

GRAIN TRAIN BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
**Candidate Statements 2026**

**ERIK HAGSTROM (INCUMBENT)**

EDUCATION: University of San Diego, 2007



**Why do you want to serve on the Board of Directors of Grain Train Co-op?**

I want to continue serving on the Board of Directors because I believe steady governance and financial discipline are especially important at this stage of the co-op's evolution. Over the past four years — serving as Treasurer and now as Vice President — I have developed a deep understanding of our financial health, strategic priorities, and governance responsibilities. I also served on the committee that hired our new CEO, with expansion as a central objective of that search, and I am committed to helping lead and see that process through thoughtfully and responsibly. Grain Train is a vital community institution, and I want to help ensure it remains financially strong, mission-driven, and well positioned for long-term growth.

**What are you passionate about? How could we see that passion in action in your day-to-day life?**

I'm passionate about building strong, resilient systems — whether in business, governance, or community institutions. I care deeply about financial clarity, long-term strategy, and making sure organizations are positioned not just to survive, but to thrive. In my day-to-day life, that shows up through disciplined decision-making, data-driven thinking, and a willingness to step into leadership roles where accountability matters. It also shows up in how I support local businesses and community initiatives, believing that thoughtful stewardship and steady leadership create lasting impact.

**Describe an experience where you worked on a team. What did you offer the team?**

**How did you compromise for the team's benefit?**

One meaningful team experience specific to my time on the Grain Train board was serving on the committee that led the search and hiring process for our new CEO, Michael. That process required collaboration, discretion, and a shared commitment to the long-term health of the co-op. I contributed financial perspective, strategic clarity around our expansion goals, and a focus on finding the right fit for a candidate. Throughout the process, I made a conscious effort to listen carefully to differing viewpoints and to balance my own priorities with the broader needs of the organization. Where there were differing opinions about candidate strengths or direction, I worked toward consensus rather than preference, recognizing that a unified board decision would ultimately best support the new CEO's success.

**Do you have other experiences that you see as being related to the work of the Board?**

Yes. In addition to my service on the Board, my professional work involves financial oversight, strategic planning, and systems-based decision making — all of which directly relate to effective governance. I regularly work with budgets, performance metrics, long-term growth planning, and operational accountability in my own businesses. Those experiences reinforce the importance of clear expectations, measurable outcomes, and disciplined execution. I also value the distinction between governance and management, understanding that the Board's role is to set direction, monitor performance, and support leadership — not to manage day-to-day operations.

**Is there anything else you'd like to tell us?**

I have truly enjoyed serving on the Board over the past four years and have valued the opportunity to contribute to the co-op's stewardship during an important season of transition and growth. It has been meaningful work, and I would be honored to continue serving for another term to help support Grain Train's long-term success.