

Governing our Co-operative

Governance Model 2020



Highlights:

We continue to elect 7 people as directors, half each year for a two year term. In addition, we create interest-based 'pods' of members to work at their own time and in their own way. Each pod will send one or more members to the monthly co-op council where information is shared and decisions are made by consensus. We have suggested a few pods we know are needed, and the model is flexible, allowing pods to change and new pods to be added as required. Each pod will have its own mandate and generate its own work agenda and ideas in the context of the Council's priorities.

How it works:

7 trustees are elected by members as usual at the AGM and they are responsible for things such as ensuring all legal and financial obligations of the co-operative are met, the co-op retains adequate insurance and licences, records and reports are maintained, business plans and long-term strategic planning is undertaken and financial records and assets are well managed and properly recorded. While they comprise the legal body under the Co-operative Associations Act, the trustees will generally act as one pod among many.

The "pods" will reflect the needs and priorities of the co-op as they flex and change, and each pod will send one or more representatives to the monthly council meeting to share information, raise issues, bring ideas, and make proposals about their area of governance. Pods are accountable to Council and set their own agendas and manner of working themselves.

Pods identified as needed for 2020, so far:

- Farmers and food producers
- Markets and marketing

- Events and workshops
- Communications and Membership
- Hall and physical asset maintenance and upgrades
- Fundraising and grant writing

We expect this model and a consensus decision-making process will provide our co-op with greater stability and more capacity than it has to meet its purposes. There has been an enormous amount of work done by a handful of volunteers over the past few years and our co-op is now in a position to start building long-term plans with the agricultural and food processing businesses on our island.

We hope you will find a way to volunteer some time and energy in one or more of the areas we've identified above. If enough of us step up, we will be looking at an exciting year in which our co-op starts moving quickly toward fulfilling its potential. We are identifying funding opportunities, looking at strategic planning, and working on increasing access to our locally grown and made food for the community.

Please give us your feedback on the model we propose. Send us a note by email to Laura-Jean Kelly lj_kelly@telus.net, or by phone to Jan Pullinger at (250) 714-4009. Let us know where and how you can help. I'm sure many of you have areas of expertise and interests your co-op can use. Throughout the International Co-operative Movement, experience and history have shown clearly that the energy and innovation that comes with membership engagement is key to any co-op's survival and success.