Building Community: A Cooperative Effort to Redevelopment

Bluenose Gopher Public House
Melissa Peterson and Sarina Otaibi

Brownfields and Beyond: 2022 Minnesota Redevelopment Conference
Thursday, April 28, 2022
MEET MELISSA

Configuration Analyst, PrimeWest Health
Board Chair, Bluenose Gopher Public House
Owner, Authentic Excursions, Todd’s Cottage
MEET SARINA

Creative Rural Building Program Director, Department of Public Transformation
Board Member, Bluenose Gopher Public House
Our mission is to create a space where community, creativity, and history collide with quality beverages and food.

Core Values

- Creativity and openness to new ideas
- Locally focused
- Member-owner driven
- Welcoming and inclusive
- Equitable and transparent workplace
OUR STORY
Why a cooperative?

- Sustainable business model
- Volstead history
- New model for small, rural communities
• 2013: Established Bylaws and incorporated as a 308B Cooperative

• Purchased downtown building on contract for deed

• Developed website, membership application, and other needed documents

• 2014: Raised money through individual patron memberships at $150.21 each

• Completed a viable business plan

• 2016: Began interior demolition of the main floor in our building

• 2016: Launched investment crowdfunding campaign

• May 2017: Annual meeting to vote on changing direction from brewery to pub

• Member loan campaign and SWIF loan

• 2018: Construction and a lot of volunteer hours!

• February 1, 2019: We open our doors!
Bluenose Gopher Public House Building in downtown Granite Falls, MN

Purchased for $16,000
Raising Financial Capital

$150K

HELP US REACH OUR GOALS AND FILL UP OUR GLASSES!

GOAL: 300 MEMBER-OWNERS BEFORE WE OPEN.
213 MEMBERS

GOAL: $50,000 BY OCT. 15TH
$8,500 RAISED FROM MEMBER-OWNERS

LEARN MORE AT WWW.BLUENOSE.COOP
MEMBER EVENTS
MEMBER VOLUNTEERS
BLUENOSE GOPHER
PUBLIC HOUSE TODAY
WE LOVE KEEPING TRACK OF ALL OUR NEW MEMBERS!

WELCOME!

337 MEMBER-OWNERS

MARY K

PATRICK M

CHRISTOPHER J
Who we are and what we do:

- Employees
- Action teams
- Board of Directors
LOCAL BEER & FOOD
SUPPORT COMMUNITY
MUSIC, ART, & CREATIVE EVENTS
OUR FAILURES AND LESSONS LEARNED
Failures

- Could not raise enough money for a brewery
- Made early decision that cost us money
- We knew nothing about cooperatives or running a business

Lessons Learned

- Need for public participation and transparency
- Barriers when accessing and raising financial capital
- Timelines mean very little, but people still demand one
- Educating others on what it means to be a part of a cooperative
- Working with and motivating volunteers
Community Leadership

- The vital role of local government, EDAs, Chambers of Commerce, etc.
- How Granite Falls shaped and impacted our career paths
THANK YOU!

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