General Manager that is both collaborative and supervisory in nature. We also participate in the Cooperative Board Leadership Development (CBLD) program from Columinate (columinate.coop), which provides the Board with a dedicated consultant to advise our Executive Committee, train board members, and keep us informed about best practices in cooperative governance. This year we worked with our CBLD consultant to conduct an annual retreat, onboard new directors, and develop the capacity of new board leadership.

Board Perpetuation

Last but not certainly not least, among the Board’s key duties is maintaining a full and rotating roster of Board members. We are pleased to share that, after expanding our board from 9 to 11 seats, we’ve successfully maintained our Board capacity since Spring 2024. We’re always excited to talk with potential candidates! Apply (syracuse.coop/about/) any time to be considered as an interim appointee, or for the following year’s election cycle.

This year’s election will open after the Annual Meeting on **November 6th**, and continue for 30 days. The link to cast your ballot online will be in e-newsletters and on SCM’s website.

To all our members: thank you for being part of the Co-op community. The unique structure of the store’s governance thrives on member engagement. We encourage you to ask questions, attend a meeting, fill out the survey, or apply to join us as a Board member.

Board of Directors 2025: Colleen Cicotta (President), Meagan Weatherby (Vice President), Jason Sebo (Treasurer), Lauren Boldon (Secretary), Michca Ballard-Fortin, Rich Barton, John DeSantis, Tracy Hogarth-Mosier, Alex Olt, Ryan Suser, and Leah Witmer.