

# 2021

## **RECOMMENDED CANDIDATE BROCHURE**

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Meridian™

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**The content of the Candidate Statements, as included herein, is printed as received from the Candidates.**

## Meridian's Nomination Process

Each year, the Board of Directors appoints a Nominating Committee which is responsible for ensuring the integrity and quality of the Director nomination and election process. The Committee is also responsible for recommending to the Membership those candidates who are best qualified to serve Meridian as a Director in order to have a high-performing Board.

Meridian's Board consists of 12 Directors elected for three-year terms. Generally, every year, the term of four Directors expires and Meridian holds Board elections to fill these vacancies and other vacancies that may have occurred.

Candidates must be a Member of Meridian by the last day of the Nomination period and hold the required Membership share. Candidates must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Meridian's By-Law #1, and not be disqualified from being a Director of a Credit Union under applicable legislation.

The process is highly competitive. All applications are evaluated, however only Qualified Candidates are considered beyond the application part of the process. In order to be a Qualified Candidate, an individual must meet the Director Selection Criteria and have one or more of the skills and expertise that best complement the current Board.

The Nominating Committee is assisted by an external advisor who conducts preliminary interviews of selected Qualified Candidates on behalf of the Committee. The Nominating Committee then selects a short list of Qualified Candidates for interviews with the Committee.

Upon completion of its interviews, the Nominating Committee determines the best Qualified Candidates to fill the available positions on the Board, and then places its recommendations behind those identified Candidates equal to the number of vacancies. This step is designed to ensure Meridian's Membership can be satisfied that the recommended Candidates are, in the view of the Committee, the best qualified individuals to serve Meridian's Members.

Any Candidate not being recommended may request that their name appear on the ballot to participate in an election. The Candidates not being recommended did not place their names forward for an election, resulting in this year's election being decided by acclamation. The four Recommended Candidates are therefore acclaimed as directors and will begin their three-year terms following Meridian's 2021 AGM on April 27, 2021.

## Recommended Candidates

### IAN CUNNINGHAM

I am honoured and excited to be recommended to serve as a member of the Board of Directors at Meridian Credit Union. I have long recognized Meridian Credit Union to be amongst the best in Canada when it comes to Member experience and using digital technology to better serve the membership and its community.

I have a very strong financial services and technology background, highlighted by senior executive leadership positions at Capital One Financial in both Canada and the United States, SVP and Chief Operating Officer for Tangerine Bank, and most recently in my current role as Executive Vice President, Chief Operating Officer North America, for Technisys, a global leader in next generation digital banking technology.

Throughout my career, I have led large, complex, technology and operations teams and programs. My roles have allowed me to develop exceptional leadership and expertise across a breadth of functions, including Operations, Technology, Risk Management, Marketing and Partnerships.

I have always been actively involved in the communities where I live and work, including volunteerism with Junior Achievement, The Boys and Girls Club, Habitat for Humanity and currently by serving as Board Chair of the Sandra Schmirler Foundation, which raises donations to assist hospitals across Canada to buy much needed, lifesaving equipment for their neo-natal intensive care units.

I was appointed to the Meridian Board of Directors in 2020 for a 1 year term and have begun to develop a strong understanding of the business model and strategy, the Meridian culture, and the challenges that lay ahead. I look forward to leveraging my passion and experience to actively contribute to the success of MCU through my Director position.

## Recommended Candidates

### KAREN FARBRIDGE

I am honoured to be returning to the Board of Directors. I applied to serve on the Board six years ago, for the same reason why I chose Meridian (formerly Guelph-Wellington Credit Union) more than 25 years ago as my financial institution – a commitment to cooperative values and principles.

I have gained considerable knowledge of Meridian and the credit union sector over the last six years. For the last three years, I have served as Board Chair since 2018. In addition, I have served on the Governance, Audit and Finance, Human Resources and Risk Committees. This experience has given me a broad understanding of the organization. I look forward to contributing to the development of a refreshed strategy for Meridian in 2021 and support its execution over the next three years. This strategic refresh is even more critical given the pandemic's impact on Members, employees, and the financial sector.

I attained my Chartered Director designation from the Directors College (McMaster University) in 2009 and have registered more than 270 Continuing Professional Development hours since then. I have sought professional development in financial literacy, human resources, strategic planning, risk management, diversity & inclusion and more.

I have served on boards in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. This has included 17 years of service to my local community as a member of Guelph City Council, eleven as Mayor. Through public service, I have served on numerous boards including the Guelph Police Services Board, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Board, and Guelph Hydro Inc. I currently serve as Board Chair for motusbank (a wholly owned subsidiary of Meridian) and on two non-profit boards.

For ten years, I mentored youth seeking to make a difference in their community and around the world as a coordinator of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (Guelph). Today, I mentor young women entrepreneurs as well as youth seeking to make a difference in the protection of biodiversity. In 2015, I was named one of Canada's Clean50 which recognizes individuals who have advanced sustainable development in Canada. I was also the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal and a 2005 YWCA-YMCA Guelph Women of Distinction Award.

Currently, I am the President of Karen Farbridge & Associates Ltd, a consulting firm based in Guelph, that advises federal, provincial and municipal policy makers, and industry leaders on sustainability and resiliency. I live in Guelph with my partner and have a grown son who lives in Vancouver.

## Recommended Candidates

### SUANNE NIELSEN

I have demonstrated a longstanding commitment to purpose-driven organizations, having served as a senior executive of an international fraternal life insurance company for more than 20 years and have contributed as a director to not-for-profit organizations throughout the past three decades. I believe strongly the organizations that will be successful now and into the future are those that are “driven to share”, instead of being shareholder driven.

To the Board, I bring senior executive experience from Foresters Financial, a 145-year old fraternal life insurance company that has no shareholders but exists for its members, their families and the communities in which they live. I have provided executive oversight to global human resources, corporate communications, brand management, marketing, public relations, insurance operations, membership, and corporate governance as corporate secretary.

I am presently the President and Board Chair of the Strategic Capability Network, a 40-year old, national not-for-profit association offering thought leadership and a community of peers for Canadian human resources executives. My past board experience includes: the American Fraternal Alliance (Director), the Daily Bread Food Bank (Human Resources Committee Chair and Member of the Nominating Committee), and the United Way of Burlington, Hamilton-Wentworth (Board Chair).

I am currently enrolled in The Directors College Chartered Director Program (C.Dir) offered through McMaster University and the DeGroote School of Business and previously attained my Human Resources and Compensation Committee Certified (H.R.C.C.C.) designation.

Other professional credentials include: Certified Human Resources Executive (CHRE), International Coach Federation Professional Certified Coach (PCC), and Fellow, Life Management Institute (FLMI).

I believe in Meridian’s purpose – **“to help Canadians achieve a better life”** – and the cooperative values that are shared by all members and employees. My view is that Meridian’s purpose and values, along with its commitments to members, communities and employees, provide a unique point of differentiation for Canadian banking consumers that will ensure ongoing prosperity for Meridian and its members.

## Recommended Candidates

### BRUCE WEST

I am honoured to have served Meridian members on the board of directors for the past three years. I have served on the audit, human resources and nominating committees and have chaired the governance committee this past year.

I am the former Executive Vice-President, Finance and Chief Financial Officer for The Co-operators Group of companies in Guelph. In that role I was responsible for strategic planning, investment strategy, mergers and acquisitions, enterprise risk management, internal audit and all aspects of financial management. I was also the primary liaison with the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, which regulates all federal financial institutions including banks, insurance companies and federal credit unions.

I bring a unique blend of skills in corporate governance, sustainability, business transformation, finance, executive leadership, strategy and corporate development. I spent almost half my career working in co-operative and mutual companies and have extensive experience in publicly listed companies and entrepreneurial endeavours. I have worked for many world-class organizations including The Co-operators, Sun Life, Clarica, London Life and Canadian Tire. I have broad financial services experience in life insurance, property and casualty insurance, wealth and asset management, trust companies, insurance brokerages, mutual funds and banking.

I am a Chartered Director with extensive board experience, having served as chair of the governance and compensation committee of a public company, chair of two audit committees and as vice-chair on two boards. I am currently a director of Aviso Wealth Inc. and a former director of The CUMIS Group which supply the credit union system with investment and insurance products. I have an MBA with a Concentration in Marketing and a Bachelor of Mathematics. I have been deeply involved in developing and implementing sustainability/ESG strategies, including initiatives for carbon tracking, impact investing and integrated reporting.

In recognition of my contribution to my community, profession and the companies for which I have worked, I was nominated a Fellow of CPA Ontario, allowing me to use the designation FCPA, FCA, the highest distinction in my profession. I am an active fundraiser in my community and my wife Karen and I have raised more than \$130,000 to support refugees and new Canadians in Waterloo Region. We have two adult children and will soon welcome our fourth grandchild.

I am passionate about my community and co-operatives and am excited to continue in my role as a director of our credit union.

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