



2021 Board Candidate

Steve Somers



Steve Somers was raised in Berkeley California in the 1960's and became familiar with food and housing co-ops at that time. He began studying music at an early age and has performed at many community events, concerts and fundraisers over the years. In 1979 he relocated to Michigan and began attending EMU where he received a B.S. and M.A. degree in classical guitar and music composition. He became an Ypsilanti Food Co-op gold card member in the 1980's.

Mr. Somers is currently teaching the jazz combo class at WCC and also directing the Ypsilanti Youth Orchestra Jazz Ensemble (a non-profit community music education group), as well as teaching private lessons. With both the WCC and YYO he is actively performing at many community events such as NAPID, WCC Free College Day, WCC G.E.D. graduation, Huron River Days, Ypsi Food Co-op events and more. Acceptance of diverse backgrounds are an important part of both the WCC and YYO ensembles and classes

Mr. Somers has three daughters and two are currently attending U of M and Oakland University. His youngest attends Wi-Hi International High School in Ypsilanti. He is very familiar with the local community and school systems.

Mr. Somers has been serving on the Ypsilanti Co-op Board of Directors since August of 2017 when he was asked to fill a vacant seat. He also serves on the newly formed WCC Performing Arts Advisory Board which helps to bring important events and guest artists to the community.

Candidate Questionnaire:

1. What role do you think the Ypsilanti Food Co-op will play in the Ypsilanti's future?

The Co-op will continue to be an important part of the community and with the pending expansion will be able to incorporate community events and educational workshops

into the current format.

2. In what ways are you working to contribute to and improve the Ypsilanti community?
Providing community education and guidance through music and mentoring. Teaching at WCC and the Ypsilanti Youth Orchestra. Supporting re-cycling and environmental awareness.
3. If you can find healthy, organic food at another grocery store, why choose the Ypsilanti Food Co-op?
The Co-op does not profit from the sale of the food.
Within walking distance (don't have to use a vehicle). Local community atmosphere. Friendly staff.
4. What issue within the food system is the most important to you, and how would you address it?
Being sure that the food is safe and that the workers are not being exploited. Fair price can be a factor too.
5. What is your past experience with the Ypsilanti Food Co-op and cooperatives in general (working, volunteering, shopping, etc.)? include what you have done to improve and support the Ypsilanti Food Co-op.
I have served on the board of directors for several years and shop at the Co-op on a regular basis. I have organized promotional music events and special events at the Co-op. Have helped promote the Co-op via social media.
6. What has the Ypsilanti Food Co-op done for you?
Provided quality food and a community location within walking distance. Provided a venue to share music within the community.
7. What skills and strengths would you contribute to the Board
 1. Help organize special events
 2. Help promote the Co-op via Social Media and "word of mouth"
 3. Experience with business (Alley Records, LLC (music production) and Steve Somers Band
 4. Experience with Real Estate
 5. Social Media Experience (Facebook, LG., YouTube etc.)
 6. Active in the community (networking)
 7. Instructor at Washtenaw Community College
 8. Master's degree from EMU (music)
 8. Reliable (on-time)