

MWEC

Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

WILLISTON
577-3765

STANLEY
628-2242

NEW TOWN
627-3550



In this issue:

- **Nomination and election of directors**
- **Meeting highlights and more**

We changed our meeting time to 2 p.m., so members should not arrive expecting a large feast, but will be treated to coffee, water or a pop with a snack. There will be NO prizes, NO gifts and NO attendance credit given for this year's meeting as well.

This year, MWEC has contracted with Survey and Ballot Systems (SBS) to conduct our election. Members will have the option to vote through mail-in ballot, online or in-person. SBS is experienced in working with co-ops around the country on confidential board elections and it works well with our SmartHub online account system to allow for the easy online voting.

During this year's meeting, we will bid a fond farewell to Cheryl Hartsoch, who has served on the MWEC board of directors for 24 years. We wish Cheryl well and thank her for her service to MWEC, our staff and our members and for being a dedicated co-op member.

In anticipation of streamlining the in-person meeting June 3, we will have the financial report presented, a short management report and no guest speaker this year. Let's all hope 2022 puts everything back to the norm! ■

Annual meeting update

BY DALE HAUGEN, GENERAL MANAGER,
AND ROGER SORENSON, BOARD CHAIRPERSON

Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative (MWEC) is always proud to conduct our annual meeting for our members. The annual meeting is an excellent time of year to come together for fellowship with other cooperative members and friends. We missed being able to visit with each of you in 2020, as we were unable to bring a large group together. With the possibility of a continued health risk associated with such a large gathering, MWEC will continue to monitor the current recommended guidelines.

We are moving forward on the 2021 annual meeting plans, requiring us to rethink the annual meeting traditions. The safety

of our members, employees and community are always the highest priority at MWEC.

There are four facts that need to be pointed out for the 2021 annual meeting and they are the "who, what, where and when" facts:

WHO: All MWEC members. You are invited to come, vote for your board of directors and hear reports about your electric cooperative.

WHAT: 2021 MWEC annual membership meeting.

WHERE: Agri-Sports Complex located at the Upper Missouri Valley Fairgrounds.

WHEN: 2 p.m. June 3.

Annual meeting notice and voting for 2021

Taking part in your annual meeting this year will be a little different. Members will not be seeing their usual red, green and yellow member notices, as they have in the past. This year, Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative (MWEC) members will receive a notice, along with a ballot from Survey and Ballot Systems (SBS).

SBS is a third-party company that allows MWEC to conduct our election confidentially and offer multiple ways to vote: mail, online or in-person. Members can expect to receive their notice and ballots in the same timeframe as years past, between mid-May to the end of May.

We want our members to know the envelopes you will receive will have our logo, but there will be a different mailing address. The return address will be to SBS. If members are using the mail-in option, they **MUST** mail it to SBS with the provided return envelope. Ballots **CANNOT** be returned to the MWEC offices.

Members will also be notified through email and the SmartHub app on when and how to vote.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at 800-279-2667. ■



Erik Bristow



Kaden Hansen



Karter Longie

2021 scholarship winners announced

\$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship winner

Erik Bristow

Erik is a senior at Williston High School and he intends to attend either the University of North Dakota or Georgetown University, where he plans on majoring in political science and minoring in pre-law. He is the son of Kelly and Calop Bristow, Williston.

\$500 Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative scholarship winners

Kaden Hansen

Kaden is a senior at Bainville High School and intends to attend Montana State University-Bozeman, where he plans on majoring in construction technology engineering and minoring in construction management. He is the son of Brandy and Chris Hansen, Bainville.

Karter Longie

Karter is a senior at Tioga High School and intends to attend the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he plans to major in sports media and communication broadcasting. He is the son of Becky and Cary Longie, Tioga. ■

Unofficial minutes of the 2020 annual meeting

2020 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Sept. 30, 2020

The annual meeting of the members of Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative met at the cooperative headquarters in Williston, N.D., on Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2020.

Chairman Sorenson gave special thanks to cooperative staff and employees for their work getting the annual meeting ready. Ryan Block, safety coordinator for the cooperative, outlined the safety procedures which were in place for this meeting. Chairman Sorenson called the meeting to order at approximately 2 p.m.

QUORUM: Chairman Sorenson reported there were 35 registered members in attendance and a quorum was not present in person. Chairman Sorenson provided the authority to use the number of mail-in ballots to count toward quorum for those questions voted upon on the written ballot and recessed the meeting to determine if a quorum had been established to consider the approval of the 2019 annual meeting minutes; the proposed bylaw amendments; and the director elections in the West District 1, Central District 2 and East District 3.

COUNT OF BALLOTS: Attorney Brittany Foust of Neff Eiken & Neff oversaw the counting of ballots. The following members volunteered to be on the election committee to assist with sorting and counting ballots:

Larry Johnson
Rod Fretland
Nyla Fretland
Micky Bures

An employee of Neff Eiken & Neff was also present to assist with sorting and counting ballots.

QUORUM CONTINUED: Chairperson Sorenson reported there were 513 valid votes cast, establishing a quorum to consider the approval of the 2019 annual meeting minutes; the proposed bylaw amendments; and the director elections.

APPROVAL OF 2019 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES: Each member was mailed a copy of the minutes from the 2019 annual meeting located on page 7 of the 2020 annual meeting packet. Upon counting of the valid ballots received, the membership approved the 2019 annual meeting minutes as printed and presented in the 2020 annual meeting packet.

MANAGEMENT REPORTS: Chairperson Sorenson stated written management reports were provided in the 2020 annual meeting packet and that no verbal management reports would

be given due to the lack of an in-person quorum needed to conduct business other than the approval of the 2019 annual meeting; the bylaw amendments; and the director elections.

BYLAW AMENDMENTS AND ELECTION OF DIRECTORS: Attorney Brittany Foust reviewed the procedure allowing the cooperative to count members present by signed vote in computing a quorum only on those questions as to which the signed vote was taken and noted the authority to do so provided in North Dakota Century Code Section 10-15-18 and Article III, Section 5 of the cooperative bylaws. She further stated the cooperative mailed an annual meeting packet to each member, which included a ballot and voting instructions, and reviewed those voting instructions with the members present. It was noted the board authorized and approved the procedure to send mail-in ballots to all members without written request, clarified that a member present at the meeting may not vote by mail-in ballot, and approved the questions asked of the members to vote upon at a regularly scheduled meeting of the directors on June 24, 2020.

Attorney Brittany Foust gave a brief explanation of the proposed bylaw amendments and the intent of the board for proposing the bylaw amendments. The majority of votes cast approved the proposed bylaw amendments as presented, allowing the cooperative to conduct its member meetings remotely and for remote participation to count toward quorum.

Attorney Brittany Foust identified the following candidates who submitted nominating petitions:

West District 1: Brion Norby and Dick Ludwig
Central District 2: Garrett Lalim
East District 3: Charlene Aubol

The candidate biographies were included in the 2020 MWEC director nomination booklet included in the annual meeting packet.

The results of the election of the nominated members elected to serve as directors for a three-year term were as follows:

West District 1: Dick Ludwig
Central District 2: Garrett Lalim
East District 3: Charlene Aubol

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned, and a notice of the adjourned meeting will be provided to the membership as provided for in the cooperative bylaws.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND PATRONAGE CAPITAL

WHERE IT CAME FROM

OPERATING REVENUE:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Electric	\$288,514,853	\$297,159,096
Lease	\$16,235,733	\$14,459,457
Other	\$781,906	\$91,835
Total Operating Revenue	\$305,532,492	\$311,710,388

WHERE IT WENT

OPERATIONS EXPENSES:

Cost of Power	\$222,309,128	\$224,500,384
Transmission Expense-Operations	\$1,044,419	\$696,783
Transmission Expense-Maintenance	\$1,389,590	\$714,838
Distribution Expense-Operation	\$10,231,848	\$9,779,482
Distribution Expense-Maintenance	\$3,936,914	\$3,358,967
Operations Costs	\$16,602,771	\$14,550,070
Customer Accounts Expenses	\$2,262,117	\$2,122,444
Customer Service & Info. Expense	\$398,236	\$426,757
Sales Expense	\$3,000	\$11,000
Administrative & General Expense	\$4,538,324	\$4,703,831
Administration Costs	\$7,201,677	\$7,264,032
Depreciation Expense	\$17,058,519	\$16,029,891
Accretion of Plant Reserve	\$2,365,564	\$2,350,790
Taxes	\$2,915,616	\$2,537,626
Interest on Long-Term Debt	\$16,041,617	\$15,900,536
Amortization of Loss on Reacquired Debt	\$181,401	\$181,401
Other	\$290,429	\$141,800
Total Operating Expenses	\$284,966,722	\$283,456,530

OPERATING MARGINS BEFORE CAPITAL CREDITS:

\$20,565,770	\$28,253,858
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GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION AND OTHER COOPERATIVE CAPITAL CREDITS:

\$12,156,877	\$10,085,992
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NET OPERATING MARGINS:

\$32,722,647	\$38,339,850
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NON-OPERATING MARGINS:

Merchandising, Less Costs & Expenses (2016 - \$252,170; 2015 - \$363,888)	(\$540)	\$38,001
Other Non-Operating Margins	-	\$51,130
Interest Income	\$549,522	\$736,631
Total Non-Operating Margins	\$548,982	\$825,762

NET MARGINS

\$33,271,629	\$39,165,612
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ASSETS

ELECTRIC PLANT:

In Service	
Under Construction	
Total Investment in Electric Plant	
Less Accumulated Provisions for Depreciation	
Electric Plant - Net	

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
	\$598,942,062	\$560,506,797
	<u>\$46,854,669</u>	<u>\$71,310,579</u>
	\$645,796,731	\$631,817,376
	<u>\$130,083,307</u>	<u>\$116,379,274</u>
	<u>\$515,713,424</u>	<u>\$515,438,102</u>

OTHER PROPERTY AND INVESTMENTS:

Investments in Associated Companies	
Other Investments	
Revolving Loan Fund	
Special Funds	
Total Other Property and Investments	

	\$105,832,787	\$95,369,175
	\$259,665	\$253,059
	\$249,092	\$247,014
	<u>\$570,476</u>	<u>\$457,860</u>
	<u>\$106,912,020</u>	<u>\$96,327,108</u>

CURRENT ASSETS:

Cash and Cash Equivalents	
Temporary Cash Investments	
Current Portion of Notes Receivable	
Accounts Receivable, Less Allowance for Uncollectible Accounts (2020 - \$4,609,453; 2019 - \$4,089,978)	
Unbilled Revenue	
Materials and Supplies	
Prepayments	
Interest Receivable	
Total Current Assets	

	\$837,535	\$1,196,853
	\$34,842,250	\$16,433,399
	-	-
	\$16,193,395	\$20,654,123
	\$21,651,936	\$24,889,646
	\$11,043,763	\$13,375,869
	\$953,298	\$271,985
	<u>\$29,257</u>	<u>\$50,513</u>
	<u>\$85,551,434</u>	<u>\$76,872,388</u>

DEFERRED CHARGES:

TOTAL ASSETS:

	<u>\$9,227,921</u>	<u>\$9,918,154</u>
	<u>\$717,404,799</u>	<u>\$698,555,752</u>

EQUITIES & LIABILITIES:

EQUITIES:

Patronage Capital	
Other Equities	
Total Equities	

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
	\$273,058,697	\$253,073,098
	<u>\$14,049,522</u>	<u>\$11,185,270</u>
	<u>\$287,108,219</u>	<u>\$264,258,368</u>

LONG-TERM DEBT, LESS CURRENT MATURITIES:

	<u>\$350,588,926</u>	<u>\$345,973,027</u>
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OTHER NON-CURRENT LIABILITY:

Deferred Revenue	
Leased Plant Maintenance Reserve	
Plant Retirement Reserve	
Postretirement Benefit Obligation	
Total Other Non-current Liabilities	

	\$12,000,000	\$12,000,000
	\$711,923	\$863,030
	\$17,439,098	\$15,073,534
	<u>\$115,234</u>	<u>\$130,481</u>
	<u>\$30,266,255</u>	<u>\$28,067,045</u>

CURRENT LIABILITIES:

Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	
Accounts Payable	
Customers Deposits	
Taxes Accrued	
Miscellaneous Accrued Current Liabilities	
Accrued Compensated Absences	
Postretirement Benefit Obligation-Current	
Total Current Liabilities	

	\$10,044,579	\$9,728,497
	\$22,290,627	\$23,769,529
	\$3,476,773	\$4,276,362
	\$5,980,131	\$5,449,932
	\$47,430	\$55,295
	\$914,149	\$741,776
	\$18,130	\$19,600
	<u>\$42,771,819</u>	<u>\$44,040,991</u>

DEFERRED CREDITS:

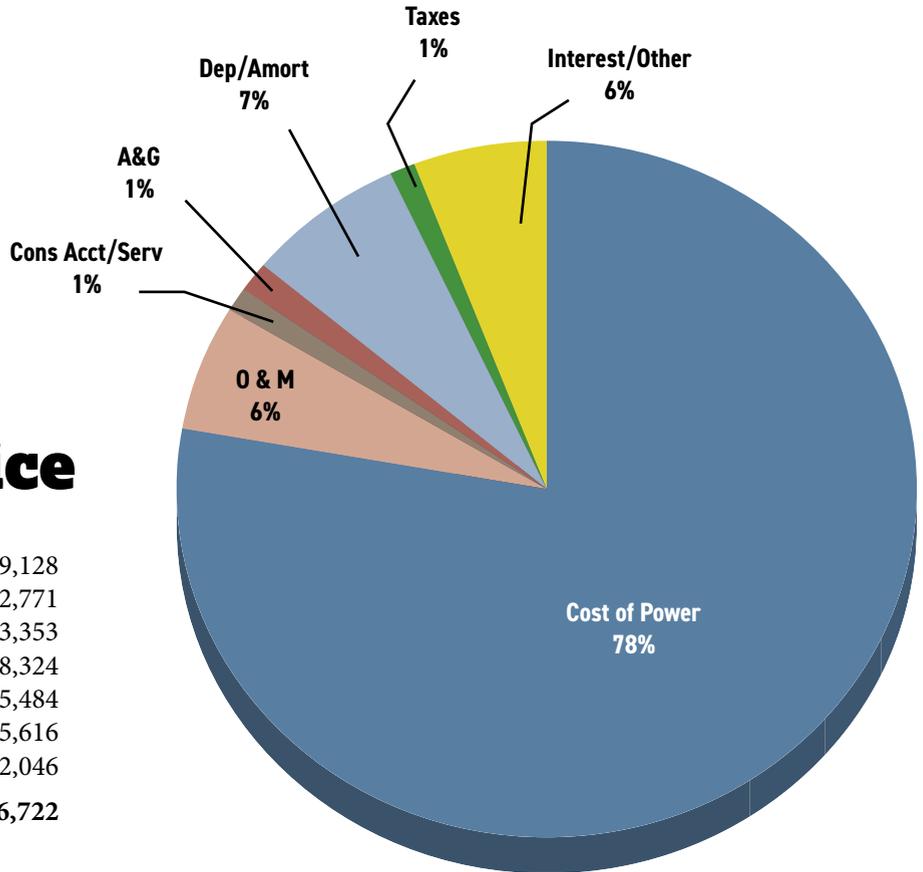
	<u>\$6,669,580</u>	<u>\$16,216,321</u>
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TOTAL EQUITIES & LIABILITIES:

	<u>\$717,404,799</u>	<u>\$698,555,752</u>
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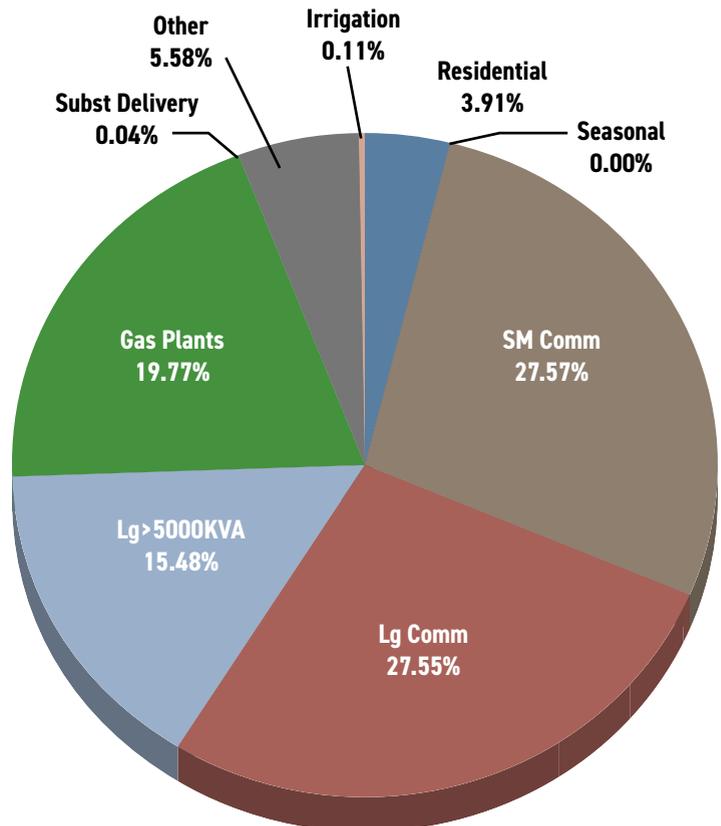
2020 Cost of Electric Service

Cost of Power	\$222,309,128
O & M	\$16,602,771
Cons Acct/Serv	\$2,663,353
A & G	\$4,538,324
Dep/Amort	\$19,605,484
Taxes	\$2,915,616
Interest/Other	\$16,332,046
Total	\$284,966,722



2020 Operating Revenue

Residential	\$11,944,256
Seasonal	\$11,235
SM Comm	\$84,240,814
Lg Comm	\$84,159,044
Lg >5000KVA	\$47,290,650
Gas Plants	\$60,407,220
Subst Delivery	\$115,001
Other	\$17,036,495
Irrigation	\$327,776
Total	\$305,532,490





Practice safety when DIY-ing

BY ABBY BERRY

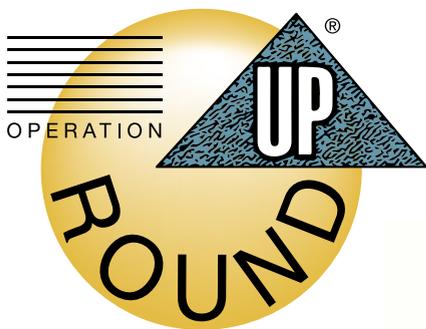
These days many of us are spending more time at home and finding new, creative ways to enhance our living space. Tackling do-it-yourself (DIY) projects for the home can be fun and cost-effective, so why not roll up those sleeves and get started! Whether you're painting the front door with a fresh hue or finally upgrading those patio lights, successfully completing a DIY home project is incredibly satisfying. But many of these projects do not come without risks. Here are a few safety tips to keep in mind as you get to work.

- Start by selecting a designated work area. The amount of space you'll need will depend on the size and scope of your project, but make sure you have adequate lighting and ventilation (if necessary). Required tools and equipment should be located in your workspace and organized for easy access.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) is your friend. We know you're a pro but investing a few bucks in PPE is essential for most home projects. Stock up on safety goggles, dust masks, ear plugs (or noise reduction ear protectors), gloves and any other kind of protection you'll need for your project. Remember to wear appropriate clothing and shoes. (Ditch the sandals for this!)
- Work slowly and clean as you go. When you rush through a DIY project, you'll likely end up with less desirable results than you intended, or worse, you could make a costly or dangerous mistake. Take your time and remember that you are in control of the project. You should also clean as you go to ensure a safer workspace. Pick up any scrap materials, tools that aren't in use and any tripping hazards.

- Be cautious with power tools. Annually, 8% of electrocutions in the U.S. are attributed to improper use of power tools. The Electrical Safety Foundation International offers the following safety tips:
 - Use ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) with every power tool to protect against electrical shock.
 - Never use power tools near live electrical wires or water pipes.
 - Use extreme caution when cutting or drilling into walls where electrical wires or water pipes could be accidentally touched or penetrated.
 - If a power tool trips a safety device while in use, take the tool to a manufacturer-authorized repair center for service.
 - Do not use power tools without the proper guards.
 - When using a wet-dry vacuum cleaner or a pressure washer, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electrical shock.

Remember, you should only tackle DIY home projects within your skill and comfort level. For projects that require extensive electrical work, we strongly recommend you hire a licensed, qualified electrician for assistance.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.



Operation Round Up report

Operation Round Up is a program in which members voluntarily “round up” their electric bills to the next whole dollar amount. The extra money is put into a trust. A voluntary board meets and grants the funds to community-based, nonprofit organizations serving Mountrail and Williams counties.

The average contribution is 50 cents per month or about \$6 per year.

2020 DISBURSEMENTS

Mountrail Cooperative Trust:	\$10,263
Williams Cooperative Trust:	\$13,600
Total:	\$23,863



Since its inception in 1997, the Operation Round Up program has over \$350,000!

Groups awarded funds in 2020

Dakota Prairie Quilter Guild
 Farm Rescue
 Fort Union Association
 James Memorial Preservation Society
 Korner Lions
 McVay Elementary School
 Opdahl Cemetery Association
 Upper Missouri Ministries
 Williston Council for the Aging

Williston Salvation Army
 Williston Sea Lions
 Williston Thursday Musical
 Parshall Promoters
 First Link
 Veterans Foundation
 New Town Library
 S.A.C.K.
 Stanley Blue Jay Boosters

* Your Operation Round Up contributions are distributed according to your county of membership.
 * Application forms are available at all Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative (MWEC) offices, or at www.mwec.com.
 * Please contact our office (800-279-2667) if you would like to add Operation Round Up to your account.
 *Thank you for your contributions to the MWEC Operation Round Up!

STOP PHANTOM POWER AND SAVE 10%

Although the term “phantom power” may be unfamiliar, most of us have tangles of cords for phones, TVs, computers and other gadgets in our homes. Many electronic devices in your home continue to draw power when they are turned off or not in use, wasting energy. Advanced power strips save energy by automatically shutting off power to unused devices. Simple to use, cost-effective and convenient, they’re the smart choice for today’s homes.

How they work

Smart strips typically have three types of outlets: one control outlet, always-on outlets and automatically switched outlets. When the device plugged into the control outlet isn’t being used, power is cutoff to all devices on the switched outlets. Always-on outlets are for plugging in devices that always need power, like a cable box.

Power strips fit different needs

There are three types of smart power strips. Though they work in different ways, they all save energy by disconnecting power to electronic devices that are in standby or sleep mode.

1. Timer-equipped smart strips are controlled by programmable timers. Devices plugged in automatically turn on or off at designated times.
2. Occupancy-sensing devices are controlled by an infrared motion detector. These smart strips can sense if someone is in the room and turn plugged-in devices on or off accordingly.
3. Current-sensing smart strips are controlled by a “master” outlet. If you plug your TV into the master outlet, your cable box and video game console will turn off automatically when the TV enters sleep mode. When you turn on the TV, the other electronics turn on as well.

Smart power strips can connect to your home network, allowing you to control it remotely using your smart speaker or a smartphone app.

By plugging in with advanced power strips, you’ll save energy and money while your devices will still be there ready to go whenever you need them. ■



Plug loads

Other plug loads around the home can add up to be 8-10 percent of monthly energy use. Here are some tips:

- Turn computers and monitors off when not in use.
- When buying a new computer, consider buying a laptop. It uses less energy than a comparable desktop.
- Turn large-screen TVs off completely when not in use.
- Check for energy-saving settings on flat-panel TVs like automotive brightness control and a power-saving sleep mode.
- Turn off stereos and radios when not in use.
- Enable auto power-down feature on gaming consoles.
- If you don’t unplug them, use energy-saving modes or automatic sleep function on electronics.
- Remember to turn off hair curling irons and hot rollers.
- Make sure electric blankets are turned off in the morning.
- Verify livestock water tank heaters are off when not needed.
- Make sure heat tape is off when not needed.
- Unplug battery chargers when not needed. ■

STAY SAFE ON THE FARM

Overhead power lines are necessary to deliver electricity to hardworking farmers and ranchers, but those same power lines can also be deadly if not treated with respect. While you need to focus on the field and your machinery, Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative urges you to also watch for electrical hazards around the farm or ranch.

BE AWARE

Farmers and their equipment should always be 10 feet away from power lines on all sides. Field cultivators and sprayers can often reach as high as 12 feet in the air. Practice extreme caution and use a spotter to make sure you stay far away from power lines when you use tall equipment.

If you have purchased new equipment, be aware of antennas or other attachments that may pose new hazards. A newer, bigger piece of equipment may no longer clear a line. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year-to-year.

Power lines also may sag over the years. If power lines on your property are sagging, contact your electric cooperative to repair the lines. Never try to move a power line on your own.

Overhead power lines are not the only electric hazard on the farm. Pole guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, are grounded. However, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can become charged with electricity. If you break a guy wire, call the cooperative to fix it. Don't do it yourself. ■



FOLLOW THESE OTHER TIPS:

- Look over work areas carefully for overhead power lines and utility poles. Make sure you, your family and employees know the location of overhead power lines, and use routes to avoid the lines when moving equipment. Do this every year, as equipment sizes and soil conditions may change.
- Use care when raising augers or the bed of a grain truck. It can be difficult to estimate distance, and sometimes, a power line is closer than it looks. Use a spotter to make certain you stay far away from power lines. Lower any extensions or augers when moving equipment.
- Be aware of increased heights of equipment, especially new equipment with higher antennas.
- Avoid moving large equipment alone. Have someone watch as you move equipment to ensure you are clear of power lines.
- Be extra careful when working around trees and brush; they often make it difficult to see power lines. ■

Unofficial minutes of regular board meeting Feb. 24, 2021

Directors present: Sorenson, Lalim, Wade, Jorgenson, Hartsoch, Grant, Aubol, DeTienne and Ludwig.

Directors absent: None.

Others present: In-house counsel Johnson Ellis for portions of the meeting, attorney Foust and Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative (MWEC) staff members.

The meeting was held at the Williston headquarters and via WebEx and was called to order at 9:25 a.m. The agenda was approved with an addition.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: The board excused MWEC staff members and broke for executive session with Johnson Ellis to discuss legal matters.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: The minutes of the Jan. 27, 2021, board meeting were approved as corrected.

SAFETY TALK: Ryan Block informed the board the mask mandate within the Williston and Stanley office buildings has been lifted as the city of Williston and city of Stanley have lifted the citywide mask mandates. He also informed the board there were no vehicle or personal injury incidents to date in February.

CONSULTANT'S REPORT: Attorney Foust presented an easement to the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation for right-of-way for the Three Affiliated Tribes Municipal, Rural and Industrial Water Supply System that was approved at the Nov. 25, 2020, board meeting. A motion was made, seconded and passed to ratify the approval of the easement and to execute a resolution that the chairperson be directed to execute and deliver a grant of easement for right-of-way in the form and

upon the terms of the proposed easement previously approved by the board at the Nov. 25, 2020, board meeting.

Attorney Foust reviewed the 2018 Electric Cooperative Governance Task Force Report section on Member Access to Information with the board. A request for information received from a third party was then presented to the board for review and discussion. Attorney Foust reviewed Policy 305 on rules and procedures to be followed in response to requests for cooperative information and noted the difference between a request for information from a member versus from a third party. The board discussed the request for cooperative information and whether any published information was available to fulfill the request. A motion was made, seconded and passed to deny the request for cooperative information from a third party.

STAFF REPORTS:

Financial report - Jodi Collings presented the financial report for January 2021. The total margins for year-to-date were \$2,142,499; OTIER was 2.43; MDSC was 3.68; cooperative equity was 30.07 percent; and SPP equity was 44.51 percent.

Work order/special equipment closeout approval - The board approved the payment of the following work order/special equipment closeouts:

Closeout 783 (Distribution)	\$164,363.32
Closeout 784 (Distribution)	\$1,499,508.75

TOTAL.....\$1,663,872.07

Bad debts - The board approved the bad debts presented in the

amount of \$14,092.69. Capital credit retention for these accounts covered a portion of the amount of bad debt owed to the cooperative for a net loss of \$2,918.88. Efforts will continue to collect bad debts including retention of capital credits.

2021 budget presentation - Jodi Collings updated the board on the 2021 budget. Overall margins are up \$1.46 million over the forecast budget.

Outage report - Jerry Rehak presented the 2020 year-end outage report. There were two major events due to weather in 2020. The year-end SAIDI was 238.35 minutes; SAIFI was 1.15; CAIDI (response time) was 207.23; and there were 1,236 interruptions, which was down from 2,293 interruptions in 2019.

Annual meeting preparation - Alex Vournas presented a new voting format to the board for consideration and discussion. Survey and Ballot Systems (SBS) is a company that assists cooperative elections throughout the United States. This company handles the printing, mailing and counting of ballots, has the ability to conduct electronic elections, and has the option for an onsite individual present at the meeting to run the election in person. The 2019 annual meeting election procedure, areas of improvement and cost of current election procedure versus SBS cost were discussed. A motion was made, seconded and passed to engage SBS to run the cooperative's elections for the 2020 annual meeting and going forward.

Chris Brostuen led a discussion with the board regarding decisions for the upcoming annual meeting. The 2021 annual meeting will be held on June 3, 2021, in Williston. It is planned to be held at the Agri-Sports Complex at the Upper

Missouri Valley Fairgrounds. The board discussed the options for meeting format and approved a business meeting only with non-interactive virtual broadcasting. Refreshments and goodies will be served, and it was proposed cooperative staff prepare a short informational session for members rather than a speaker. An annual report summary will be printed in the magazine and a full annual report will be made available online, to attending members, and at cooperative offices.

BOARD REPORTS:

Chairperson's report –

Chairperson Sorenson visited the construction site at the new New Town office building.

Board roundtable – Each director had a chance to discuss what is happening in their area, if any.

Upper Missouri Power Cooperative (UMPC) – The general manager's update from Feb. 19, 2021, was made available. A copy of the UMPC annual meeting appointment of delegates; chairman and alternate and nominee for trustee was made available.

North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) – The Feb. 9, 2021, minutes from the board meeting were made available. Brief reports were made regarding the virtual format of the NDAREC annual meeting.

Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) – Director Grant was recognized for his years of service with RDFC. Director Grant retired from his position with the board, which he has been on since 2009. Director Wade was appointed to the RDFC board and gave a brief update on the annual meeting and board meeting.

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) – The Legislative Conference will be

held virtually April 19-23.

RESCO – The cooperative received a check for 1 percent of the 2020 sales originating from the Williston warehouse. A copy of the letter and check were made available.

MANAGERS' REPORTS:

SPP/WAPA overview - Matthew Stoltz discussed the interplay of Southwest Power Pool (SPP)/ Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) as to how it relates to the cooperative. He then discussed what happened during the severe winter weather and power issues experienced in Texas and Oklahoma and how and why it affected the cooperative requiring conservation of power. He explained even though geographically the cooperative's service area is far from Texas and Oklahoma, there is one power market to meet loads, losses and reserves, which helps spread the risk, so if the Northern Plains were short on power, roles would have been reversed and the southern cooperatives in the same power market would have been asked to conserve power. A timeline of events related to the winter weather events in Texas and Oklahoma from the cooperative, SPP and WAPA were made available. The board was also guided through an illustrated example of the SPP market prices.

PEP talk - James Neether gave the board an update on permits, easements and projects from Feb. 19.

New Town building progress - James Neether presented a PowerPoint showing the New Town building progress from August to February. The five-week overview was also made available.

Mountrail County easements - Chris Brostuen gave a brief update on easements being worked on in Mountrail County.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. ■



MOUNTRAIL-WILLIAMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

218 58th St. W.
P.O. Box 1346
Williston, ND 58802

Williston – 701-577-3765
Stanley – 701-628-2242
New Town – 701-627-3550
800-279-2667

DIRECTORS

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Garrett Lalim Vice chairperson
Cheryl Hartsoch Treasurer
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