## MINUTES GENERAL BOARD MEETING, DECEMBER 17, 2020 FERGUS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

- 1. **GENERAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.** The Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Trustees met in general session December 17, 2020 with PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAEKER calling the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. JANINE RIFE DIDIER was scrivener. Board members in attendance were BRAD ARNTZEN, BOB EVANS, TERRY FROST, CATHY KOMBOL and BRETT MAXWELL. GENERAL MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY, OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK, LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA and CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL were also present. In attendance via conference call was Board member JASON SWANZ. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- **2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** After reviewing the meeting agenda, BOB EVANS 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 19, 2020 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. No member appeared.
- PLANNING.
- 6. **FINANCIAL AND OTHER MONTHLY REPORTS.** Financial and other monthly reports were presented to the Board for discussion. OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK reviewed the November 30, 2020 operating report. HORACEK noted that three large work orders were cleared during the November 2020 work order close out which affected the operating margins for the month. HORACEK reported that the Capital Credit General Retirement checks issued for 1992, 1993, and 1994 totaled \$933,964.74. HORACEK reported that the co-op continues to wait to hear whether the amount it received through the Payment Protection Program (PPP) is forgiven. Stockman Bank had said it could take up to sixty days to hear how the amount the co-op received through the PPP is classified. OFFICE MANAGER HORACEK reported that on December 4 the co-op received the three million dollars it borrowed from FFB.
- 7. OPERATIONS AND SAFETY REPORT. LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that it currently takes far longer to get material shipped than in the past. RIKALA reported that JACESON STOKKEN with Jacobson Electrical Contracting began changing meters to AMI meters north of Lewistown and is averaging 34 meters per day. Electric Service Shop will start changing out meters in the Roundup area and Central Electric and Peak Electric are also interested in changing meters for the co-op in the Lewistown service area. RIKALA reported that CREED ZIBEL of CJZ Tree Service, LLC trimmed trees in the town of Roy and will start trimming in Winifred next. RIKALA also noted that a five-foot-by-five-foot concrete pad was poured for the co-op's new drop box and mailbox located adjacent to the existing mailbox. The new drop box will provide members the convenience of inserting a payment into the locked box from their vehicle's window. Fergus Electric will continue to receive applications for the Journeyman Lineman opening in Roundup up to January 15, 2021. RIKALA reported that the co-op will be listing a 2001 digger, 2003 digger, 2002 bucket truck, and 2010 one-ton service truck in an upcoming JJ Kane auction. RIKALA told that a member is buying the Bombi Sno-cat and asked the Board to consider whether they would be interested in donating old trucks to rural fire districts or other such entities. An Apprentice Committee meeting is planned for the afternoon of December 17.
- **8. INVENTORY OF WORK ORDERS.** After reviewing the Form 219 Inventory of Work Orders No. 601-601X for \$192,736.41 and 601-601X (A) for \$22,485.35, dated November 30, 2020, BRETT MAXWELL moved to approve them. BRAD ARNTZEN seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- **9. POWER OUTAGE REPORT.** The Board reviewed the outage report prepared by JANINE RIFE DIDIER which covered power interruptions for January 2020-November 2020.

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- SCHOLARSHIPS. GENERAL MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY circulated an article that will be printed in the January 2021 Fergus Features detailing various scholarships that are being offered. SWEENEY reported that an anonymous donor has given the co-op a very generous donation of \$5,000 which they would like to be used for a lineman scholarship. The Board expressed sincere appreciation and gratitude to the anonymous donor for their big-hearted and thoughtful donation.
- **FEDERATED INSURANCE.** The Board reviewed the current policy that details the insurance protection coverage. After a discussion period, TERRY FROST moved to increase the uninsured motorist coverage extension limit on the co-op's automobile liability and physical damage protection policy. BOB EVANS seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- BOARD POLICY 209 SAFETY. The Board reviewed Policy 209. After discussion, TERY FROST moved to approve the policy as amended. CATHY KOMBOL seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- 13. BOARD POLICY 209.1 - ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION. The Board reviewed Policy 209.1.
- REPORT OF CORPORATE COUNSEL. CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL reported that it had been a busy month having worked on several items of importance to the cooperative. BIRDWELL recommended that the Operations Report title be changed to Operations/Safety Report to describe the report's subject matter more accurately.
- MANAGER'S REPORT. MANAGER SWEENEY reported that he has worked with those within the employee group who are interested in voluntarily participating in answering after hours outage calls. The coop has developed a contract that the union and CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL have reviewed and accepted in draft form. The co-op will continue to review labor laws for reviewing non-represented hourly employees. SWEENEY reported that he will develop a rotating schedule of those interested in the 2021 year. SWEENEY updated the Board on the line patrol program telling them that the program will begin at the Ruby Gulch substation. SWEENEY has engaged NISC's help to understand the co-op's options and details for planning a system inventory. Additional meetings and demos are scheduled to understand how best to utilize the software products that the co-op has purchased. MANAGER SWEENEY reported that he and SCOTT SWEENEY will schedule a time to discuss the co-op's budget procedure.
- 16. BASIN BOARD MEETING. MANAGER CARSON SWEENEY gave a report on Basin Electric Power Cooperative's (virtual) Board Meeting for December.
- 17. MECA BOARD MEETING. BOB EVANS and CARSON SWEENEY gave a short report on the virtual MECA Board Meeting they attended. EVANS noted that the co-ops have two Montanans on the CFC board now.
- 18. SAFETY. LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that a safety meeting is scheduled for December 17 to review the close calls report from MECA. ASSISTANT LINE SUPERINTENDENT BRET OPHUS will cover various safety topics and provide training on the Tucker Sno-cat.
- 19. ESTATE CAPITAL CREDITS. The Board reviewed the November 2020 list of estate capital credits in the amount of \$21,995.25 prepared by SUSAN HINKLEY. BRETT MAXWELL moved to affirm the retirements and BRAD ARNTZEN seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- 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.
- 21. OTHER BUSINESS. None.

## 22. **FUTURE MEETINGS.**

- a. Wellness Day, January 13
- b. PRECorp/Members 1st Board Meeting, January 19, 2021
- c. FEC Board, January 28
- d. Safety Meeting, TBD

## 23. NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS.

- 24. EXECUTIVE SESSION. BOB EVANS moved to continue the meeting in an executive session, starting at 1:28 p.m., for the purpose of reviewing the general manager. TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. The Board came out of executive session at 2:24 p.m.
- ADJOURNMENT. PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAEKER adjourned the meeting at 2:55 p.m. 25.

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