



MRG 2020 Candidate Statement, Photo, Brief Bio & Questions

Name: Bill Coyle

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Brief Bio:

My name is Bill Coyle. Our family has been skiing here since 2000. We have been Co-op shareholders since 2001.

My wife Lisa and I are originally from the Philadelphia area. We have four daughters ages 24 to 31. All the girls learned to ski here. They still love to come back and ski MRG when they can, even though two are on the West Coast. We raised our daughters in the Philly area to be close to our families. We spent a lot of years driving 7 hours each way from Pennsylvania to ski at Mad River. Eight and a half years ago, we moved to New Hampshire, in large part to be closer to Mad River Glen.

For the past 16 years I have owned and managed a company that manufactures industrial cutting tools. Before that I was an independent consultant and prior to that, a consultant with McKinsey & Co. My first job out of college was as an army officer in the 82d Airborne.

We have a place in Waitsfield where we spend most weekends and holidays. The MRV is important to our family. We enjoy introducing our friends to the area and to MRG.

Candidate Questions:

1. What brought you to Mad River Glen initially? What keeps you coming back today?

In the mid to late '90s our family skied all around New England and kept coming back to Sugarbush. We were at Sugarbush one weekend and decided to check out Mad River Glen. It was a snowy, powder Saturday. When we arrived, there were no parking spots to be found. Edie was still working the parking lot, saw that we had a car full of kids, and pulled us right up in front of the place. We skied MRG that day & never left. The mountain was much more relaxing, kid friendly and family friendly than many other places we had skied.

What keeps us coming back? Our family learned to ski here. I was late to the game and learned as an adult. At MRG, I was fortunate enough to learn from some of the best skiers and ski instructors in New England.



The challenge and complexity of the terrain. The simplicity of the operation. (not minimizing the management challenge, but simpler, and in some ways more robust, than traditional ski areas). The outstanding long-term staff. The skiers only policy. The welcoming atmosphere. I know it may sound cliché, but for the same reasons that a lot of other folks keep coming back. You can relax here. People can belong here. The folks who ski here are more than customers. At how many other ski areas do people come back to grab a sandwich and a beer on a Friday summer's eve, just to see who is here, just to say hello, and to shorten a bit, the time between when the place closes and when the snow flies again?

2. Why are you running for the board? What strengths would you bring the Board and to the Cooperative? Is there an officer role or committee chair in which you'd be interested in serving sometime during your tenure?

Mad River Glen and the MRG Community have been great to my family and to me. It is an important part of our winter recreational life. It is what brought us to, and kept us in, the Mad River Valley. I think there are times and places where one has an obligation to contribute if possible.

For the past 16 years I have run a privately held business. Our company has a responsibility to turn a profit, to grow, to serve our customers and to provide a solid place of employment for our associates. Those obligations are mutually supportive and equally important. MRG, I think, is similar. It needs to be financially stable and serve its customers. Mad River also has an obligation to its employees and associates. In that way I think that it is very similar to how we run our business. At our company, senior managers and I have to formulate policy, bring on associates and allocate capital consistent with those goals. Hopefully, some of that experience will be relevant to serving on the Board at MRG.

In terms of officer role or committees, I am honestly not sure. It is important to learn a bit more about how things work. If elected, I will be happy to serve in whatever role fellow board members believe I can contribute.

3. The Co-op has entered its third decade. Where do you see the Co-op in five years? Ten years? What is your vision of the Board's role in this future?

I will answer the last question first. I believe that the role of the Board is one of responsible stewardship. Some may have different opinions, but I believe that responsible stewardship has two main components: 1) first, adhere to the governing principles and mission of the organization; 2) pursue policies and actions consistent with the governing principles, that leave the organization in better shape than you found it. This highlights the imperative to improve upon an already strong foundation.

In five or ten years, I would hope that the Co-op will still be serving up a skiing experience on natural snow and some of the best terrain in New England. I imagine that the benefits from the capital campaign will have kicked in and portions of the plant and facilities will be upgraded. The Co-op should be providing the same blend of skiing experience and winter recreational community that MRG has for the past 60 plus years. Not to sound repetitive, but the Board's role is one of responsible stewardship. Stay true to the mission. Leave the place in better shape than you found it. I would like to help in this task.

4. Based on the environmental and economic changes impacting our industry, what do you see as MRG's greatest challenges and opportunities.

In some ways, MRG's challenges are fairly constant, unchanging. How does MRG stay true to its founding principles, but at the same time evolve in a manner that ensure that it survives and thrives? MRG has to remain true to its original charter.

MRG also has to attract a new generation of skiers and skiing families that buy into, literally and figuratively, the MRG experience. MRG is not for everyone; and that is OK. MRG is a niche product/experience. I think that the real challenge is how to evolve and attract the next generation(s) without becoming too much like every other ski area.

A great opportunity is to introduce like-minded skiers who will enjoy and appreciate what MRG and the Co-op have to offer. In many ways our skiers are our best ambassadors, marketers and salespeople. We could be more active and deliberate introducing friends and family to MRG. This is a tremendous, sometimes untapped, opportunity.

If the mountain can attract the next generation, stay true to its charter and pursue a Board policy of responsible stewardship, then people will still be skiing here 60 years hence.

5. Now that the campaign is being wound down and plans to renovate are in progress, what do you see as the next opportunity or challenge for the Co-op.

The Co-op must allocate funds responsibly. The Co-op should undertake projects that are consistent with the mission/charter, enhance its sustainability and secure its financial stability as an entity. This is tricky for a couple of reasons. First the Co-op must spend resources on projects that enhance the MRG experience without changing it substantially. Second, the Board and Management need to ensure that the Co-op will be able to fund the maintenance of any plant/facilities upgrades. Depreciation is not free. Bigger plant, bigger facilities, more equipment will demand more maintenance dollars. That has to be factored into operating budgets and considered when deploying capital. Finally, the Co-op should consider seriously how to allocate a portion of the campaign funds to provide additional security to the valued employees at MRG. Any place can buy real estate and equipment. Every professional sports team uses the same gear, from the same companies, but they achieve dramatically different results. The difference is the people. We must not ignore the people element when allocating campaign funds.

All of the above must be undertaken with the goal of attracting the next generation(s) of like-minded skiers. This also is both a challenge and an opportunity.