

**MINUTES  
GENERAL BOARD MEETING, SEPTEMBER 28, 2018  
FERGUS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**

- 1. GENERAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.** The Fergus Electric Cooperative, Inc. Board of Trustees met in general session September 28, 2018 with PRESIDENT BOB EVANS calling the meeting to order at 9 a.m. TERRY FROST was secretary and VANGIE McCONNELL was scrivener. Other board members present were BRAD ARNTZEN, PAUL DESCHEEMAEKER, CATHY KOMBOL and BRETT MAXWELL. JASON SWANZ joined by conference call. ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER DAVID DOVER, CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL, LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA and OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK were also present. MANAGER SCOTT SWEENEY was not in attendance.
- 2. 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.
- 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** After reviewing the meeting agenda, PAUL DESCHEEMAEKER moved to approve it. TERRY FROST seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.** After reviewing the minutes of the August 30, 2018 general meeting and discussing them, TERRY FROST moved their approval. CATHY KOMBOL seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- 5. 50KV TRANSMISSION LINE REBUILD.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that Fergus Electric, Rocky Mountain Contractors and JOE ROTH of PRECorp had a pre-construction meeting via a conference call for the Carters Pond to Hilger transmission project – about seven miles in length. The start date is planned for around October 15. Rocky Mountain Contractors are planning for three eight-hour outages.
- 6. NRTC – AMI METERING SYSTEM.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER noted that representatives from NRTC will meet with Fergus Electric in October. Fergus continues to work closely with PRECorp on planning and education. The cooperative will purchase high gain antennas to help with data transmission in low density areas. Lead time on meters has moved from 16 weeks to 25 weeks.
- 7. BOARD RETREAT.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DOVER reviewed the agenda and arrangements for the Board Retreat set for October 24-25 at the Judith Mountain Lodge. ERIC ANDERSON and AARON STALLINGS of CFC will serve as moderators.
- 8. TRUCK GARAGE.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA updated the Board on progress regarding the truck garage. Plans are to complete the project by the end of October. Rikala noted that \$355,000 of the \$679,000 budgeted amount has been paid to the contractor.
- 9. SANDFIRE RESOURCES (BLACK BUTTE) COPPER MINE.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER reported that STAKING ENGINEER MELANIE FORAN continues to refine the cost schedule and timeline for the construction of the 100kV line.
- 10. SERVICEMAN TRUCK.** After discussion, the Board gave LINE SUPERINTENDENT RIKALA approval to procure a bid for a new serviceman bucket truck for Roundup. Discussion will continue after the bids are received.
- 11. FINANCIAL AND OTHER MONTHLY REPORTS.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER presented financial and other monthly reports to the Board for discussion. OFFICE MANAGER SALLY HORACEK reviewed the August 2018 operating report. Because FINANCIAL ANALYST JANINE RIFE DIDIER's husband is hospitalized, she was not in attendance to give the analysis of operating statistics.
- 12. POWER OUTAGE REPORT.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DOVER and the Board reviewed a report prepared by VANGIE McCONNELL covering power interruptions for January through August.

- 13. OPERATIONS REPORT.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reviewed the September 25, 2018 operations report covering operations and maintenance, engineering and safety. He noted that new services were installed in the Winifred, North Fork of the Flatwillow and Roundup areas. Crews have worked on the new service at the Garneill elevator. At the September 19 safety meeting, NRECA REPRESENTATIVE DIANE ESPINOZA covered insurance, retirement, investments and other benefits. Apprenticeship and safety committee meetings took place.
- 14. REPORT OF CORPORATE COUNSEL.** CORPORATE COUNSEL KRIS BIRDWELL suggested that compensations levels for directors be reviewed. Staff will gather information regarding director compensation from all Montana co-ops. The information will be presented at the October board meeting.
- 15. INSURANCE PLAN COSTING.** BENEFITS ADMINISTRATOR VANGIE McCONNELL reviewed a three-year comparison of premiums for the cost of NRECA insurances – AD&D, Business Travel Accident, Dental, Basic Life, Long Term Disability, High Deductible Medical with Prescription Drugs, PPO Medical with Prescription Drugs, and Vision.
- 16. BARBECUE.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DOVER reported that the Board/Employee barbecue on August 30 was successful with good attendance. Employees, former employees, directors, spouses and children enjoyed the meal and camaraderie and expressed thanks to the Board for providing steaks for the meal.
- 17. OPERATIONS CONFERENCE – SEPTEMBER 10 and 11.** LINE SUPERINTENDENT DALE RIKALA reported that TYSON RUFF, DEAN LAWLER and RIKALA attended the Operations Conference in Great Falls. He noted that presentations on rubber glove testing and chainsaw safety were especially informative. He’s hoping to bring the rubber glove testing workshop to a safety meeting in Lewistown.
- 18. NISC, SEPTEMBER 10 – 13.** BRIAN GODBEY, SUSAN HINKLEY and ERIKA MATTALIANO attended the NISC (National Information Solutions Cooperative) annual meeting and conference in Saint Louis. Each participant chose software presentations that pertained to their areas of expertise. It was also NISC’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with 2,500 in attendance.
- 19. MONTANA COOPERATIVE IMPACT WEEK.** JANINE RIFE DIDIER and MARK SCHWOMEYER gave presentations at the high school in White Sulphur Springs September 11. They talked about rural electric cooperatives and covered types of employment that are generally available at rural electric cooperatives.
- 20. NWPPA CONFERENCE AND BASIN MANAGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE.** ASSISTANT MANAGER DAVID DOVER, in MANAGER Sweeney’s absence, reported on the NWPPA conference that took place in Boise, Idaho September 13-14. He also covered the September 17 Basin Managers Advisory Committee in Bismarck.
- 21. PRECORP/FERGUS AMI/METER UPDATE.** SALLY HORACEK, MELANIE FORAN, BRIAN GODBEY and DALE RIKALA attended an AMI meeting with PRECorp in Sheridan, Wyoming September 17 to discuss strategies on deploying the new AMI meter system and to discuss software availability.
- 22. PRECORP BOARD – SHERIDAN.** PAUL DESCHEEMAEKER and DAVID DOVER attended the PRECorp Board meeting September 19.
- 23. BENEFIT UPDATE.** BENEFITS ADMINISTRATOR VANGIE McCONNELL noted that at the September 19 safety meeting, NRECA REPRESENTATIVE DIANE ESPINOZA gave a thorough review of the NRECA insurances Fergus Electric offers.
- 24. LEADERSHIP SKILLS – SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP.** ASSISTANT LINE SUPERINTENDENT BRET OPHUS reported on the NWPPA Leadership Skills #1– Situational Leadership course that he attended in Boise September 19-20. The training is designed for supervisors and managers, and employees who will be transitioning to a supervisory or managerial role in the future.

**25. NRECA REGION 9, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA.** BRAD ARNTZEN attended the NRECA Region 9 meeting in Anchorage September 24 -27. He participated in a board leadership class – Strategic Technologies and their Impact on the Cooperative. He noted that the presentation on electric automobiles and charging stations was especially interesting. Sage Grouse legislation was also discussed.

**26. ESTATE CAPITAL CREDITS.** The Board reviewed the September 2018 estate capital credit retirements of \$10,747.46. PAUL DESCHEEMAERKER moved to affirm the retirements and CATHY KOMBOL seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**27. 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.

**28. BOARD POLICIES 311 AND 302.** The Board reviewed Policy 311 – Employee, Director, Dependent Pensions and Benefits and Policy 302 – Salary, Wage, and Benefit Administration. After discussion, the Board agreed to table discussion until the next meeting.

**29. BOARD POLICY 313 AND MEMBERSHIP DISTRIBUTION.** The Board reviewed Policy 313 – District Boundaries and County Lines. No changes were recommended. At the same time, the Board reviewed membership distribution in the seven districts.

**30. BASIN ELECTRIC ANNUAL MEETING – NOVEMBER 6 – 8.** PAUL DESCHEEMAERKER was appointed voting delegate to the Basin annual meeting in Bismarck and BOB EVANS was appointed alternate voting delegate. Along with DESCHEEMAERKER and EVANS, JASON SWANZ and SCOTT SWEENEY plan to attend the meeting.

**31. FUTURE MEETINGS.**

- a. Sandfire Tour, White Sulphur, Oct. 5, Nov. 1, 10 a.m.
- b. Safety Meeting, Oct. 3, Work Ethics, Winter Driving and Preparation, Safety Jeopardy – Johnnie Stanton of MECA
- c. FEC Board, Oct. 25 – 1 p.m., Nov. 30 – 1 p.m., Dec. 20 -10 a.m., Jan. 31, 10 a.m.
- d. BLC Course 955.1 – Your Board’s Culture: Its Impact on Effectiveness, Great Falls, Oct. 1
- e. MECA Annual and Today’s Members Program, Great Falls, Oct. 1-4
- f. PRECorp, Sundance, Oct. 16
- g. Board Retreat with CFC, Oct. 24-25
- h. Management Internship Program, Madison, Wisconsin, Nov. 5-16
- i. Basin Annual, Bismarck, Nov. 6-8
- j. Safety, NRECA Managing Your Money and PIRC Advisor, Nov. 14-15
- k. Christmas Dinner, Elks, Fri., Nov. 30

**32. NEWS FROM THE DISTRICTS.**

**33. ADJOURNMENT.** PRESIDENT BOB EVANS adjourned the meeting at 12 noon.

**SECRETARY** \_\_\_\_\_ **ATTEST: PRESIDENT** \_\_\_\_\_