Clinton County Connection

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Clinton County Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting held Thursday, Aug. 18, 2022

The 83rd 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. 18, 2022.

The meeting was called to order by Kevin Kampwerth, chairman of the Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) board at 7:30 p.m. He then recognized the CCEC Board of Trustees, Advisory Board, Association of Illinois Electric Cooperative (AIEC) employees and special guest, State Representative Charlie Meier.

Board trustee Kevin 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 John Winter, seconded and a vote taken thereon, the minutes from the 2021 Annual Meeting were approved.

The 2022 election consisted of a contested election in districts 2 and 3. Upon motion by Ron Becker, seconded and a vote taken thereon, Cary Dickinson, who was running unopposed, from District 1 was re-elected by acclamation to a 3-year term set to expire at the annual meeting in 2025. Incumbent Joe Voss and John Winter were vying for the District 2 seat. The members in attendance voted to re-elect Joe Voss to represent District 2. In District 3, Eric Henken was running against incumbent Steve Kalmer. The membership re-elected Steve Kalmer to represent District 3. Voss and Kalmer's terms will also expire at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

Board Chairman Kevin Kampwerth welcomed members to the meeting and discussed CCEC's business model and how it sets the co-op apart from other electric utilities.

Kampwerth demonstrated CCEC's "Concern for Community" by explaining ways the co-op has invested in the community, including academic scholarships to high school and college students who are members or dependents of CCEC members, and providing grants to area educators to help fund educational projects.

"For many years, CCEC has been dedicated to giving back to the community it serves," Kampwerth said.

Board trustee Kevin Wiegmann provided the treasurer's report. "Your electric co-op is financially sound and strong," he began. Wiegmann explained that a little over 16.8 million in revenue was collected in 2021, and the co-op spent $15.8 million to operate. About $10.6 million was power purchased from Southern Illinois Power Cooperative, the co-op's electric supplier.

For 2021, the co-op generated about $1 million in margins. The current capital credit balance is $9.4 million, and CCEC has returned more than $9.6 million to members since its beginning over 80 years ago. In March, the co-op paid $450,000 in capital credits earned in 1996, '97, '98 and 2001 to members.

Next, Illinois State Representative Charlie Meyer spoke briefly about the volatile energy market.

Then CCEC President Bob Kroeger addressed members. "As I've stated in the past, safety takes priority over everything else. I'm proud to report we did not experience any lost time accidents in 2021, nor have we experienced any lost time accidents to date in 2022. The employees of Clinton County Electric have now worked over 519,000 hours

"Annual Meeting" continued on 18B

"Annual Meeting" continued from 18A

since our last accident dating back over 13 years to April 15, 2009. Considering the working conditions and hazards that come with this business, that's pretty amazing."

In addition, he discussed the importance of public safety, which included right-of-way maintenance, pole testing and treatment, and rebuilding overhead lines, all to prevent outages and increase safety. "Although we will never reach 100 percent reliability or eliminate all safety risks, hopefully these programs will continue to move us toward meeting the goal of our mission statement: to provide safe and reliable services to benefit our member-owners," Kroeger said.

Kroeger then discussed rates and summarized by saying, "There was a decrease of approximately $8.75 per month implemented back in 2021 and an average increase of $5 per month implemented in 2022. So, in essence, our rates are still lower than they were in 2020." He went on to say, "In the next couple weeks, we will begin working through the 2023 budget process. As part of that process, we will take into account inflation and supply chain problems. If any rate adjustments are needed, we will likely alter the Power Cost Adjustment to reach our targeted operating margins, just as we have done in the past."

President Kroeger then spent some time talking about the Cost-of-Service Study and Rate Design recently completed by SIPC. The results of the Rate Design will likely produce a new wholesale rate from SIPC. That new wholesale rate will be better aligned with today's energy market and could possibly lead to new time-of-use rates and demand-based rates for CCEC members.

The volatile energy market and the possibility of rolling blackouts were next in President Kroeger's speech. He told the membership, "CCEC may or may not receive advanced notification of a rolling blackout event. Please be assured, we will attempt to communicate all details to the membership as soon as they become available to us via phone, e-mail, our website and Facebook."

President Kroeger closed his portion of the evening by saying, "I believe the membership of CCEC is the greatest asset we have. After all, you are the owners of this co-op. I believe the second greatest asset we have are our employees. The employees play a key role in the success of CCEC. They take pride in that responsibility and serving the membership. I'm proud of their commitment and dedication."

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

President Kroeger recognized the following CCEC employees for their years of dedicated service to the membership: Kyle Wiegmann, 5 years in 2021; John Schroeder, 5 years in 2021; Jared Kampwerth, 5 years in 2022; Mike Faust, 20 years in 2021; and Brian Taylor, 25 years in 2021.

President Kroeger also recognized the following CCEC board member for his years of dedicated service to the membership: Cary Dickinson, 25 years in 2021.

Four cash prizes were awarded. The winners were Jacinta Jansen, $100; Village of Hoffman, $50; Dan Ribbing, $50; and Tom Beckmann, $50.

There being no further business to come before the 83rd Annual Meeting of Members of the Clinton County Electric Cooperative Inc., upon motion by Craig Benhoff, seconded and a vote taken thereon, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Kampwerth.

To hear this type of information first-hand, collect attendance prizes and to have the opportunity to win cash prizes, consider attending next year's annual meeting. As a member, you are an owner of this cooperative and deserve to be well-informed about all activities.

Celebrating membership

October is National Co-op Month

Fall is a busy time, and October is a particularly eventful month with school, community and sports activities in full swing. It's also when all cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month.

When we say Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) celebrates Co-op Month, it really means we are celebrating you! After all, our co-op wouldn't exist without you, our members.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. "Concern for community" is one of seven guiding principles that all co-ops share.

Similar to how our wires run through our service territory, our concern for community flows through all of our decisions—because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.

CCEC works to help our community thrive through initiatives led by our employees and local board that's comprised of neighbors who live right here in our community. Because we're local, we understand our community's unique needs and strive to help meet them. We're proud to support local youth through our Youth Tour and scholarship programs.

The word "cooperative" is close to "cooperation," meaning people working together towards a common goal—mutually benefitting one another and the larger community. That's the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and member-elected board members are invested in the community in which they live and serve.

Above all, as a co-op we put our members' priorities first. As your trusted energy partner, we know that saving energy and money is important to you.

We want to empower you to manage energy use at home. If you haven't already, I encourage you take a moment and download our app, SmartHub. Through the app, you can conveniently monitor and manage your energy use. And we're of course here to help, so give us a call if you have questions about your energy bills.

CCEC is continuously examining ways to operate more efficiently while continuing to provide the highest level of friendly, reliable service you expect and deserve. After all, we're your local co-op. We were built by the members we serve.

Focused on YOU.

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

DOES YOUR SCHOOL OR CLASSROOM NEED NEW MATERIALS?

CAN YOUR STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM NEW PROGRAMS AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES?

Clinton County Electric Cooperative is again coordinating our grant program with Touchstone Energy for our local private and public Pre-K-12 teachers and administrators. Eight grants of $500 will be provided for innovative, unfunded projects or materials. Qualifying projects are those that improve the learning environment or increase educational resources for the school.

Grant applications are due by Nov. 7, 2022.
Grant awards will be announced on Dec. 9, 2022.

An objective panel of judges will determine which projects will be awarded the grants.

For grant applications and guidelines, please visit our website at www.cceci.com or contact Carrie Trame at 800-526-7282.

In observance of Veteran's Day, the office will be closed on Friday, Nov. 11, 2022.

In observance of Thanksgiving, the office will be closed on Thursday, Nov. 24, 2022 and Friday, Nov. 25, 2022.

Although the office will be closed, obtain your account information and pay your bill 24 hours a day, seven days a week by visiting our website (www.cceci.com) or by calling 800-526-7282.