

MINUTES
GENERAL BOARD MEETING, MAY 18, 2022
FERGUS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

- 1. GENERAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.** The Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Trustees met in general session May 18, 2022, with PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAER calling the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. JANINE RIFE DIDIER was scrivener. Board members in attendance were BRAD ARNTZEN, BOB EVANS, CATHY KOMBOL, BRETT MAXWELL, JASON SWANZ, and TERRY FROST. Other attendees included GENERAL MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY, LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA, OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK and CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL. The attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** After reviewing the meeting agenda, BRETT MAXWELL moved to approve it. JASON SWANZ seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.** After reviewing the minutes of the April 21, 2022, general meeting and discussing them, TERRY FROST moved their approval. BRETT MAXWELL seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- 4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.** The Board noted the regular time for member input relative to any issue of interest or importance to them. Central Montana Search and Rescue (CMSAR) TRAINING/SAFETY OFFICER BRETT NIENHUIS thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak to them. NIENHUIS gave a short talk about CMSAR and stated that he was requesting assistance equipping CMSAR with critical lifesaving needs that the organization is currently lacking. NIENHUIS concluded his talk by telling how obtaining additional bleeding control kits, first aid kits, AED's, cold weather uniforms, training for new members and getting assistance with financing to finish construction on their new training room would benefit CSAR. As NIENHUIS left the meeting, the Board thanked him for his service to the community and for attending. After a period of discussion, the Board authorized MANAGER SWEENEY to use funds from unclaimed capital credits to make a one-time donation of \$1,000 to the Central Montana Search and Rescue for the purpose of education. In return, the Board requests that CSAR follow up by telling Fergus Electric how they used the donated money.
- 5. ANNUAL MEETING.** GENERAL MANAGER SWEENEY reviewed each of the items that will appear on the Annual Meeting agenda with the Board. The Board considered role assignments and discussed agenda topics.
- 6. CFC/RUS TRANSITION.** OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK reported that the transition from RUS to CFC is complete.
- 7. FINANCIAL AND OTHER MONTHLY REPORTS.** Financial and other monthly reports were presented to the Board for discussion. OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK reviewed the April 30, 2022, operating report. PAYROLL ADMINISTRATOR JANINE RIFE DIDIER gave an abbreviated April 30, 2022, ratios report.
- 8. OPERATIONS AND SAFETY REPORT.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT RIKALA reported that MECA SAFETY INSTRUCTOR JERRY LEMM instructed a Flagger Certification course on May 17th. RIKALA was pleased to report that APPRENTICE LINEMEN DANYON RICE and COLLIN SULLIVAN passed their written tests under the tutelage of INSTRUCTOR MARK SCHWOMEYER on May 16th. RIKALA noted that to date 13 individuals had applied for the Right of Way Specialist position which is set to close on May 19. RIKALA reported that the regional material vendors' pole and material reserves are depleted due to the recent storms in eastern Montana and North Dakota. RIKALA said that upon completing a two-day Drone Certification Course at MECA, FOREMAN LOUIE HOLD and TRANSFORMER REPAIRMAN MARK SCHWOMEYER passed their test and are certified to commercially fly drones for Fergus Electric. RIKALA reported that STAKING ENGINEER SCOTT OLSON attended a two-day Security and Response Services User (SRS) Group meeting at Basin Electric's headquarters in Bismarck to gain more knowledge about the afterhours dispatch service. RIKALA reported that line superintendents across Montana met May 3rd and May 4th at the Yogo Inn. Among the topics discussed were long lead times for materials, trucks, equipment, and EV charging stations, and maintaining Forest Service rights of way.

9. **INVENTORY OF WORK ORDERS.** No work orders were closed in May.
10. **POWER OUTAGE REPORT.** The Board reviewed the April 2022 Outage Report.
11. **BOARD POLICY 233 – INJURIES AND EARLY RETURN TO WORK.** The Board reviewed Board Policy 233. After a period of discussion, BOB EVANS moved to approve Board Policy 233 with the recommended amendments. BRAD ARNTZEN seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
12. **BOARD POLICY 234 – POST-EMPLOYMENT PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS.** The Board reviewed Board Policy 234. After a period of discussion, TERRY FROST moved to approve Board Policy 234 with the recommended amendments. BRETT MAXWELL seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
13. **REPORT OF CORPORATE COUNSEL.** CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL reported that he has kept busy working on several items of importance to the cooperative. BIRDWELL reported that the sale of the two Roundup properties is completed. The house, buildings plus five acres on Horsethief Road sold for \$250,000 less closing costs; the remaining eight acres on that property sold for \$2,000 per acre; and the Musselshell Riverside Street property, approximately two acres, sold via quit claim deed, without warranty of any kind for \$500.
14. **MANAGER'S REPORT.** GENERAL MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY reported that on April 25th, he met with TRACY JERMAN, a representative of Northrop Grumman, DEANNA LANGMAN, with Big Sky Economic Development, and SARA HUDSON, with Snowy Mountain Development to discuss the upcoming missile upgrade project. The federal government is near the end of an environmental impact study. Upon conclusion of the study, Northrup will be able to communicate additional information including the construction schedule. SWEENEY reported that Central Montana Foundation's scholarship committee recommended two local applicants for our lineman scholarship. SWEENEY told the Board that since only one of last year's three lineman scholarship recipients attended line school and received the scholarship funds, he consented to awarding TRAVIS SURA and NOLAN FRY each a \$3,000 scholarship to the line school of their choice. Upon completion of the program, the co-op will award each of them an additional \$3,000.
15. **NRECA LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE.** PAUL DESCHEEMAERKER attended the NRECA Legislative Energy Conference in Washington, D.C. May 1st-3rd. DESCHEEMAERKER said that it was well attended. He and his group spoke with U.S. Representative from Montana MATT ROSENDALE's Chief of Staff. They also spoke to U.S. Senator STEVE DAINES of Montana and had a brief chat with U.S. Senator JON TESTER of Montana. DESCHEEMAERKER appreciated the opportunity to attend.
16. **MEMBERS 1ST/BASIN UPDATE.** GENERAL MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY reported that he attended the Basin Electric Board meeting in Bismarck and Members 1st was well represented. TARY HANSON, Tongue River Electric's General Manager, BILL MERTZ, Members 1st new CFO, and BRIAN MILLS, PRECorp's new CEO all attended. SWEENEY and the group toured the Dakota Gasification Company plant, which was far larger and more complex than imagined. In June, in conjunction with the PRECorp and Members 1st regular board meeting, there will be a farewell party for MIKE EASLEY, PRECorp's current CEO, who is retiring. Members of Fergus Electric's Board hope to attend. Starting in August, BRIAN MILLS will be PRECorp's new CEO.
17. **DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS/NEW MEMBERS LIST.** The Board reviewed the delinquent accounts showing those that were paid in full and those that were still owing.
18. **EXECUTIVE SESSION.** At 3:10 p.m., JASON SWANZ moved to go into executive session. TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
19. **REGULAR MEETING CONTINUES.** The general meeting resumed at 3:37 p.m. BRETT MAXWELL moved to resume the general meeting. JASON SWANZ seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
20. **ESTATE CAPITAL CREDITS.** The Board reviewed the list of estate capital credits for May 2022 totaling \$15,130.41, which were prepared by SUSIE HINKLEY. JASON SWANZ moved to affirm the retirements and TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.


21. OTHER BUSINESS.

22. FUTURE MEETINGS.

- a. Fergus Electric Annual Meeting, June 9
- b. Safety Meeting, June 15
- c. Members 1st Board Meeting, June 20
- d. FEC Board Meetings in 2022, August 4 and August 31

23. NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS.

24. ADJOURNMENT. PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAERKER adjourned the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

SECRETARY  ATTEST: PRESIDENT 