

MINUTES
GENERAL BOARD MEETING, FEBRUARY 27, 2024
FERGUS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

1. **GENERAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.** The Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Trustees met in general session February 27, 2024, with PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAER calling the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m. JANINE RIFE DIDIER was scrivener. Board members in attendance were BRAD ARNTZEN, TERRY FROST, CATHY KOMBOL, JASON SWANZ and BRETT MAXWELL. Other attendees included GENERAL MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY, LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA, OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK, and CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL. BOB EVANS attended via speaker telephone. The attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** After reviewing the meeting agenda, JASON SWANZ moved to approve it. TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
3. **MINUTES APPROVAL.**
 - a. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.** After reviewing the minutes of the January 30, 2024, general meeting and discussing them, TERRY FROST moved their approval. BRAD ARNTZEN seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.** No one from the public appeared.
5. **PLANNING.**
 - a. **NEW RATE STRUCTURE - JANUARY RESULTS.** MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY referred to the chart he included in his Manager's Board Report. The average residential bill decreased slightly in January despite January's temperatures being colder. Member feedback has been minimal.
 - b. **USDA LOAN COMMUNICATIONS.** MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY reported on Central Montana Medical Center's news release that the Lewistown News-Argus will publish March 2nd and that Fergus Electric included in its Fergus Features insert of the March 2024 Rural Montana magazine.
6. **FINANCIAL AND OTHER MONTHLY REPORTS.** Financial and other monthly reports were presented to the Board for discussion.
 - a. **OPERATING AND RATIOS REPORTS.** OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK reviewed the January 31, 2024, Form 7 operating report. HORACEK reported that as of January 2024 she is spreading larger transportation expenses over the number of months remaining in the calendar year instead of all being spread in the month they occurred. JANINE RIFE DIDIER reviewed the January 2024 Ratios Report.
 - b. **OPERATIONS AND SAFETY REPORT.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that the line crews enjoyed the presentation MECA SAFETY INSTRUCTOR BERKE BROWN gave on Personal Protective Equipment, Slips, Trips and Falls and Safety Data Sheets during the February 8 Safety Meeting. MECA SAFETY INSTRUCTOR, JERRY LEMM, will cover Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure, Lock Out/Tag Out and Crane Signals during the March 13 Safety Meeting and STAKING ENGINEER MELANIE FORAN PE will provide training for the crews to access meter information regarding demand readings from the Meter Data Management software and from ITRON's Meter website for proper sizing of transformers. RIKALA gave a progress report of current projects the engineers and line crews are completing. STAKING ENGINEER DAN BALSTER PE and HDR Engineering are working on a redesign for Carters Pond Substation located north of Lewistown. The substation has one rotten pole and timbers that need replacing along with low conductor clearances. FOREMAN TYSON RUFF and his crew are replacing twenty-two poles in the Winnett and Grass Range areas that were rejected during testing last year. FOREMAN LOUIE HOULD's crew is upgrading sectionalizing equipment in the Roy and Winifred areas. FOREMAN OWEN THATCHER's crew is installing the new sectionalizing devices in the Roundup and South Roundup areas. RIKALA gave a progress report on the new Roundup office. Mid-Rivers Communications is scheduled to install fiber in the new Roundup facility and Office 360 met with two co-op staff members and took measurements in preparation of ordering office furniture.

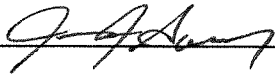
- c. **INVENTORY OF WORK ORDERS.** After reviewing Inventory of Work Orders No. 624-624X for \$21,749.99 dated January 31, 2024, CATHY KOMBOL moved to affirm them. JASON SWANZ seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
 - d. **POWER OUTAGE REPORT.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reviewed the January 2024 Outage Report prepared by STAKING ENGINEER MELANIE FORAN, PE. RIKALA reported that the 50kV breaker in the Roundup Substation that failed when it was bitter cold in January would have likely failed soon regardless of weather temperatures. The Outage Report numbers reflect the extensive outage in the power supplier category and material/equipment fault/failure category.
- 7. POLICIES – REVIEW.**
- a. **BOARD POLICY 250 – LUCK OF THE DRAW SCHOLARSHIP.** TERRY FROST moved to approve Board Policy 250 as amended. BRAD ARNTZEN seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- 8. REPORT OF CORPORATE COUNSEL.** CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL reported he had worked on various items of importance for the co-op. BIRDWELL reported that it was a good month.
- 9. MANAGER'S REPORT.** GENERAL MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY covered items included in his written report. SWEENEY reported on the results of the rate structure change that became effective January 1st, 2024, that is revenue neutral to Fergus Electric Cooperative. SWEENEY reported that CHS Pumping Station informed the co-op that it intends to postpone the new Shawmut Oil Pumping Station until fall of 2024. SWEENEY updated the Board on the Basin Manager's meeting he attended in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and on the recent Resco and Anixter conversations regarding their respective alliance agreements.
- 10. MEETING REPORTS.**
- a. **MEMBERS 1ST.** PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAER and MANAGER SWEENEY were unable to attend the Members 1st meeting held February 20, 2024.
- 11. EXECUTIVE SESSION.**
- a. **MOTION.** At 12:55 p.m., BRAD ARNTZEN moved to go into executive session. TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
 - b. **GENERAL SESSION RESUMES.** At 1:24 p.m., BRAD ARNTZEN moved to return to general session. BRETT MAXWELL seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
 - c. **DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS/NEW MEMBERS LIST.** The Board reviewed the delinquent accounts showing accounts paid in full and accounts still owing.
 - d. **ESTATE CAPITAL CREDITS.** The Board reviewed the list of estate capital credits for February 2024 totaling \$6,822.49, which were prepared by SENIOR BILLING CLERK ERIKA MATTALIANO. BRAD ARNTZEN moved to affirm the retirements and JASON SWANZ seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- 12. OTHER BUSINESS.** The Board reviewed current election procedures and discussed the option of entertaining other, additional methods of voting. After considering the cost, the Board decided to leave election procedures as is.
- 13. FUTURE MEETINGS.**
- a. NRECA PowerXchange: San Antonio, TX; March 3-6
 - b. Safety Meetings:
 - i. March 13
 - c. FEC Board Meetings:
 - i. March 28 - 10:00 a.m.
 - ii. May 2 - 10:00 a.m.
 - d. MECA Spring Board Meeting: Great Falls, MT; April 9-10

- e. NRECA Legislative Conference: Washington, DC; April 21-24
 - i. Both chambers out of session
- f. FEC Annual Meeting: June 6
- g. CFC Forum: Indianapolis, IN; June 17-19

14. NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS.

ADJOURNMENT. PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAEEKER adjourned the meeting at 2:19 p.m.

SECRETARY



ATTEST: PRESIDENT

