

**MINUTES
GENERAL BOARD MEETING, DECEMBER 3, 2021
FERGUS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**

1. **GENERAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.** The Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Trustees met in general session December 3, 2021, with PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAER calling the meeting to order at 11:12 a.m. JANINE RIFE DIDIER was scrivener. Board members in attendance were BRAD ARNTZEN, BOB EVANS, TERRY FROST, CATHY KOMBOL, and BRETT MAXWELL. JASON SWANZ was not in attendance. GENERAL MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY, LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA, OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK and CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL were also present. The attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** After reviewing the meeting agenda, TERRY FROST moved to approve it. BRAD ARNTZEN seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.** After reviewing the minutes of the November 1, 2021, general meeting and discussing them, BRETT MAXWELL 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. **FEDERATED INSURANCE.** MANAGER SWEENEY and OFFICE MANAGER HORACEK reviewed the insurance policy and rate information they received from Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE, DAVID REHER during his recent office visit. After a period of discussion, TERRY FROST moved to approve increasing the Federated Insurance Commercial Umbrella Policy to ten million dollars. BRETT MAXWELL seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
6. **STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION.** MANAGER SWEENEY and the BOARD OF DIRECTORS reviewed the agenda for the Strategic Planning Session scheduled for December 14 -16, 2021.
7. **FINANCIAL AND OTHER MONTHLY REPORTS.** Financial and other monthly reports were presented to the Board for discussion. OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK reviewed the October 31, 2021, operating report. JANINE RIFE DIDIER reviewed the October 31, 2021, ratios report.
8. **OPERATIONS AND SAFETY REPORT.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT RIKALA reported that the safety meetings scheduled for November 10 and December 8 would be postponed until next year. The co-op is focused on completing the installation of the new AMI system by December 31, 2021. Crews and contractors are busy installing relays and changing meters. Some three-phase and single-phase meters needed to complete the AMI project that were ordered in June 2021 have still not arrived. Currently, there are 1,073 residential meters and 273 relays left to install. RIKALA reported that 2021 inventory of material was finalized on November 22. RIKALA said that SRS DISPATCH SUPERVISOR, JOLENE JOHNSON, plans to meet with Fergus staff on December 8 to talk about the co-op's afterhours outage call needs and to tell what services SRS offers. RIKALA gave an update on the Roundup Horsethief Road property and the proposed property boundaries that a surveyor will submit to Musselshell County for approval. RIKALA reported on outages, broken poles, and broken power lines that the co-op and NorthWestern Energy experienced due to significant high winds. RIKALA reported that Fergus Electric's year-round office hours will remain Monday through Thursday, 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. RIKALA reported that the two new replacement service trucks will be shipped to ALTEC where they will each have a service body installed. The newly built flatbed trailer that was ordered should be delivered in December.
9. **INVENTORY OF WORK ORDERS.** No work orders were closed in October 2021.
10. **POWER OUTAGE REPORT.** The Board reviewed the October 2021 Outage Report. The Board agreed that prearranged outages do not need to show on the monthly outage report.

11. BOARD POLICY 227 – HARASSMENT AND/OR DISCRIMINATION. CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL reviewed each of the amendments to the policy that he proposed. After a brief discussion, BRETT MAXWELL moved to approve Policy 227 – Harassment and/or Discrimination as amended. TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

12. REPORT OF CORPORATE COUNSEL. CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL reported that he has kept busy working on several items of importance to the cooperative.

13. MANAGER’S REPORT. GENERAL MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY reported that he participated in the MECA Manager’s Committee meeting this week. Many Cooperatives are seeing record new-construction growth. A sub-committee is working with Federated and BKI Engineering on a Wildfire Mitigation Plan template for each cooperative that chooses to participate. SWEENEY said that he is supportive of Fergus Electric participating in a three-year trial with BKI. SWEENEY reported that Wildfire liability was also discussed during the MECA Legislative Committee meeting he attended. The committee will be developing language for the next Montana Legislative session concerning reducing utility fire liability.

14. BASIN ANNUAL MEETING. PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAER, SECRETARY/TREASURER JASON SWANZ, and MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY reported that they had attended Basin’s 60th Annual Meeting in Bismarck, North Dakota. They met Basin Electric’s new CEO TODD TELEZ. SWEENEY said that he, DESCHEEMAER and SWANZ attended the SRS dispatch breakfast. SRS will begin dispatching for Fergus Electric in January 2022. SRS provides afterhours answering services to 80 cooperatives. SWEENEY reported that he and the Fergus directors invited Basin’s SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, MEMBER SERVICES AND ADMINISTRATION CHRIS BAUMGARTNER to come speak to the Fergus Electric Board. BAUMGARTNER was receptive to the invitation. Plans will be made for him to attend a future board meeting.

15. MEMBERS 1ST/BASIN UPDATE. GENERAL MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY reported that the November 16 meeting was cancelled.

16. ESTATE CAPITAL CREDITS. The Board reviewed the November 2021 list of estate capital credits in the amount of \$12,736.34 prepared by SUSAN HINKLEY. BRETT MAXWELL moved to affirm the retirements and BRAD ARNTZEN seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

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. OTHER BUSINESS.

19. FUTURE MEETINGS.

- a. Fergus Electric Strategic Planning, December 14-16
- b. PRECorp Board Meeting, December 21
- c. FEC Board Meetings in 2022: January 27, 10 a.m.; February 24; and March 31
- d. NRECA PowerXchange, Nashville, March 4-9, 2022

20. NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS.

21. ADJOURNMENT. PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAER adjourned the meeting at 3:21 p.m.

SECRETARY  ATTEST: PRESIDENT 