



**BriarPatch Food Co-op Board of Directors  
2021 Election  
Board Candidate Handbook**

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## Letter to Candidates

Elections for Board Directors are held each year in May. This handbook is provided to guide candidates through the election process.

The Board of Directors serves a critical role in overseeing and guiding our Co-op. Directors attend Board meetings and the meetings of at least one committee. We encourage BriarPatch owners to explore this opportunity for service and to contact us with any questions.

We encourage you to visit the BriarPatch website at [briarpatch.coop](http://briarpatch.coop) to review news and activities and to become acquainted with the bylaws and other Board governance documents at [briarpatch.coop/join-the-co-op-governance](http://briarpatch.coop/join-the-co-op-governance). Finally, we encourage you to attend Board meetings that are scheduled for the last Tuesday of each month. Three positions on the Board, each for three-year terms, become available at every annual election.

### The annual election schedule is as follows:

<b>October 1, 2020</b>	<b>Candidate application period opens</b>
<b>February 1, 2021</b>	<b>Deadline for candidate applications</b>
<b>Late February to Early March 2021</b>	<b>Candidate interviews and orientation</b>
<b>April 1, 2021</b>	<b>Notice mailed to owners / Candidate Names announced to public</b>
<b>April 15-30, 2021</b>	<b>Campaigning and candidate forum(s)</b>
<b>May 3, 2021</b>	<b>Election begins</b>
<b>May 17, 2021</b>	<b>Election ends</b>
<b>May 17, 2021</b>	<b>Election results posted</b>
<b>May 25, 2021 Board Meeting</b>	<b>Seat new Board and elect Leadership Positions</b>

For information about the election process, please contact by email:

Mary Hunter  
Administrative Assistant  
[maryh@briarpatch.coop](mailto:maryh@briarpatch.coop)

## Director of the Board Job Description

The Board of Directors is committed to carrying out the mission of BriarPatch as stated in the Articles of Incorporation and Policy Register. The Board provides collective leadership to the General Manager on behalf of owners.

### Duties:

1. Prior to each board meeting, prepare by reading committee reports, financial statements, and other materials distributed in the Board packet.
2. Attend all regular and special Board meetings, participate in the proceedings, and follow the agenda.
3. Serve on at least one committee and actively participate in meetings of the committee.
4. Maintain knowledge of current corporate policies, procedures and the objectives of the corporation.
5. Financially support BriarPatch by being an active owner and shopper.
6. Actively recruit BriarPatch owners to serve on the Board and on committees.
7. Share expertise and talents with BriarPatch as appropriate.
8. Serve as an advocate to the community.
9. Be accessible to the General Manager and other Directors as needed.
10. Fulfill commitments within the agreed-upon deadlines.
11. Hold in confidence any sensitive information. All issues related to personnel, real estate, market strategy and goals, pending litigation, contract negotiations, and financial status (owner loans, bank loans, General Manager salary, etc.) will be considered sensitive issues subject to confidentiality unless or until full disclosure is approved by the Board as a whole.
12. Read and comprehend the bylaws, articles of incorporation, the policy register and procedures manual of the BriarPatch Board of Directors.
13. All Directors should be open to assuming a leadership position role if the need arises.

### Compensation:

15% discount for all shopping in the store

Monthly Stipend (*taxable – will be reported annually on Form 1099*):

\$200.00 - Director

\$250.00 - Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President

\$350.00 - President

## BriarPatch Food Co-op Ends Policies

1. A successful and vibrant cooperatively-owned business that acts as a leader among local businesses and food co-ops nationally and contributes to environmental stewardship through its business practices.
2. Access to high quality, healthy products, especially local and organic food.
3. A community center where people experience a sense of connectedness, ownership and fellowship.
4. A stronger local food system.
5. A major local employer that provides a healthy, fair, and considerate workplace for employees.
6. Access to education about food and consumer issues that encourages customers to make healthier food choices.

## Requirements

Candidate requirements as paraphrased from the *BriarPatch bylaws section: 4.2*.

To be qualified as a Director, a person must:

1. Have been an active owner (be fully paid owner or current on ownership payments – and – have shopped in the store in the past 24 months) for at least six months prior to the commencement of the election of Directors;
2. Be at least 18 years old;
3. Be unwaveringly committed to the best interests of the co-op;
4. Not have any overriding conflict of interest with the co-op;
5. Satisfy any other reasonable eligibility requirements set by the Board;

\* In addition to the eligibility requirements stated above, a person is only eligible to serve as a director if his or her service as a director would not result in two or more related persons being directors at any one time. If any election would otherwise result in two or more related persons being directors at any one time, then only that person receiving the greatest number of votes in the election will be elected as a director. The term “related person” means the spouse, child, grandchild, sibling or parent of the person, and any individual sharing the household of the person.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	TO RUN FOR THE BOARD	TO VOTE IN THE ELECTION
Must be the primary owner or a member of a household on a co-op ownership account	✓	
Must be the primary owner on a co-op ownership account (household members do not have voting rights)		✓
Ownership account status must be “active” (either fully paid or current on payments – and – have shopped in the store in the past 24 months)	✓	✓
Candidate application <u>must be complete in all respects</u> and must be submitted by the deadline	✓	

In addition to the above bylaws qualifications, the Board Development Committee will determine desired professional qualifications needed by the Board and recruit and look for these qualifications in potential candidates. It is strongly recommended that interested parties attend at least one Board meeting prior to the election.

## Candidate Campaigning Rules

BriarPatch will assist Board of Director candidates in campaigning and encourage owners to participate in the elections by:

1. Hosting, advertising, and sponsoring one or more candidate forums prior to the election. Participation by candidates is optional.
2. Posting approved information and photographs of candidates in BriarPatch within two weeks of the acceptance of the candidate list. Candidate statements will be available for customers to take home to help owners make informed voting decisions.
3. Publishing notices about upcoming elections and approved candidate statements and photographs in BriarPatch Vine newsletter.
4. Posting approved information and photographs of candidates on BriarPatch website.
5. Additional notices may be published in BriarPatch e-newsletter and on social media reminding owners about voting procedures and policies.

**Candidates for BriarPatch Board of Directors are expected to campaign in a professional, appropriate manner, that reflects positively on BriarPatch. Candidates will campaign fairly and focus on the issues of importance to the interests of owners.**

1. Candidates are encouraged to talk about themselves, their experience, leadership ability, business/jobs and policy position on issues relevant to the cooperative.
2. BriarPatch requires candidates to follow BriarPatch Board of Directors' Code of Conduct in Section C-5 of the Policy Manual at all times.
3. Campaigning inside the store is prohibited.
4. Use of BriarPatch logo is prohibited in campaign materials, except for those provided by BriarPatch.
5. Campaigning outside of BriarPatch shall be allowed provided ingress and egress to the store are not restricted and candidates are not disturbing customers, while adhering to all state, local and store guidelines for safe social distancing. Candidate must contact the Front-End Manager or Customer Service prior to tabling to make tabling arrangements.

All candidates and their representatives desiring to campaign by the entrance to BriarPatch must review the candidate handbook. Candidates shall agree to abide by all these requirements as indicated by signing the application. Copies of the candidate application packet are available at the Customer Service counter inside the store.

Management is responsible for ensuring that all campaigning rules are being followed:

1. Use of proprietary co-op information by candidates, including but not limited to the owner mailing list, is prohibited.
2. All campaign mailings shall clearly state the names of the persons providing the mailing and shall follow the ethical guidelines listed above.
3. Each candidate generates his/her own materials with his/her own personal resources. BriarPatch resources may not be used.

4. Employees of BriarPatch are prohibited from actively campaigning for a candidate on co-op premises when on duty.
5. BriarPatch employees shall not use their position or BriarPatch resources to influence the election.

**Campaigning that violates this policy will be brought to the President of the Board. The President may initiate removal of a candidate from the ballot subject to approval by the majority vote of the Board.**

## Code of Conduct for Candidates

To avoid any conflicts during the election season, the following code sets the following guidelines:

1. Incumbent and new candidates will not participate in election discussions at Board or Committee meetings. Examples are: candidate questions, discussions of eligibility, content of applications. During closed session election discussions, candidates will leave the meeting.
2. Incumbent candidates need to be removed from email lists to Directors when involving discussions about elections business or passing documents such as copies of applications or a list of forum questions.
3. Incumbent and new candidates are not entitled to see other candidate applications.
4. Incumbent or new candidates on the Board Development Committee will not participate in meetings and event planning from declaration of candidacy through election completion.

All applicants will be considered without attention to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, veteran or disability status.

Please contact [elections@briarpatch.coop](mailto:elections@briarpatch.coop) if you have questions.