

**SEVANANDA NATURAL FOODS MARKET  
2026 CANDIDATE FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPLICATION**

**Terms Beginning July 2026**

Dear Prospective Board Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in serving on the Sevananda's Board of Directors. Please read the enclosed information carefully before completing the application. As the Co-op has grown into a large, complex organization, it has become increasingly important to find qualified board candidates and actively promote their candidacy.

**This election will fill four (4) seats for a 3-year term.**

Sevananda Natural Foods Market is governed by a Board of Directors elected by the Member-Owners. Instead of having direct Board involvement in the management of the store, or any direct input or control over the daily operations of it, the Board is charged with engaging in developing the vision and ensuring the long-term viability of the co-op using John Carver's Policy Governance Model® to organize its work.

**Note: The General Manager is the ONLY employee that reports to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors does NOT get involved in Operational issues i.e. personnel/human resources and staffing.**

Enclosed you will find information about how cooperatives function, how Sevananda's Board works, and what the expectations are for running for and serving on the Board. Please feel free to contact us at [election@sevananda.coop](mailto:election@sevananda.coop) with any questions that you may have; we look forward to meeting you!

In Service,

*The Sevananda Elections Committee*

## Cooperative Values and Principles

The [International Cooperative Alliance](#) (ICA) outlines seven cooperative principles by which cooperatives put their values into practice. The ICA is considering adopting the eighth principle listed below; Sevananda and many other co-ops have already chosen to adopt it.

### **Cooperative Values:**

Basic cooperative values are general norms that cooperators, cooperative leaders and cooperative staff should share; the values should determine their way of thinking and acting. This list of ten values was proclaimed by the International Co-operative Alliance in 1995.

- Self-help
- Self-responsibility
- Democracy
- Equality
- Equity
- Solidarity
- Honesty
- Openness
- Social Responsibility
- Caring for others

### **Cooperative Principles:**

#### **Voluntary and Open Membership**

Co-operatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

#### **Democratic Member Control**

Co-operatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. People serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

#### **Member Economic Participation**

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. They usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

**Autonomy and Independence**

Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

**Education, Training, and Information**

Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

**Co-operation Among Co-operatives**

Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-operative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.

**Concern for Community**

While focusing on member needs, co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Cooperatives strive to incorporate diversity, perform equitably, and ensure inclusion at all levels of their organizations to better serve members, show Owners they are valued, and ensure Owners receive equitable service.

## What Is the Board's Role?

The Board of Directors is the legal representative of the Member-Owners and, as such, is responsible for the overall well-being of Sevananda. The Board holds fiduciary responsibility, on behalf of the Member-Owners for following the laws of the state in which we are registered as a cooperative entity. Sevananda is a registered cooperative in the state of Wisconsin. State law requires the organization to have written Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, both of which are approved by the Member-Owners of the organization in accordance with those laws.

The Board exercises its authority through its relationship with the General Manager, whom it hires and monitors. All of the board's expectations and requirements for the General Manager's performance are clearly stated in the Board's written policies, which must also align with Wisconsin State law. So, the Board ensures the Coop's success by verifying that the General Manager remains in compliance with the Board's policies.

You can learn more at the following websites:

[Chapter 185 of Wisconsin Law](#)

[Sevananda's Bylaws](#)

### **Policy Governance**

Sevananda's Board operates using the Policy Governance\* Model, which was developed to allow Boards to maintain accountability for organizational performance while focusing on providing visionary leadership around our 'big- picture' mission. With the recognition that delegation is a significant component of our accountability, the Board maintains written documentation of expectations for ourselves, our organization, and our General Manager, in alignment with the International Cooperative Values and Principles – our policies are the primary vehicle for recording these expectations, and they are monitored on a regular basis.

The relevance of this methodology stems from (1) the fact that a significant volume of information is required to fulfill our fiduciary duties; (2) the need to delegate authority in order to accomplish our organizational purpose; (3) the desire to ensure that our stakeholders are well-served by organizational accomplishments.

The Policy Governance model is designed to allow the Board to delegate with great clarity by completing three steps:

- (1) Expressing the expectations of the job being delegated.
- (2) Assigning expectations with no ambiguity to the party who is to be held accountable for meeting them.
- (3) Checking that expectations were met.

We have four general categories of policies that express our expectations for Ends to be achieved and the acceptable means by which to achieve them:

#### A -- Ends

Ends policies broadly state the desired organizational outcomes. They describe the ongoing priorities of what should be achieved and for whom. The General Manager is responsible for reporting on compliance with these policies once a year.

#### B -- Governance Process

The 'B' policies describe how the Board is organized and its process and products. The Board evaluates its compliance with these policies throughout the year.

#### C -- Governance-Management Connection

These Board-GM policies describe how the Board delegates to our sole employee, the General Manager. The Board evaluates its compliance with these policies throughout the year.

#### D -- Executive Limitations

The Executive Limitations delineate job expectations and acceptable constraints within which the general manager can act.

The General Manager develops a written report for the Board on each of these policies on a regular basis throughout the year, and the Board evaluates whether the interpretation was reasonable, and makes conclusions about whether the GM is in compliance. If it is determined that we are not in compliance with our policies, the Board discusses the reasons for this result and establishes parameters and expectations for achieving compliance within a set time frame. The Board may require additional monitoring of the policy (on a more frequent basis) or even conclude that the policy needs to be revised.

Our approach to crafting policies, based on the Policy Governance™ Model, is to begin with broad statements regarding allowable and prohibited behavior and make increasingly specific policies. For example, a policy that prohibits the General Manager from violating the law provides a concise statement of expectation (and is a lot easier than trying to think of and write down a list of all the illegal actions which could be undertaken!). A more specific policy might require that a certain level of insurance be carried to protect Sevananda's property. The Board limits the level of detail in our written policies to that required for the Board to accept any reasonable interpretation.

This approach allows for maximum flexibility and creativity within clearly established boundaries and provides a system for delegation and accountability. (It helps also to have a manageable number of policies--it would be much more difficult to monitor 200 pages of detailed policies! Furthermore, it prevents micro-managing so that we can focus on the big picture questions).

The advantages of using the Policy Governance model are:

- It enables the Board to focus on the future and provide high-level organizational leadership rather than focusing on day-to-day operational issues (After all, if the Board does not provide this type of leadership, who else could?).

- By deciding on the larger issues about Ends and means the Board can maintain meaningful control of the organization while allowing others to decide on smaller issues.
- The Board can delegate genuine authority to others without failing in its own accountability -- the parameters of delegated authority are clearly established by the Board, allowing for decisive leadership by others.
- Regular assessment of compliance with policy provides a systematic method for evaluating organizational performance because the Board knows what to look for.
- The Board and its subordinates (e.g. its committees, the General Manager) know what is required of them because expectations are clearly articulated.

Since the design of jobs has already been decided, the Board can distinguish the proper course of action when confronted by questions without having to spend time defining the nature of governance itself.

The Board of Directors exists for the sole purpose of ensuring, on behalf of our Member-Owners, that the organization performs as it should. We must constantly evaluate our purpose -- what change we want to occur for people and even the world outside of our organization -- and our Ends – the accomplishments, which justify our existence.

**As a candidate for the Board of Directors, you agree to learn and adhere to Wisconsin state cooperative laws, Sevananda’s Bylaws, and the John Carver Policy Governance™ Model.**

\*The Policy Governance methodology was developed by John Carver as a means to structure Board process to allow for Board accountability on a meaningful level and empower the Board to lead their organizations at the highest level. The term Policy Governance is registered and protected. Carver’s website address is: [www.carvergovernance.com](http://www.carvergovernance.com)

**What are the Benefits of Joining the Board**

As a director of the Board, you will have a unique opportunity to impact the future of Sevananda. You will have an opportunity to join like-minded Member-Owners who are eager to help foster the growth and prosperity of Sevananda.

Board members are provided a monthly stipend for their service through the end of their term. You will also receive a board discount and have an opportunity to use it every day you shop with Sevananda through the end of your term.

## Prospective Board Member Reading and Discussion Points

### *Pre-Interview Governance Reading Review and Reflection*

This is not intended as a pass/fail exercise. Rather, it is designed to help us understand your approach to preparation, self-assessment, critical reading, and thoughtful engagement with governance principles relevant to board service.

Please review the PG Source Document carefully and respond to the questions based on the content provided. We are less interested in perfect scores (we're always learning) than in your willingness to read attentively, reflect meaningfully, and engage with the material in a thoughtful and substantive way.

**Assigned Reading:** POLICY GOVERNANCE® SOURCE DOCUMENT (referred to below as the “PG Source Document”)

1. According to the PG Source Document, what does the principle of “Board Holism” mean?
  - a. The board’s authority is held and used as a body, and the board speaks with one voice rather than through individual board members acting independently.
  - b. Individual board members may direct staff on operational matters when they have relevant expertise, if their actions generally support the board’s intentions.
  - c. A food co-op may support holism through promoting a holistic lifestyle through fresh produce, wellness products, and nutritious prepared foods.
2. According to the PG Source Document, what is Policy Governance?
  - a. A flexible collection of governance ideas that boards may adopt selectively without affecting the overall model.
  - b. A comprehensive set of integrated principles that, when consistently applied, allows governing boards to realize owner-accountable organizations.
  - c. A food co-op may support owner wellness by offering local produce, whole grains, and minimally processed foods that promote healthier daily choices.
3. According to the PG Source Document, which of the following is something Policy Governance does not dictate?
  - a. A co-op may choose to offer organic greens, bulk spices, and responsibly sourced pantry staples based on community values and product standards.
  - b. The need for Ends policies, Executive Limitations policies, and ongoing monitoring.
  - c. Board size, specific officers, or whether a CEO is required.
4. According to the PG Source Document, under the Ownership principle, who does the board exist to represent?
  - a. The most active stakeholders, including staff, vendors, and frequent shoppers, regardless of ownership status.
  - b. The informed voice and agent of the owners, whether they are owners in a legal or moral sense.
  - c. A community food co-op may serve many stakeholders, including shoppers who prioritize healthy foods, local farms, and sustainable sourcing.
5. According to the PG Source Document, what are Ends policies primarily concerned with?
  - a. The intended effects to be produced, the intended recipients of those effects, and the intended worth of those effects.

- b. A co-op may value nutrient density, seasonal produce, and wellness-centered offerings as part of its product mix and community mission.
  - c. The board's preferred operational methods, staffing structures, and internal procedures for implementing programs.
6. According to the PG Source Document, what is the purpose of Executive Limitations policies?
- a. To describe the exact operational methods the board wants management to use to achieve Ends.
  - b. A co-op may establish standards for ingredient quality, product sourcing, and food safety to support customer trust and long-term health.
  - c. To define limits on operational means by identifying what would be unacceptable even if it were effective.
7. According to the PG Source Document, what does it mean to begin policy at the broadest level?
- a. Policies should begin with detailed procedural instructions and then be simplified over time as the board gains experience.
  - b. Policies should begin at the broadest, most inclusive level and then move to greater detail only until the board can accept any reasonable interpretation.
  - c. A co-op may begin with broad wellness values—such as supporting local, organic, and minimally processed foods—and then refine product offerings over time.
8. According to the PG Source Document, what does “Clarity and Coherence of Delegation” require?
- a. Committees and officers may be assigned responsibilities that overlap with the CEO's work, as long as communication remains respectful and collaborative.
  - b. The delegation must be unambiguous and that committees or officers may not be given responsibilities that interfere with, duplicate, or obscure the CEO's role.
  - c. A co-op may delegate product selection, merchandising, or prepared food planning internally, while still maintaining a consistent commitment to healthy and mission-aligned offerings.
9. According to the PG Source Document, what is the purpose of monitoring?
- a. A co-op may monitor inventory turnover, spoilage, and customer demand to maintain fresh produce and high-quality wellness products.
  - b. To allow the board to revisit day-to-day operational decisions whenever it wants additional detail or reassurance from staff.
  - c. To evaluate whether the organization achieved a reasonable interpretation of the board's previously stated Ends and Executive Limitations policies.
10. According to the PG Source Document, why must Policy Governance be used with precision?
- a. Because boards may customize the model freely, and precision is helpful but not necessary if overall intentions remain strong.
  - b. A co-op may carefully curate produce, supplements, and prepared foods with precision so that product quality consistently reflects its mission and values.
  - c. Because the model is a seamless system, and incomplete use can seriously weaken its effectiveness and owner accountability.

## Candidate's Qualifications

Per Bylaw 3.01, qualifications to run for Elections are:

- Have been a Member for at least one year prior to his or her nomination or application for a board of director position.
- Shall be at least eighteen years of age.
- Shall not have any overriding conflict of interest with Sevananda.
- Shall be committed to the best interests of the co-op and to following Sevananda's Bylaws and Policies.
- Shall commit to the time requirement necessary to complete the work of the Board.

Per Bylaw 3.01.6 - An Applicant shall meet any other reasonable eligibility requirements as may be set by the Board from time to time.

The Board of Directors has determined the following criteria to meet the needs of the Board:

### Preferred Qualifications

1. Education or Experience
  - a. Minimum Associate's degree from an accredited school plus minimum 2 years managerial experience,
  - b. 5 years of verifiable managerial experience in any field, or
  - c. Demonstrated ability in fields considered to be of value in the deliberations of the Board, including business management, retail, consumer, operations, technology, financial, sustainability, manufacturing, public service, education, science, law and government.
2. Investment of Time/Availability
  - a. Must be willing and able to attend and be prepared for monthly board meetings including review of all meeting materials provided in advance of the meeting,
  - b. Devote adequate time to board duties (minimum 5 hours/week),
  - c. Serve on at least one Board committee (minimum 1-3 hours/week), and
  - d. Attend board retreats and training (minimum 1-3 days/bi-annually).
3. Interpersonal Skills
  - a. Candidate must exhibit the highest moral and ethical character.
  - b. Candidate must exhibit independence and teamwork spirit.
  - c. Candidate must possess great communication skills (verbal and written).
  - d. Candidate must have the utmost discretion with access to sensitive and personal information.

### Mandatory

1. Candidate must not be a current employee of Sevananda or seeking employment with Sevananda\*\*
2. Candidate must attend the board meeting on **May 26, 2026, June 23, 2026**, and stay for the entire meeting.
3. Candidate must attend **in-person**, "Candidate Orientation" on **June 6, 2026, 11a-1p** in the Sevananda Education room, downstairs.

### Highly Recommended

1. Participate in all candidate "Meet and Greets" **in-person**, in the Sevananda Education room,

downstairs, during the voting phase of elections.

Meet/Greet Dates

- 1st meet/greet- **Thursday, June 16 @ 6:30pm**

- 2nd meet/greet- **Saturday, July 11 @ 11am (via Zoom)**

2. Complete brief "Why Vote for Me" Video message that will be posted on our Instagram and Facebook page.
3. Go Live on our social platforms (Facebook or Instagram) to give members another opportunity to engage with you directly.
4. Attend all board meetings during the elections process.

*\*\*Bylaw 3.01(a) - Any member who is not a current employee of the co-op is eligible to be elected as a director. Any director who becomes employed with the co-op consequently is ineligible and therefore must immediately resign from the Board of Directors.*

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### Requirements for Packet

#### Mandatory

1. Fully complete, sign and date all forms
2. Include most recent, professional resume
3. Must have 2 **signed** professional letters of recommendation emailed directly from the person writing the reference to [election@sevananda.coop](mailto:election@sevananda.coop).
  - a. Letters without a signature will not be accepted.
  - b. Contact info should be provided for all references – They will be contacted by Elections Committee Member.
4. Type responses to questions provided. Response should not exceed 500 words for total document.
5. Email a good quality photo to [election@sevananda.coop](mailto:election@sevananda.coop)

Notice: Your responses, **references and resumes** will be made available for member-owners to get a better understanding of you as a candidate. For your privacy and security, Sevananda will black out ALL personal information before responses are made public.

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**Reminder:** Please take note that paper application submissions have changed since COVID-19. The completed application and other relevant documents must be returned via one of three methods:

1. Email a scanned copy of the required documents related to the application process to [election@sevananda.coop](mailto:election@sevananda.coop)
2. If you do not have access to a scanner, take photos of each page and send **one** with the attachments to [election@sevananda.coop](mailto:election@sevananda.coop)
  - a. **You must hold your phone steady when taking a photo of each page.**
  - b. **Illegible and/or severely crooked attachments will be returned.**

Submit completed documents by **April 30, 2026** by 8pm. If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact the Elections Committee at [election@sevananda.coop](mailto:election@sevananda.coop).

**SEVANANDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
PERSONAL INFORMATION AND CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE  
(PLEASE PRINT)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide typed responses not to exceed 500 words in total, on a separate sheet using the format: Question + Answer.**

1. Describe how you came to be involved with Sevananda. Share the length of your involvement, areas of participation, and what initially drew you to the cooperative model.
2. Describe any volunteer experience you believe may add value if you served as a coop board member. How have your contributions in past organizations reflected teamwork, equity, or consensus building?
3. What do you see as the current condition of Sevananda, and our future prospects?
4. How do you see Sevananda's role in the broader community, and how might you help deepen its positive social, environmental, or economic impact?
5. Why do you wish to join Sevananda's Board of Directors, and what unique perspective or energy would you bring?
6. Have you previously served on a board or in a governance role? If so, provide a summary of your experience on the board (please include your most positive experience and any drawbacks or negative experiences).
7. Which skills or areas of expertise from your professional, educational, or volunteer background would strengthen Sevananda's Board and support the cooperative's strategic priorities (e.g. finance, marketing, governance, community outreach, event planning, legal)?
8. Provide a recent example that illustrates your leadership style and ability to collaborate or make decisions in a group setting. What was the outcome, and what did you learn?

**BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT  
SEVANANDA NATURAL FOODS MARKET 2023**

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The Board of Directors of the Sevananda Natural Foods Market has adopted this policy for its Code of Conduct.

*POLICY NUMBER: II - 6*

*ADOPTED: 3/24/14*

*AMENDED: 5/20/18*

*Formerly II-7, Renumbered & Revised 11/30/18*

## POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

***POLICY TITLE: BOARD MEMBERS' CODE OF  
CONDUCT***

We each commit ourselves to ethical, professional and lawful conduct.

1. Every director is responsible at all times for acting in good faith, in a manner which she/he reasonably believes to be in the best interests of the Cooperative, and with such care as an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would use under similar circumstances.
2. Directors must demonstrate unconflicted loyalty to the interests of the Cooperative's owners. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups, membership on other Boards or staffs, and the personal interest of any director acting as an individual consumer or member.
  - a. There will be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business, personal services or the preservation of personal relationships that supersede accountability to the board between any director and the Cooperative except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity and equal access to "inside" information.
  - b. At a new director's first board meeting, he/she will complete the "Conflict of Interest Disclosure" form and will verbally report to the whole board the potential conflicts. Any subsequent potential conflicts will be reported to the whole board immediately.
  - c. When the Board is to decide on an issue about which a director has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that director shall abstain from the conversation and the vote.
  - d. A director who applies for employment must first resign from the Board.
3. Directors may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.
  - a. When interacting with the GM or employees, directors must carefully and openly recognize their lack of authority.

- b. When interacting with the public, the press, or other entities, directors must recognize the same limitation and the inability of any director to speak for the Board except to repeat explicitly stated Board decisions.
4. Directors will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and must continue to honor confidentiality after leaving Board service.
5. Directors are expected to attend Board of Directors scheduled events, defined as: regular monthly meetings, strategic planning sessions, the annual member meeting, and training retreats. Any Director should refrain from being absent for three or more scheduled events of the Board, within any twelve-month period.
6. Directors will support the legitimacy and authority of the Board's decision on any matter, irrespective of the director's personal position on the issue.
7. Any director who does not follow the code of conduct policy can be removed from the Board by action of the Board

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have reviewed this policy and as indicated by my signature on this document, hereby agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby disclose that I have the following relationships (including with associations, organizations including Sevananda, and vendors) which may pose a conflict of interest in whole or in part with respect to my service on the Board of Directors:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

I understand that it is my responsibility to disclose any additional conflicts or potential conflicts that may arise during the term of my board service.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**CONFIDENTIAL**

I hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_ to receive any criminal history record information pertaining to me, which may be in the file of any state or local criminal justice agency in any State. This information will only be used to assess eligibility to serve on Sevananda Board of Directors.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Former Name(s) and Dates Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address Since: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Previous Address From: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Previous Address From: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Mo/Yr) (Street) (City) (Zip/State)

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month/Day/Year)

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License Number/State: \_\_\_\_\_

**DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE**

\_\_\_\_\_

[ ] CRIMINAL RECORD ATTACHED

[ ] NO CRIMINAL RECORD-ATTACHED

\_\_\_\_\_

Verified by: Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_