Clinton County Connection

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Mark your calendar!

Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc. will host the 2024 Annual Meeting of the membership on Thursday, Aug. 15, 2024. The nomination procedure for those interested in running for a spot on the board is published on page 18D.

Minutes from CCEC's 84th Annual Meeting of Members

The 84th Annual Meeting of Members of the Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc. was held at Central Community High School, 7740 Old U.S. Highway 50, Breese, Ill., on Thursday, Aug. 17, 2023.

The meeting was called to order by Tim Hanke, chairman of the Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) board, at 7:30 p.m.

Secretary/Treasurer Kevin Wiegmann acted as secretary and kept the minutes thereof.

Chairman Hanke reported there was a quorum present.

The invocation was given by President/COO Bob Kroeger.

All present were then asked to stand for the national anthem.

Robert's Rules of Order governed the meeting.

Chairman Hanke then recognized the CCEC Board of Trustees, Advisory Board, Association of Illinois Electric Cooperative (AIEC) employees Kayla Adkins and Paul Dow, along with special guest Southern Illinois Power Cooperative President/CEO Don Gulley.

Secretary/Treasurer Wiegmann read the official notice of the meeting and informed the members that proof of mailing of the meeting notices and number of members is evidenced by the receipt of mailing from the U.S. Postal Service.

Upon motion by Ron Becker, seconded and a vote taken thereon, the minutes from the 2022 Annual Meeting were approved.

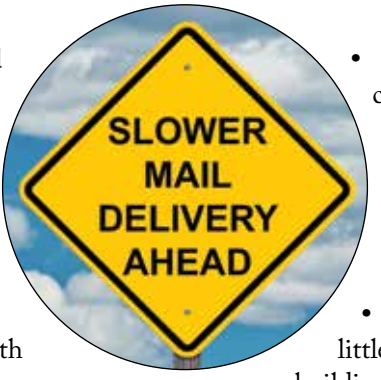
CCEC's Legal Counsel Erik Hyam then conducted the 2023 election. Upon motion by Myron Johnson, seconded and a vote taken thereon, Trustees Tim Hanke from District 1, Kevin Kampwerth from District 2 and Rodney Timmermann from District 3 were reelected. All candidates ran unopposed and were reelected by acclamation to a 3-year term set to expire in 2026.

Hanke then returned to the microphone to give the chairman's report. He spoke briefly about two of the Seven Cooperative Principles: Member Economic Participation, as well as Education, Training and Information. Concerning Member Economic Participation, he stated, "The board was proud to be giving back capital credits to the members. In fact, over the years, we have returned over $10.2 million." Hanke also discussed the co-op's focus on the principle of Education, Training and Information. To embody that principle, Clinton County Electric Co-op performs live line demonstrations, training at the Kaskaskia College Education Center, and board and employee education classes and meetings. He closed his report by giving a brief summary of the results from the 2022 Member Satisfaction Survey. Hanke said, "Overall CCEC performed very well on the survey. CCEC's overall score in the Cooperative Attitude and Performance section was 94. Only one other cooperative, out of 15, scored higher, and only one other cooperative received the same score."

Kevin Wiegmann gave the treasurer's report, stating that the co-op is once again financially sound. He also showed data on revenues, expenses, margins, assets and the effect inflation has on these numbers.

Continued on 18B ▶

Postal delays



With postal delays becoming more and more prevalent, we are encouraging our members to explore the following bill pay options to guarantee your payment is received on time and to avoid late fees:

- **Electronic funds transfer –** We can automatically draft your bill amount from your checking account on the 25th of every month.
- **Recurring credit/debit card –** We can automatically charge a credit/debit card on the 25th of every month.
- **Phone payments –** Call and make a payment with a debit/credit card or check using our automated system.
- **Online –** Visit us online at www.cceci.com and use the pay-now option to pay with a debit/credit card or check. The SmartHub link or app allows you to not only make payments, but also to see your consumption, billing and payment history.
- **24-hour drop box –** It looks like a little light pole outside the front door of our building, located at 475 N. Main St. in Breese. It is secure and checked daily.

There are no additional charges for any of the above payment options. For more details on how to utilize any of the alternate bill pay options, check out the back of your monthly bill or call the office 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday at 800-526-7282.

Minutes continued from 18A

Then, Southern Illinois Power Manager Don Gulley gave an update on what power sources look like now and in the future. He displayed data on reliability problems across the U.S., including the effect closing coal plants will have on the grid. He also informed members that SIPC has been working to diversify their resources to compensate for potential reliability issues and rolling blackouts.

Next, CCEC President/COO Bob Kroeger gave the president's report. He discussed the importance of safety and was proud to report no lost-time accidents have been reported since 2009. In 2022, the co-op focused on reliability programs, including pole replacements and line upgrades. He also followed up on the SIPC report, reiterating the challenges of maintaining a reliable electrical grid. He shared with members how to prepare for rolling blackouts: have a preparedness kit ready, get alternate charging options for phones and other important electronics, keep a small supply of food and water ready, and possibly purchase a generator. His final topic was potential new rate structures for members, stating, "Information on the new rate structures will be included in future editions of the Illinois Country Living magazine."

Upon motion by Ron Zurliene, seconded and a vote taken thereon, all reports given by the officers and the president were approved.

The final portion of the meeting was dedicated to recognizing employees and trustees for their years of service: Jacob Haselhorst-10 years, Justin Hubert-10 years, Carrie Trame-10 years, Ron Deien-15 years, Craig Benhoff-15 years. Secretary/Treasurer Wiegmann also received an award for 5 years of service on the board of trustees.

There being no further business to come before the 84th Annual Meeting of Members of the Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc., upon motion by Myron Johnson, seconded and a vote taken thereon, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Hanke at 8:25 p.m.

After adjournment, four cash prizes were awarded. The winners were: Charles & Cindy Hubert, $100; Curtis Kuppler, $50; Gary & Doris Sauerhage, $50; and Vernon Mohesky, $50.

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Kevin Wiegmann,
Secretary/Treasurer

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Tim Hanke, Chairman

Leaders of tomorrow represent their cooperative at Youth Day

The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives sponsored the "2024 Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day" on March 20, 2024, in Springfield, Ill.

Nearly 200 students representing 22 Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives had the opportunity to visit the State Capitol, view state government in action and question their legislators on key issues.

Abigail Steinkamp, Emily Cirrincione and Kara Schomaker, all children of Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) members, were selected based on their applications to attend Youth Day in Springfield. They joined more than 200 high school students from around the state for the day's activities, which included touring the Capitol Building and the Lincoln Home National Historic Site. While at the Capitol Building, the students were privileged to meet with Illinois State Senator Christopher Belt, Illinois Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton, along with Illinois Representative Blaine Wilhour.

During lunch, Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director Natalie Phelps Finnie addressed the students. She discussed her background as a healthcare provider and how she got into politics. She encouraged them to follow their passions, live confidently and work hard. "You're embarking upon adulthood," Phelps Finnie said to the students. "You can do anything you want to do. I just ask that you come to adulthood with the right posture and attitude. … Don't come with a sense of entitlement that everything is owed to you. Work for it. Earn it."

Participants also met Paris Van Dyke, the 2023-24 Illinois Youth Leadership Council representative, who was sponsored by Wabash Communications during last year's Youth Day. She spoke about her experiences over the past year and challenged attendees to say, "Yes." "What I want to say to you today is something that I decided to do during this day last year — take every opportunity," Van Dyke said. "You will learn so much if you just choose to say, 'Yes.'"

At the end of the day, the students were interviewed for the chance to participate in the Youth to Washington Tour, June 14-21, 2024. Abigal Steinkamp, daughter of Eric and Jennifer Steinkamp of Bartelso; Emily Cirrincione, daughter of Joseph and Laura Cirrincione of St. Rose; and Kara Schomaker, daughter of Anita and Nick Schomaker of Germantown were all selected as Clinton County Electric's 2024 winners of the Washington, D.C. trip.

Children of cooperative members who are sophomores, juniors or seniors in high school and whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) are members of the cooperative and whose primary residence is served by Clinton County Electric Cooperative are eligible to apply for the Youth Day in Springfield, giving them a chance to participate in the annual "Youth to Washington" trip. For more information, visit our website at www.cceci.com or watch for information in our December and January issues of this publication.

Pictured, from left, are CCEC President Bob Kroeger, CCEC Member Service Representative Carrie Trame, Emily Cirrincione, Illinois Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton, Abigail Steinkamp and Kara Schomaker.

Pictured, from left, are Kara Schomaker, Emily Cirrincione, Abigail Steinkamp, Illinois Senator Christopher Belt, CCEC President Bob Kroeger and CCEC Member Service Representative Carrie Trame.

Pictured, from left, are CCEC President Bob Kroeger, Illinois Representative Blaine Wilhour, Abigail Steinkamp, Emily Cirrincione, Kara Schomaker and CCEC Member Service Representative Carrie Trame.

Bylaws specify nomination procedure

Section 4.06. Nominations. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to appoint, more than ninety (90) days before the date of a meeting of the members at which Board trustees are to be elected, a committee on election and credentials consisting of not less than five (5) nor more than nine (9) members with at least one (1) member from each district from which a trustee is to be elected. No employee, trustee, Officer, known candidate, or close relative (as hereinafter defined) of any of the above may serve on such committee. The purpose of the committee is to review the qualifications of petitioning nominees and to conduct the election of trustees. To be nominated by petition, a candidate for trustee must file a petition for nomination signed by at least twenty-five (25) members, but not more than fifty (50) members. Signatures may come from the entire Cooperative membership. A joint membership constitutes only one member. Nominations by petition must be picked up and filed not more than ninety (90) days or less than forty-five (45) days before the date of a meeting of the members at which trustees are to be elected. The Election and Credentials Committee, or subcommittee of same must meet to determine if the candidates meet the qualifications for trustee. Upon establishment of the fact that a nominee for trustee lacks eligibility under these Bylaws, it shall be the duty of the Election and Credentials Committee to disqualify such nominee. If there are no nominations by Petition for trustee in any district in which a trustee is to be elected, it is the duty of the Board of trustees to appoint a member to serve in that position. At least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting of members, the Election and Credentials Committee shall certify a list of nominees for trustee to the secretary. The secretary shall then post at the principal office of the Cooperative, at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting of members, a list of the nominations for trustee to be elected, listing separately the nominee(s) for each trustee district. The secretary shall also be responsible for mailing, with the Notice of Meeting or separately, but at least five (5) days before the date of the meeting, a statement of the number of Board members to be elected and the names and addresses of the nominees. No nominations may be made from the floor. Nominees' names from the same district may be rotated on the ballot so that each nominee's name is on the ballot in the same position as equal number of times as possible. Notwithstanding anything in this section contained, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of trustee. The Election and Credentials Committee shall elect its own chairman and secretary at its initial meeting. It shall be the responsibility of the committee to establish or approve the manner of conducting any ballot or other voting, to pass upon all questions that may arise with respect to registration of members in person, to count all ballots or other votes cast in any election or in any other manner, to rule upon the effect of any ballots or other votes irregularly or indecisively marked or cast, to rule upon all questions that may arise relating to member voting in the election of trustees and to pass upon any protest filed with respect to election or to conduct affecting the result of the election. In exercising the responsibility, the committee shall have available to it the advice of counsel provided by the Cooperative. In the event a protest or objection is filed concerning any election, such protest or objection must be filed not more than three (3) business days following the adjournment of the meeting in which the voting is conducted. The committee shall thereupon be reconvened, upon notice from its chairman, not less than seven (7) days after such protest or objection is filed. The committee shall hear such evidence as is presented by the protestor(s) or objector(s), who may be heard in person, by counsel, or both, and any opposing evidence; and the committee, by a vote of a majority of those present and voting, shall, within a reasonable time but not later than thirty (30) days after such hearing, render its decision, the result of which may be to affirm the election, to change the outcome thereof, or to set aside. The committee's decision (as reflected by a majority of those actually present and voting) on all matters covered by this Section shall be final. The committee may not affirmatively act on any matter unless a majority of the committee is present.

For a list of Election and Credentials Committee members, date of meeting, a petition or any other information concerning the nominations procedure, please contact: Bob Kroeger, President, Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc., 475 N. Main Street, Breese, IL 62230, (618) 526-7282.