



Fitchburg Local First

Mission, Bylaws, and Structure

Fitchburg Local First (FLF) is an organization of independent local businesses. In order to receive foundation funding, Fitchburg Local First is an affiliate of the Sustainable Business Network of Greater Boston (SBN), which is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization.

Fitchburg Local First Mission Statement

Fitchburg Local First is a network of locally owned and independent businesses working to build a strong local economy and a vibrant community. We do this by:

- Organizing a Fitchburg Local First campaign that raises the awareness of consumers, businesses, and government agencies regarding the benefits of purchasing from locally owned, independent businesses.
- Bringing together locally owned independent businesses for mutual benefit and networking opportunities.
- Supporting Fitchburg ordinances, regulations and policies that promote locally owned, independent businesses.
- Collaborating with other organizations that promote and advance locally owned, independent businesses.

Membership

There are three categories of membership in Fitchburg Local First:

Business Sponsor – \$500 (for qualifying for-profit and enterprising non-profit businesses)

Business Member – \$100 (for qualifying for-profit and enterprising non-profit businesses)

Friend Member – \$50 (individuals, non-profits, and supportive non-profit businesses located outside Fitchburg but inside Massachusetts)

Business Member Qualifications

1. Business is privately held and not publicly traded.
2. The business owners, totaling greater than 50% of the business ownership, live in Massachusetts.
3. Business is based locally, operates in Fitchburg, and has no corporate or national headquarters outside the state.
4. Business can make independent decisions regarding the name and look of the business, as well as all business purchasing practices and distribution.
5. Business pays all marketing, rent, and other business expenses without assistance from a corporate headquarters.
6. The steering committee may make exceptions if agreed upon by a majority of its members.

Officers

Officers are elected in September and they serve two-year terms. There is no limit to the number of terms a person may serve in an office.

Co-Chairs – Call and facilitate meetings, set agendas, act as spokespeople for Local First.

Clerk – Takes minutes of meetings and distributes the minutes via email.

Treasurer – Sends out notices for dues, collects and deposits money, and produces a quarterly financial report.

Steering Committee

1. The *Steering Committee* is the governing body of Fitchburg Local First. Policy is generally made by consensus. However, a majority of those present can set policy and approve programs and expenditures. The *Steering Committee* is also responsible for the continued formalization and organization of the Fitchburg chapter of Local First. It shall be the intent of this committee, when and if necessary, with approval by the majority of general members, to accept a new charter that is more aligned with the organizational structure of other, more established chapters of Local First.
2. The *Steering Committee* consists of the four FLF officers and at least two, but no greater than eight additional members elected by the general membership.
3. Elections for the *Steering Committee* are held in September every year. Non-Officer SC members are elected for a three-year term by the general membership. There is no limit on the number of terms a person can serve.
4. SC members are expected to attend nine out of eleven Member Meetings and to be involved in at least one committee during the year.
5. *Steering Committee* members must be founding/sustaining business members of Local First. Friend members who are also Fitchburg residents may be SC members, but the majority of SC members must be owners of Fitchburg-based, for-profit, independent businesses.
6. The *Steering Committee* will hold meetings once a month except during the month of August. These meetings are open to Local First members, prospective members and other individuals working for the mission of Local First. These meetings will consist of general business and open member discussions. The *Steering Committee* may hold private meetings, or Executive Sessions, for any FLF business deemed sensitive by a committee member, including member privacy or legal issues.

Other Committees

The Steering Committee may form ad hoc and standing committees to work on various projects and events.