

**MINUTES**  
**GENERAL BOARD MEETING, OCTOBER 31, 2019**  
**FERGUS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**

1. **GENERAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.** The Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Trustees met in general session October 31, 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 and OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** After reviewing the meeting agenda, BRETT MAXWELL 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 September 23, 2019 general meeting and discussing them, BOB EVANS 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. **EXECUTIVE SESSION.** At 9:07 a.m., TERRY FROST moved to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters. BRAD ARNTZEN seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
6. **GENERAL SESSION RESUMES.** At 10:40 a.m., BOB EVANS moved to return to general session. CATHY KOMBOL seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
7. **MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY.** The Board reviewed the schedule for the co-op's Member Appreciation Day, which will be held from 2:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m. today 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, watch a safety demonstration presented by the linemen and look at the Sno-Cat, digger and bucket trucks.
8. **NEW METERING SYSTEM.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER gave an update on the current AMI schedule for the Board and showed them a data flow diagram and explained how the AMI system will communicate with NISC, our software provider. On October 22-24, ten co-op employees took part in a live in-house training program with ITRON. The comprehensive training included many topics relevant to the AMI project. DOVER reviewed the AMI handout, which furnishes information about the AMI system and the Outage Management software and addresses some of the questions members have asked the co-op's line crews. The handout will be made available to co-op members and employees and will be posted on the co-op's website.
9. **SANDFIRE RESOURCES COPPER MINE.** CATHY KOMBOL reported that she participated in the final mine tour for the current year and thought it was great. KOMBOL said it was a learning experience and she was glad she went and would recommend others take the tour next year when they are offered again.
10. **COOPERATIVE SOLAR - PHASE 2.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER reported that the co-op and Basin are waiting to secure a rate for phase 2 of our solar project.
11. **BOARD RETREAT.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER has talked to JASON STRONG with CFC once a month or so making plans for the 2020 board retreat. PRESIDENT DESCHEEMAER asked the Board to write down questions or topics that they want to discuss.
12. **INVENTORY.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA provided a review of inventory count results with which the Board and Management was pleased.



- 13. OPERATIONS REPORT.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that crews have been busy completing AMI site surveys in the Spion Kop and Winnett areas. RIKALA was pleased to report that TYSON RUFF has advanced in job position from lineman to foreman. RIKALA told the Board that the truck garage work order balance is currently \$785,000. RIKALA estimates that there is approximately \$5,000 in additional gravel and grading expenses to be charged to the truck garage work order before it is finalized. At the 2017 annual meeting, the membership approved \$850,000 for constructing the truck garage. Fergus Electric Co-op received notice that its after-hours answering service, Vision Net, is terminating its support services as of November 30, 2019. The Carters Pond to Hilger Transmission Rebuild project is complete. Line crews built a two-mile single phase re-route in the Plum Creek area which replaced a line that had a pole wash out from spring flooding.
- 14. BUDGET.** The Board of Directors reviewed the items proposed in the 2020 Budget presented by GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY. After a period of discussion, the Board recommended that it revisit the budget at its December 6, 2019 general board meeting.
- 15. 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 September 30, 2019 operating report and FINANCIAL ANALYST JANINE RIFE DIDIER presented the September 30, 2019 ratios report.
- 16. INVENTORY OF WORK ORDERS.** After reviewing Inventory of Work Orders No. 596-596X for \$266,416.79 and 596-596X (A) for \$24,022.85, dated September 30, 2019, BOB EVANS moved to approve them. TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- 17. POWER OUTAGE REPORT.** GENERAL MANAGER SWEENEY and the Board reviewed a report prepared by JANINE RIFE DIDIER covering power interruptions for January-September 2019.
- 18. TUCKER SNO-CAT.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that the co-op purchased a used Tucker Sno-Cat. The Board had previously expressed concern about line crews being able to access and repair power lines after experiencing bitter cold and snow during the past two winters. TERRY FROST thanked RIKALA and ASSISTANT LINE SUPERINTENDENT BRET OPHUS for shopping around to get a good price on the Sno-Cat and trailer.
- 19. REPORT OF CORPORATE COUNSEL.** CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL reviewed having worked on items of importance to the cooperative.
- 20. BIG TIMBER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.** MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY reported on the renewable energy meeting he attended. As one of five panelists invited to speak, SWEENEY gave a power point presentation on the cooperative solar project to a group of approximately 40 people.
- 21. STAKING ENGINEER POSITION.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY reported that he plans to advertise for a staking engineer to replace GUY JOHNSON who is planning to retire in January 2020.
- 22. MECA ANNUAL COMMITTEES 2020.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY and the Board reviewed the chart of MECA committees for 2020. After a period of discussion, it was decided that JASON SWANZ will move off the legislative committee and take the position on the education committee formerly held by OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK. BOB EVANS will join the bylaws and policies committee.
- 23. NISC MEMBER CONFERENCE.** OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK reported that she attended NISC's annual meeting held in St. Louis, Missouri along with CASHIER RECEPTIONIST SUE WERDIN and STAKING ENGINEER SCOTT OLSON. HORACEK said that she and the others attended workshops that were related to their jobs. HORACEK told the Board that Flathead Electric Co-op has two electric cars: one used by Flathead's staff and one is rented out to the co-op's members. HORACEK noted that drones are gaining in popularity.



24. **MEMBERS 1<sup>ST</sup>/PRECORP MEETINGS.** GENERAL MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY reviewed the October 29 Members 1<sup>st</sup> board meeting held in Sundance, Wyoming which SWEENEY attended via a conference call.

25. **ESTATE CAPITAL CREDITS.** The Board reviewed the October 2019 estate capital credits in the amount of \$9,588.92, prepared by SUSAN HINKLEY. JASON SWANZ moved to affirm the retirements and BRETT MAXWELL 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. 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

28. **NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS.**

29. **ADJOURNMENT.** PRESIDENT PAUL DESCHEEMAEKER adjourned the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

SECRETARY



ATTEST: PRESIDENT



