

Board of Directors Candidate Application Form

This form will be photocopied and distributed to the members as part of the election process.
Please write legibly or type, and return the application with a photo if possible to
board@honestweight.coop or the service desk at the store.

Date of application: **11-21-15** Date of election: **11/30/15** Application Deadline: **11/25/15**

Name: **Saul A. Rigberg** HWFC number: **6485**

Primary phone: **518-528-3450** Best time to call: **8 am to 10 pm**

Secondary phone: **none**

Email: **eckrig@aol.com**

Are you up to date on your share payments? **Yes**

When did you join the co-op? **1986**

Are you currently a working member of the co-op? **Yes**

If Yes, are you: Weekly ____ Monthly

Please note that our bylaws require those running for the board to be up to date on both share payments and work requirements on the date of the application deadline!

Please answer the following questions, with a maximum of 150 words each.

1. What are some of the Co-op activities in which you have been involved? (Cashiering, stocking, committees, etc.)

In the early part of this century, I was an active member of the Bylaws Review Committee and of the Personnel Committee. As one of the primary authors of the major revision of the Bylaws, which were adopted in June 2003, I worked hard to retain the core foundational values of the Coop, which include Membership control over HWFC policy; fair and respectful treatment of employees (requiring progressive discipline and a grievance procedure) and maximum use of member-labor. It also provided for an enjoyable, safe environment for employees, members and shoppers. On the Personnel Committee, I helped develop the protocols regarding progressive discipline and joined with others in promoting implementation of the "living wage" concept. More recently, I stock shelves.

2. Have you ever served on a board of directors before? If yes, please describe your experience(s). If not, what experience do you have with other organizations that will be useful in your work as a Co-op Board member?

I served on the Board of Directors of the George Street Coop in New Brunswick, New Jersey in the early 1980s. Prior to that time, my wife and I lived in Cincinnati, Ohio where we were active members of the coop and I worked for a public employees union. When I learned that the coop

employees were being paid just barely above minimum wage and did not receive any benefits, I organized a group of members to develop a proposal to present to the membership. After several months of meetings and discussions, the membership voted almost unanimously to increase wages substantially and to provide benefits such as sick leave, vacation time and health insurance.

As Staff Attorney at the Department of Public Service, I coordinated teams of accountants, financial analysts, economists, engineers and consumer advocates in preparation of testimony and negotiation positions in utility rate and policy proceedings. More recently, I represented the Department of State in Public Service Commission proceedings, advocating on behalf of small commercial and residential ratepayers, with a particular emphasis on securing benefits for low-income ratepayers. I have also presided as a labor arbitrator.

3. Please describe your experience with and approach to group decision-making processes. What do you think makes for good group process and what are some of the challenges to group decision-making process?

My approach combines humility, a sense of humor, thorough preparation and developing a shared group vision of the interim and final decisions and work products for which the group is responsible. I have found that people are more willing to tackle thorny issues creatively when the facilitator establishes a fun, respectful and warm environment.

Over the years, I have co-lead grassroots groups that were successful in achieving their goals. In Cincinnati, we honored the varied contributions of people—from letter writing, leafleting, and meeting with elected officials to holding vigils and demonstrations and civil disobedience—in stopping the construction of the Zimmer Nuclear Power Plant. In Bethlehem, I served on the steering committee of the organization that raised public awareness about the town's intent to authorize construction of a trash incinerator. We organized a referendum, which resulted in 60% of the voters registering opposition to the proposal.

Quality group decision-making requires careful planning and organization, full transparency and sharing of information, actively engaged listening, and good humored patience. Group decision-making is impaired when the folks in charge of the process have a hidden agenda, withhold information or provide misleading information, promote a climate of mistrust or demonstrate a lack of respect for the ideas of participants with which they disagree. Democracy is messy, but it is key to the health of HWFC as a community.

4. Please discuss the skills you could bring to the HWFC board.

I am a thorough reader; I am a thoughtful listener and speaker; I write well; I think strategically; I attend to details; I grasp complicated concepts quickly; I am a hard worker; I like jokes.

5. Please describe your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the board of directors.

Governance in a membership-based, democratic organization is challenging. Honest Weight has made a commitment to being participatory and democratic. Each member of the HWFC has the power to be a change agent, by participating in the governance (Board and committees) and operations of the co-op, and participating in Membership meetings. Honest Weight's Bylaws empower the Board of Directors with considerable responsibilities. The Board has critically important fiduciary and leadership roles to protect and defend the Coop on behalf of the

Membership by modeling lawful and honest behavior. Generally speaking, the Board of Directors is the primary policy developer, working with members, management and staff through the Coop's ad hoc and standing committees. These committees perform the "due diligence" function of the Board and draft recommendations for the Board's consideration. Some decisions can be decided by the Board of Directors, but others require formal membership approval.

The health and welfare of the Coop requires a balanced cooperative relationship among the members (with active participation on committees and final approval of all policies), the Board of Directors (with corporate fiduciary, policy development and management oversight obligations), and management and staff (with responsibility for day-to-day store operations). One would expect the Board to encourage robust democratic, cooperative processes and structures in order to facilitate fair and open decision-making at all levels of HWFC.

It is certainly not among the Board's roles and responsibilities to vote, at its meeting of October 20, 2015 after an executive session lasting more than two and one-half hours, to end member-labor in the store in violation of Section 330 of the Bylaws; to advise the Department of Labor in a letter dated October 24, 2015 that the Board has directed HWFC's management team to commence transitioning from member-labor "with all deliberate speed"; to establish planning committees that meet in secret; or to engage a consulting firm that has implemented the end of member-labor in coops throughout the country.

6. What do you think are the major issues that the coop's board needs to address over the next five years?

I believe the Board must change the direction of the Coop and return to the core concepts of the Bylaws such as protecting the member-labor program. It must turn away from adopting the common corporate shareholder model, with a strong management, a passive board, and uninvolved shareholders who tend to vote as recommended by the corporation or not vote at all, and In most parts of our lives, we are viewed as consumers rather than as citizens of a society or members of a community. HWFC is different. It is not simply a natural foods store; it is a community, foremost, where people feel a sense of belonging.

7. How will you use your skills to contribute to addressing the above issues?

I will apply my skills as well as my experiences as a principal author of the Bylaws to promote cooperative principles, protect the member-labor program, ensure that the Coop becomes a high quality employer and continues to increase the amount of locally-sourced, organic food and products we offer for sale.

8. Please list any potential conflicts of interest you may have. (Conflicts of interest will not preclude you from serving on the Board, but helps to establish open communication.)

I am unaware of any conflicts of interest with respect to HWFC.