GET READY—
2019 ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING

By Kevin P. Owens—PE, General Manager

Most of us lead busy lives. We find ourselves multitasking, constantly checking phones and email to keep up with the demands of modern life. Thanks to technology, we can accomplish many tasks electronically and remotely to be more efficient. With so many pressing obligations, we like to protect our “spare” time. Invitations to attend in-person meetings and gatherings are weighed carefully as we decide whether or not our time and effort to attend is beneficial.

The answer to the question, “what’s in it for me?” must be compelling. You may think attending Beartooth Electric’s annual meeting would be easy to lump into the “no benefit to me” category. However, I’d ask you to think again.

Beartooth Electric exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to its member-owners (that’s you!). Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of all members and serve the long-term interests of our local communities. This is where you can help.

As a member of the community, you have a perspective that is valuable—and we invite you to share it with the co-op. At the annual meeting, co-op leaders will discuss priorities, challenges and discuss the financial health for the coming years.

Items we’ll talk about include our Meter Upgrade Project, Shares du Soleil-Beartooth Electric Solar Project, Cost of Service Study (COSA) and Rate Design. This year’s Keynote Speaker, Dr. Marco Restani will both inform and entertain with his Osprey Project information and highlights of Beartooth Electric’s Avian Protection Plan.

Our Annual Meeting is also the time to vote for new board members who will represent you—the members of the co-op. Board members are local consumers, just like you.

Beartooth Electric is one of the few local organizations that is uniquely positioned to bring together all members of the community. It is worth noting the health of the co-op and the well-being of the community are closely intertwined.

Perhaps you may feel that you have nothing to add to the discussion, so there is no need to attend the annual meeting. However, every energy bill you pay to the co-op helps ensure better service and reliability for the whole membership. Your dollars are reinvested locally into improvements impacting the reliability and affordability of your energy.

While Beartooth Electric provides convenient electronic options for bill-paying and communication, there are times when there is no substitute for in-person engagement. When members of our community come together for a common purpose, we improve the quality of life for all in our corner of the world.

If you’ve never attended our annual meeting, or if it’s been awhile, please stop by. Our co-op family looks forward to visiting with you! We’ll have food, fun and door prizes, so mark your calendar for the annual meeting on Saturday, May 4, 2019, and plan to join us at the ANIPRO Event Center, located 1.45 miles South of the MT-419 and MT-78 intersection, located in the Town of Absarokee, County of Stillwater, and State of Montana. Member registration begins at 8:00 a.m. The business meeting will commence at 9:00 a.m. and adjourn at noon followed with door prizes from our valued vendors and a festive Cinco de Mayo luncheon for all.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Kevin P. Owens—PE, General Manager
2019 BEC MEMBER-OWNER VOTING

1. Mailing Envelope

2. Member-Owner Letter | Official Meeting Notice

3. Draft 2018 Annual Member Meeting Minutes

4. 2019 Voting Instructions

5. Official Ballot

6. Official Ballot Return Envelope (MUST BE SIGNED)

KNOW HOW TO VOTE
BEC’s annual meeting is just around the corner and it is an excellent opportunity to take part in the business of your member-owned electric cooperative. It is the democratic control that affords you, the member, the privilege of attending the annual meeting and participating in the voting on a board proposed bylaw amendment and trustee elections. A trustee is a member just like you. He or she represents your district and is your voice in the cooperative. The BEC service territory is divided into seven Districts. Although the Districts range in size, they contain approximately equal numbers of members.

During the first week of April, via first-class mail, BEC member-owners will receive a vote-by-mail envelope containing all necessary voting documentation. The following items will be included: Member-Owner Letter, Official Annual Meeting Notice, Draft 2018 Annual Member Meeting Minutes, 2019 Voting Instructions, Official Ballot, and Official Ballot Return Envelope.

Official Annual Meeting Notice: This is the official announcement of the meeting as required by our bylaws. The notice includes the meeting date, time, and location.

Draft 2018 Annual Member Meeting Minutes: Please review the minutes of the last meeting to be voted for approval during the annual meeting.

2019 Voting Instructions: Your vote-by-mail package also contains the proposed bylaw amendment and election information with voting instructions. Members should carefully read these instructions to ensure their ballot is completed correctly. The notice will also include a brief candidate biography.

Official Ballot: To properly complete a ballot, members should mark an “X” in the selected box. The two lines of the “X” must cross inside the box. Members must not color in the box or use a check mark when voting.

Official Ballot Return Envelope: The official ballot return envelope is yellow. For the convenience of our members, the return envelope is self-addressed to the BEC Auditor. Members are required to sign the back of the return envelope where indicated. This certification verifies that the member personally voted with the enclosed ballot. If the account is a joint membership, only one member is required to certify the ballot.

Ballot Return
Members may return their ballots one of two ways. 1. Official Ballot Return Envelopes with ballots enclosed, sealed, signed, stamped and mailed to the Auditor’s office for receipt no later than Friday, May 3, 2019. Ballots received after that date will be null and void. 2) Bring your signed and sealed Official Ballot Return Envelope to the Annual Meeting on Saturday, May 4, 2019, to cast your vote.

BEC has gone to great lengths to ensure the integrity of the vote-by-mail process. BEC contracts with Dairyland Power Cooperative, a certified, third-party service to print and mail ballots to members. BEC’s independent auditing firm, Summers, McNea and Company, PC, receives, validates and counts all mailed ballots and delivers the ballots to the annual meeting location. The BEC Auditor, with the assistance of the BEC Elections Committee, counts the ballots presented in-person at the annual meeting and tallies all total votes.

Members’ voting preferences always remain anonymous. Election results will be announced at the close of the meeting after all business properly brought before the meeting has concluded.

If you have questions, call BEC at 406-446-2310 or send us an e-mail at comments@beartoothelectric.com.

Beartooth promotes electric safety with hands on training for our service area 5th & 6th graders every year. BEC’s Field Safety Instructor Jake Wright is shown here during training in Luther. Thanks to the supporting teachers and Jake for taking the time to teach our kids electric safety!
NATIONAL LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY
APRIL 8, 2019

NRECA Board Resolution (2015)

"Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas linemen are the first responders of the electric cooperative family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents; and Whereas there would be no electric cooperatives without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen; Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognize the Second Monday of April of each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day and make available to electric cooperatives, materials and support to recognize the contributions of these valuable men and women to America’s Electric Cooperatives."

The lights go out. You see and hear tree limbs falling. Power poles and wire once powering your home lay on the ground. The service that powers the lives of your family is no longer there.

This is the potential scene when storms roll through or severe winter weather changes the landscape of our daily routines. This is when the lineman goes to work, in the worst of weather and conditions, with a steady focus on the hazardous job at hand.

"Our linemen work with thousands of volts of electricity on power lines, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, often under dangerous conditions far from their families. To say the least, travel conditions and storm restoration work can be challenging," said Kevin Owens, BEC general manager, "Working together to get power on for our members after severe weather is the most rewarding and gratifying part of the job. Power is something we all need, want and expect, and there is no better feeling than completing the job and seeing home lights back on."

National Lineman Appreciation Day is set apart to recognize linemen, the profession of linemen, and the contributions these brave men and women make daily to protect public safety. This day serves as a small token of thanks to the hardworking linemen across the country for everything they do to keep our electricity on.

"Our linemen truly are public safety heroes, often being the first to respond during storms and other emergencies, and our appreciation for them should not go unnoticed," noted Owens.

To participate in honoring line workers and their families across the country, use the hashtag #thankalineman in social media. More importantly, if you see a line worker today, thank them for their service.

Thank you BEC Linemen, today and every day!

#thankalineman

When the snow is high, the temperatures low (-30), and the bucket truck cannot make it in through the snow—what do you do? Climb the pole says our Linemen. Much thanks and gratitude to all our Linemen restoring power in the dangerous and worst of winter conditions. Thanks to Sam Walkowiak, Jim Avent, Mike Ferguson and Jake Wright working this winter storm outage. #thankalineman.
Proposed bylaw change aligns Trustee terms with the new annual meeting date

By Arleen Boyd, Trustee District 5, Risk Management Committee Co-Chair

The proposed amendment to Article IV, Section 2 of the Beartooth Electric Cooperative Amended Bylaws aligns the definition of BEC Trustee terms of service with Article III, Section 1 that was amended at the 2018 Annual Meeting to change the Annual Meeting date from September of each year to a date during the second quarter of the calendar year. Instead of holding an Annual Meeting each September, the BEC Trustees are required to choose a date, by their October board meeting, for the next Annual Meeting to be held between April 1 and June 30.

Article IV, Section 2 currently establishes “three-year” terms of office for the Trustees. The three-year term is based on the previous version of Article III, Section 1, which provided for elections at an Annual Meeting each September. At the 2019 Annual Meeting, the BEC Trustees are proposing to the membership an amendment to Article IV, Section 2, reestablishing Trustee terms to conform to the requirement for an Annual Meeting during the second quarter of each year. **The proposed change replaces “three-year term” with “terms ending at the third Annual Meeting thereafter.”** The defined sequence of District Trustee elections is unchanged.

As a result of the 2018 amendment, current Trustees will serve slightly less than a full three-year term. They will stand for re-election at the Annual Meeting during the second quarter of their third year of service, not in September of that year. The election for Trustees to represent District 2 and District 5 will be held at the May 4, 2019, Annual Meeting. Elections for Trustees to represent District 1, District 3, and District 7 will be held at the Annual Meeting in the second quarter of 2020 and Trustees for District 4 and District 6 will be elected at the Annual Meeting held in the second quarter of 2021. All current trustees support the proposed amendment.

By 2022 all Trustees will have been elected in the second quarter of a calendar year for a term expiring at the annual meeting held the third year thereafter. A full explanation of the proposed amendment is posted on the website. Bylaws are a contract between the members and the cooperative. They define responsibilities of the co-op, its trustees and the members. Our bylaws strongly support transparency. Please read the BEC bylaws and consider serving on the bylaw committee.

BEC Board Update

By Julie Lindgren, Board President

The Board engaged in a Strategic Planning Session to establish priorities for three years, 2019-2021. These priorities include implementation of the TWACS net metering upgrade project, Shares du Soleil (community solar project), initiating a new cost of service study (COSA), exploring new rate design options and begin a review of BEC’s Equity Management process. The first two initiatives are in full deployment by staff. In late 2018, the Board began the due diligence process of educating themselves on industry trends regarding rate design. The first of the year kicked off our COSA process with EES Consultants. The Board will begin the review of our Equity Management processes this Spring with a goal of completing this effort in late Fall. This process will start all over again in the Fall when the Board has another Strategic Planning Session to develop a blueprint for action in the following year. As always, there will be ample opportunities for member input and participation. As you can see, there is a lot on our plate, but it’s exciting times at your Cooperative.

Light it up with LED Yard Lights

Your Beartooth Electric Cooperative will now exclusively offer LED Yard Lights. With the new LED Cobra Head Luminares, you can reliably upgrade to LED yard lighting; saving energy, maintenance and operating costs, and contributing to environmental stewardship. These LED lights are fully adjustable from 70 to 160 watts and provides uniform, high performance LED crisp, clean white light.

For more information, contact the BEC Office 406-446-2310.

Contact information

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