

**MINUTES**  
**GENERAL BOARD MEETING, AUGUST 29, 2019**  
**FERGUS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**

1. **GENERAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.** The Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Trustees met in general session August 29, 2019 with PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAER calling the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. JANINE RIFE DIDIER was scrivener. Board members in attendance were BRAD ARNTZEN, BOB EVANS, TERRY FROST, CATHY KOMBOL, BRETT MAXWELL and JASON SWANZ. GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY, CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL, LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA and OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK were also present. ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER was not in attendance.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** After reviewing the meeting agenda, BOB EVANS 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 July 24, 2019 general meeting and discussing them, TERRY FROST moved their approval. BRAD ARNTZEN 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. No member appeared.
5. **VOTING DELEGATES.** After discussing the various openings for voting delegates, TERRY FROST moved to approve appointing BRAD ARNTZEN to act as the primary voting delegate and CATHY KOMBOL as the alternate voting delegate for the MECA Board Certification. BOB EVANS seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. CATHY KOMBOL moved to approve JASON SWANZ as the official 2019 MECA credentialed voting delegate and BRAD ARNTZEN as the alternate voting delegate. TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. BOB EVANS is the voting delegate for both CFC and NRECA at the Region 9 meeting in Spokane.
6. **MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY.** The Board discussed several ideas and made some plans for the co-op's Member Appreciation Day, which will be held on Thursday, October 31, 2019 from 2:00p.m.-4:30 p.m. in the co-op's new truck garage in Lewistown.
7. **TRANSMISSION LINE UPDATE.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY and LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that Rocky Mountain Contractors returned and did the required cleanup work, completing the job.
8. **NEW METERING SYSTEM.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY had STAKING ENGINEER MELANIE FORAN join the meeting to provide an update on the current AMI schedule for the Board and show them a video on AMI's and answer their questions.
9. **TRUCK GARAGE.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that the new water line is dug, connected and there is now water to the truck garage. RIKALA noted that there is still more work remaining before the project will be finished.
10. **SANDFIRE RESOURCES COPPER MINE.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY said Sandfire expects the final Environmental Impact Study in August followed by the Record of Decision in September. SWEENEY noted that the next mine tour is scheduled for September 6, 2019.
11. **COOPERATIVE SOLAR - PHASE 2.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY reported that STAKING ENGINEER SCOTT OLSON completed the REAP grant for the Phase 2 construction. SWEENEY told the Board that co-op staff is looking into Wi-Fi and a phone line for the truck garage, which would permit current statistics pertaining to solar output to be sent to a monitor in the office the same as what is being done with Phase 1 solar data. Staff hopes to have enough information to know the proposed solar panel cost by the end of September.



**12. BOARD RETREAT.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY reported that ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER scheduled the Board Retreat for January 22 and 23, 2020 at Big Spring Brewery in Lewistown. CFC VICE PRESIDENT OF REGULATORY AFFAIRS, JASON STRONG will facilitate the board retreat. A schedule and agenda will be prepared.

**13. FINANCIAL AND OTHER MONTHLY REPORTS.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY presented financial and other monthly reports to the Board for discussion. OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK reviewed the July 31, 2019 operating report and FINANCIAL ANALYST JANINE RIFE DIDIER presented the July 31, 2019 ratios report.

**14. POWER OUTAGE REPORT.** GENERAL MANAGER SWEENEY and the Board reviewed a report prepared by JANINE RIFE DIDIER covering power interruptions for January-August 2019.

**15. OPERATIONS REPORT.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that crews have been busy completing AMI site surveys in the Hilger and Roundup areas and meter relays have been installed in the Hilger area. LOUIE HOULD has advanced in job position from serviceman to foreman. After interviewing three individuals to fill the serviceman position left open by HOULD, RYAN d'AUTREMONT was offered and accepted the proposal to fill the serviceman position, leaving an opening for a transformer repairman. The transformer repairman position will be filled soon. RIKALA and MANAGER SWEENEY reported that SERVICEMAN/METER TECH BRIAN GODBEY and STAKING ENGINEER MELANIE FORAN had recently discovered a plane by the Roundup airport that had crashed, and upon further investigation the two found the pilot, who was in serious need of medical assistance, and called for help. MANAGER SWEENEY commended the duo for their gracious rescue effort.

**16. SERVICE POLICIES HANDBOOK.** After a period of review and discussion, JASON SWANZ moved to approve the Service Policies handbook. BOB EVANS seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**17. INTERNAL POLICY 406.0 - POSITION DESCRIPTION STAKING ENGINEER.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY presented the amended Staking Engineer job description to the Board for informational purposes, as no action or approval from the Board was required.

**18. REPORT OF CORPORATE COUNSEL.** CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL reported that the NRECA Legal Seminar 59 held August 12-14, 2019 in Denver, Colorado was very worthwhile, and he was glad he attended. A takeaway from the seminar, for the Board, is to be transparent, and to be diligent about writing down time spent working on the board each month. COUNSELOR BIRDWELL noted that a total of approximately 200 attorneys and managers attended.

**19. CHANGE IN 2019 BUDGET ITEMS.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY listed a few items that the co-op would still like to purchase in 2019, that were not included in the original, approved 2019 budget. The added items include a diagnostics tool for the mechanic's shop, a trailer to transport meter relays and a snow cat. SWEENEY noted that the co-op will not be purchasing a few of the original line items this year that were approved for 2019, so SWEENEY recommended swapping the original items for the new items, which will result in no price difference. MANAGER SWEENEY and LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA spoke to the Board about needing to repair or replace the breaker for the Winifred transmission line. Staff will update the Board next month.

**20. RESAP.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that in August he traveled to Tongue River Electric in Ashland and McCone Electric in Circle as part of the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP) to conduct a safety inspection. The RESAP inspections are sponsored by NRECA. RIKALA reported that it was Tongue River's first RESAP inspection and he noted that he had a good crew visit at McCone.

**21. SAFETY MEETINGS.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that MECA SAFETY DIRECTOR TROY KAMPS presented a course on electrical burns and Safety Jeopardy at the August 15 Safety Meeting that was well received.

22. **MEMBERS 1<sup>ST</sup>/PRECORP MEETINGS.** BOARD PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAERKER and GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY reviewed the August 20 Members 1<sup>st</sup> and PRECorp board meetings.

23. **NRECA CONNECT CONFERENCE.** OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK thanked the Board and Manager for sending her to the NRECA Connect Conference in San Francisco, August 19-21. HORACEK reported that NRECA announced that the Retirement and Security Plan will continue, and that insurance plans, known as "Cadillac"-type policies, will not be taxed.

24. **PRECORP ANNUAL MEETING.** BOARD PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAERKER reported that he attended PRECorp's Annual Meeting on August 24 in Buffalo, Wyoming. DESCHEEMAERKER said that PRECorp offered its members a health screening, and there were also other items offered, i.e., displays, demos, and a vocalist for their members enjoyment.

25. **ESTATE CAPITAL CREDITS.** The Board reviewed the July 2019 estate capital credits in the amount of \$17,514.92 and August 2019 estate capital credit retirements in the amount of \$17,901.47, prepared by SUSAN HINKLEY. TERRY FROST moved to affirm the retirements and BRAD ARNTZEN seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.


26. **DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS/NEW MEMBERS LIST.** The Board reviewed the delinquent accounts showing those that were paid in full and those that were still owing. A list of new members was also reviewed.

27. **FUTURE MEETINGS.**

- a. Safety Meeting, Lori Slaboda/NRECA Field Rep. – Benefits, Sep. 4
- b. MECA Operations Conference, Sep. 9-12, Great Falls
- c. NWPPA fall meeting – Sep. 12-13, Kalispell
- d. Members 1<sup>st</sup>/PRECorp, Sep. 16-17, Sheridan
- e. FEC Board, Sep. 23, Oct. 31, Dec. 6 and Dec. 19
- f. NRECA Region 9, Sep. 25-26, Spokane
- g. FEC Board and Christmas Awards Dinner, Friday, Dec. 6, Winifred

28. **NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS.**

29. **ADJOURNMENT.** PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAERKER adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

SECRETARY  ATTEST: PRESIDENT 