

**MINUTES**  
**GENERAL BOARD MEETING, SEPTEMBER 23, 2019**  
**FERGUS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**

- 1. GENERAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.** The Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Trustees met in general session September 23, 2019 with PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAER calling the meeting to order at 9:00 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, ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER, CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL, and LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA. OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK was not present.
- 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** After reviewing the meeting agenda, BRAD ARNTZEN moved to approve it. BRETT MAXWELL seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.** After reviewing the minutes of the August 29, 2019 general meeting and discussing them, JASON SWANZ moved their approval. TERRY FROST 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. MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY.** The Board reviewed plans for the co-op's Member Appreciation Day, which will be held on Thursday, October 31, 2019 from 2:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m. in the co-op's new truck garage in Lewistown. The co-op will serve hot dogs and cookies. Members will have a chance to win prizes, look at a display of the new metering equipment the co-op is installing and ask questions, and watch a safety demonstration presented by the linemen.
- 6. NEW METERING SYSTEM.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER gave an update on the current AMI schedule for the Board. DOVER said that the AMI equipment is beginning to arrive. DOVER spoke of the importance of integration with NISC. DOVER stated that Fergus Electric's staff is interested in learning about AMI. Currently, approximately 42 percent of the site surveys are completed, and 24 relays and one access point are installed.
- 7. TRUCK GARAGE.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that the concrete work is being finished today. RIKALA noted that an emergency shutoff needs to be installed at each door and said there is still a little more work remaining before the project is completed.
- 8. SANDFIRE RESOURCES COPPER MINE.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY updated the Board on the Black Butte Copper Project and noted that the next mine tour is scheduled for October 3.
- 9. COOPERATIVE SOLAR - PHASE 2.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY reported that the co-op is planning to delay construction of the project until next spring after the REAP grant is awarded.
- 10. BOARD RETREAT.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER will contact JASON STRONG with CFC to begin making plans for the 2020 board retreat.
- 11. BASIN MONTHLY BOARD VIDEO REPORT.** The Basin monthly board report was shown during the lunch break and its content was discussed when the board meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m.
- 12. FINANCIAL AND OTHER MONTHLY REPORTS.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY presented the August 31, 2019 operating report and other monthly reports to the Board for discussion. JANINE RIFE DIDIER provided a brief overview of financial statistics for the month ended August 31, 2019.
- 13. POWER OUTAGE REPORT.** GENERAL MANAGER SWEENEY and the Board reviewed a report prepared by JANINE RIFE DIDIER covering power interruptions for January-August 2019.



**14. OPERATIONS REPORT.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that crews have been busy completing AMI site surveys in the Kolin and Roundup areas. There is one more meter relay to install in Phase One. MARK SCHWOMEYER has advanced in job position from lineman to transformer repairman. RIKALA told the Board that two individuals had interviewed for the Lewistown foreman position and the position will be filled this week. RIKALA reported that on September 20, he and MECHANIC JASON DEFFINBAUGH traveled to Manhattan, Montana to look at a used Tucker Sno-Cat® and are waiting to hear whether the seller accepted the purchase offer. RIKALA reported that the co-op hired an electrician to change the wiring, so the computer room and the front receptionist area will have power via the generator when the power is off due to an outage. RIKALA noted that office staff has always wanted this capability and are pleased.

**15. RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE 2020 LOAD FORECAST.** The Board of Directors reviewed a Resolution to approve the 2020 load forecast prepared by Basin Electric Power Cooperative. After a discussion period, BOB EVANS moved to adopt and approve the 2020 Load Forecast as a reasonable forecast for the future demand and energy requirements for Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. through the year 2050. JASON SWANZ seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. A copy is attached.

**16. SERVICE POLICIES HANDBOOK.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY brought the Service Policies that were approved during the August board meeting before the Board to discuss changing Section 24: Types of Services and Voltages, to reflect how the co-op operates. After further discussion, BRAD ARNTZEN moved to approve changes to the Service Policies handbook. BOB EVANS seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**17. SIGNATURES ON BOARD POLICIES.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY presented three policies requiring the board's signatures. CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL reviewed their content with the Board after which the Board signed the following: Board Policy book signature page; Board Policy 111.0, Trustee Duties and Standards of Conduct; and Board Policy 248.0, Procurement Conflict of Interest Policy.

**18. REPORT OF CORPORATE COUNSEL.** CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL reviewed having worked on items of importance to the cooperative.

**19. CO-OP PICNIC.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY reported that the employees enjoyed the co-op picnic and he thanked the Board for their generosity. The Board felt that the picnic was well received.

**20. NRECA BENEFITS.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY AND ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER said that NRECA FIELD REPRESENTATIVE LORI SLOBODA gave a good talk to the staff on Benefits when she attended the September 4 Safety Meeting. Her appearance was SLOBODA'S introduction and first presentation to Fergus Electric Co-op's employees.

**21. MECA OPERATIONS CONFERENCE.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA told the Board that the speakers at the operations conference held in Great Falls were good as was the information they presented. Lincoln Electric shared that they are using drones and Lower Yellowstone reported that they are budgeting for one.

**22. NWPPA FALL MEETING.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY gave a brief overview of the NWPPA meeting held in Kalispell on September 12-13.

**23. MEMBERS 1<sup>ST</sup>/PRECORP MEETINGS.** BOARD PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAERKER and GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY reviewed the September 17 Members 1<sup>st</sup> and PRECorp board meetings.

**24. MECA HUMAN RESOURCES & EMPLOYMENT LAW MEETING.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER reported on the meeting that he and OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK attended of the newly formed HR group that was held at MECA.

**25. NRECA CREDENTIALS.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY congratulated CATHY KOMBOL for completing all the requirements to become an NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director and TERRY FROST for completing all the NRECA Board Leadership requirements. The Board commended their fellow directors.

26. **CFC LETTERS OF CANDIDACY.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY reviewed the letters of candidacy the co-op had received. A brief discussion followed.

27. **NRECA VOTING DELEGATE.** After a period of discussion, the Board approved by consensus for BOB EVANS to serve as the voting delegate for NRECA Director Elections and TERRY FROST to serve as the alternate voting delegate.

28. **REVISED MECA VOTING DELEGATE MOTION.** JASON SWANZ moved to approve retaining TERRY FROST as Fergus Electric Cooperative's primary MECA representative and to name CATHY KOMBOL as the alternate MECA representative. BOB EVANS seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

29. **BASIN ANNUAL MEETING VOTING DELEGATE.** After a period of discussion, the Board approved by consensus for JASON SWANZ to serve as Fergus Electric Cooperative's voting delegate for the Basin Annual Meeting and PAUL DESCHEEMAERKER to serve as the alternate voting delegate.

30. **ESTATE CAPITAL CREDITS.** The Board reviewed the September 2019 estate capital credits in the amount of \$911.15, prepared by SUSAN HINKLEY. TERRY FROST moved to affirm the retirements and BRAD ARNTZEN seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

31. **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.

32. **EXECUTIVE SESSION.** At 3:00 p.m., JASON SWANZ moved to approve going into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters. TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. At 3:36 p.m., BOB EVANS moved to return to general session. TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

33. **FUTURE MEETINGS.**

- a. NRECA Region 9, Sep. 25-26, Spokane
- b. MECA Annual Meeting, Oct. 7-9, Great Falls
- c. Members 1<sup>st</sup>/PRECorp, Oct. 15, Sundance & Nov. 19, Gillette
- d. Safety Meeting, Jerry Lemm/MECA Safety Instructor, PPE/Hazard Assessment, Oct. 30
- e. MECA Winter Meeting, Dec. 3-4, Great Falls
- f. FEC Board, Oct. 31, Dec. 6 and Dec. 18
- g. FEC Board and Christmas Awards Dinner, Friday, Dec. 6, Winifred
- h. FEC Board Retreat, Jan. 22-23

34. **NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS.**

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

SECRETARY  ATTEST: PRESIDENT 

