

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ATTENTION: Calendar Section Editors, Local News Editors, Business News

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“WHY JOIN NOW?”

(Bremerton, WA) The Kitsap Community Food Co-op is hosting their 5th Semi-Annual Public Meeting on Sunday February 28th, 2010 at the Norm Dicks Meeting Chambers. Doors open at 1:30 PM for socializing and appetizers donated by local eateries and farmers; the program starts at 2:30 PM. Attendees will hear about site selection efforts from the Co-op Board of Directors, and why their involvement at this time is crucial for success of this full-service, community-owned store. Member-owner shares will be available for purchase, as well as a silent auction.

“Many community members have asked me why they should become a member of the co-op now, instead of when the doors open, or after we’ve committed to a building or specific location,” says co-op Board President Laura Moynihan. “While we realize that becoming a member-owner now is a leap of faith – with minimal risk involved – it is a much bigger risk to assume we’ll get to opening day without their membership. Without significant member dollars, we simply cannot make the steps involved to secure a location. That’s just how cooperatives work.”

Moynihan explains that membership shares are refundable, so if the store is located in an area where members can’t use it, they can ask for their money back once the store has been open for one year. Additionally, if the effort fails, as much of the member dollars will be returned as possible. “But the community needs to commit their dollars before we can commit to a location. There's no doubt about it.”

Currently, the Kitsap Community Co-op has 71 member-owners. While organizers are pursuing other sources for funding such as grants, loans and fundraising events, memberships provide the important startup funds that are crucial for operating costs, and as collateral for bank loans. Their goal for 2010 is to sign up at least 200 member-owners, and to have 500-700 member-owners by opening day.

Moynihan adds, “With our emphasis on supporting local farmers and producers, we are confident that the store will benefit Kitsap County in a significant way. We can look to co-ops in Port Townsend and Olympia to see the impact they have had on their local economy. Co-ops also have a way of making struggling neighborhoods blossom.”

More information on the Kitsap Community Food Co-op may be found at www.kitsapfoodcoop.org, by contacting Board President Laura Moynihan at (360) 813-1301, or by sending an email to info@kitsapfoodcoop.org.

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Kitsap Community Food Co-op Mission: The Kitsap Community Food Cooperative connects our local community with quality food, products and access to information that promotes a healthy future for our families and our planet. Together we work toward a world where mutually beneficial relationships exist between producers and purchasers.