

MWEC

Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative

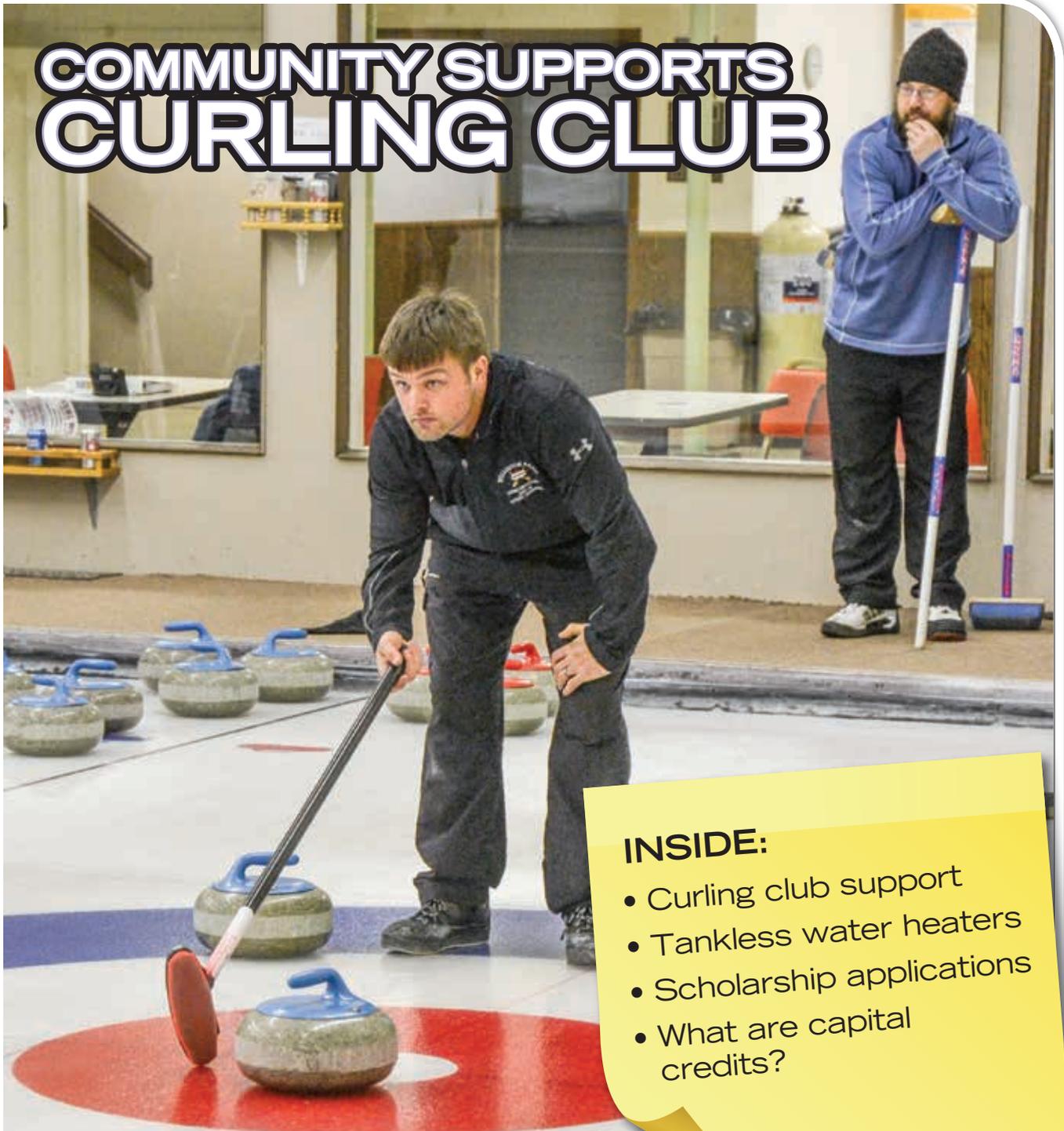
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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COMMUNITY SUPPORTS CURLING CLUB



INSIDE:

- Curling club support
- Tankless water heaters
- Scholarship applications
- What are capital credits?

Levy Bergstrom, a Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative employee, shows a thrower where to place the stone.



Sweepers aid in the placement of the stones. They use brushes to influence the speed of the stone as well as its path.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS CURLING CLUB

BY TIM PEDERSON

Making ice in North Dakota in the winter? It shouldn't be a challenge, but for competitive sports, consistent ice conditions can make a world of difference.

The Williston Basin Curling Club was faced with chilly prospects as it finished last season – either risk operations with a less-than-trustworthy ice-making unit or raise funds to buy a new one. The club opted for the latter.

The old unit would fail two or three times a season and failed last year during a tournament, stated the club's president, Travis Kitchens.

"Club members were left scrambling to find a repairman before the ice melted beyond repair," he explained.

If the rinks melted, it would be a month before the old ice could be cleaned out and the new ice refrozen for use by the club.

A new refrigeration unit and installation was projected to cost around \$150,000.

With community support and help from Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative and about a dozen other

businesses, the money was garnered and a new system was installed in November.

Kitchens likens the new compressor to a giant refrigeration unit. "It cools off the cement floor enough to where it turns water to ice," he said.

The unit keeps the floor at about 20 degrees, which keeps the ice surface at about 24 degrees. It pumps a salt brine solution through plastic pipes spaced three inches apart throughout the floor – enough to keep four, 150- by 16.5-foot sheets of curling ice frozen.

The sport of curling dates back to the medieval days in Scotland, where people would throw flat-bottomed river stones on ice. It has evolved and is now an Olympic sport.

The event consists of sliding 44-pound "stones" across a sheet of ice, aiming for a two-foot dot some 90 feet away. An eight-foot circle and 12-foot circle form a bulls-eye called the "house," where curlers aim to score points. The opposing team members throw their stones to knock the other team's stones out of the house and keep their stones inside the circle.

The surface of the ice is "pebbled," which allows the stone to ride atop the

droplets of ice which in turn allows the athlete to "curl" the stone. With an ever-so-slight twist of the wrist, a slow spinning stone can move to one side.

Sweepers aid in the placement of the stones. They use brushes to influence the speed of the stone as well as its path and can be seen furiously brushing the ice as the stone slides toward the house.

The Williston Basin Curling Club holds league play and tournaments from November through March. More than 140 people participate and the club is looking at starting a family night on Sundays.

Kitchens moved to Williston five years ago to manage the local Sears store. The native of Devils Lake had curled since he was 12 years old and even had a chance at the Olympics, finishing seventh in the Olympic finals. He also is the head ice maker and "skips" or leads a curling team.

"(The new system) is an efficient system," Kitchens added. And, after the club raises more money, they will be able to reclaim the heat produced by the new unit and cycle it through the arena so the club can save on heating costs.

"That is another fundraising project in the next two to five years," he said.

"We are very appreciative of the companies that helped," Kitchens stated. "It was great to see the community come together to support the club." ■



Travis Kitchens, Williston Basin Curling Club President by new energy efficient equipment

The truth about tankless water heaters

COURTESY OF THE COOPERATIVE RESEARCH NETWORK

Many of us have seen advertisements for tankless water heaters. The ads promise big savings. But are they accurate?

Unlike a traditional water heater, a tankless model does not store hot water. It heats water only as it is used. Either one or a series of heating elements within the water heater is activated when a hot water faucet or valve is opened. The unit heats the water as long as this is open. When it is closed, the tankless unit stops heating the water.

Companies that make tankless water heaters generally cite four advantages of their designs over a tank-type water heater:

- Unlimited (continuous) supply of hot water
- Instantaneous hot water if installed at point of use
- Reduced water-heating costs
- Small amount of space required for installation (usually wall-hung)

It is true that tankless water heaters do not require a lot of space. A large unit requires an area no larger than 24 inches square and extends from the wall by about 8 to 10 inches. But what about the other three claims?

Is it realistic to expect “unlimited” hot water?

An unlimited supply of hot water may sound appealing, but it is not compatible with responsible water use, particularly in those areas of the country suffering from drought or chronic water shortages. Moreover, even the largest whole-house unit may not supply enough hot water for simultaneous multiple uses. Such a unit may be able to supply only two showers simultaneously, or perhaps

one shower, a dishwasher and a sink. If the users demand too much water, the temperature will drop. So a tankless system probably won't meet the needs of a large family.

Water temperature rise is determined by the kilowatt capacity of the heating unit, the water flow, and the temperature of the incoming water. As the incoming water temperature drops, or as the volume of water moving through the heater increases, the temperature of the heated water will decrease correspondingly.

The water temperature depends on the volume coming out of the faucet. If you turn on the faucet only enough for a trickle of water, it will be cold. If you open the faucet further, you will trigger hot water – the hottest you'll ever get. If you open the faucet to its maximum, the temperature will drop a bit. If you open more than one faucet, the water temperature should drop even more.

Your home's electric service may need to be upgraded

Tankless electric water heaters usually require an upgrade in electrical service, something the home improvement stores often do not mention.

A tank water heater with 4,500-watt elements operates on No. 10 wire and a 30-amp circuit breaker. One whole-house tankless water heater has four 7,000-watt elements, for a total electrical load of 28,000 watts. This load requires wire and a circuit breaker that will handle at least 120 amps, at a cost many times that of electrical service to a conventional tank water heater.

The load also requires a larger and more expensive meter loop and main panel for the house. In some cases,

the customer also must pay for wiring between the neighborhood distribution transformer and the electric meter.

You may need to check with a licensed electrician or your electric service provider to determine if your home needs to be upgraded.

Consumers who want to replace an existing conventional water heater with a tankless unit or add a tankless unit in a home-remodeling project will incur initial installation costs much greater than those for new home installations.

When a high amperage load comes on, voltage levels can be affected significantly. If a tankless water heater is installed in an existing home without upgrading the electrical service, low voltage or sudden voltage drops are likely to result in dimming or blinking lights and other problems. Some co-op customers complain about blinking lights after reportedly connecting 28-kilowatt tankless units in homes with 150-amp services on 10-kilowatt transformers.

Picking the right water heater

Consumers looking for an efficient water heater should consider a heavily insulated traditional storage electric water heater. These water heaters are often the most cost-effective option over the product's life.

If you want to reduce your water heater energy costs, there are several avenues you can pursue. According to a report by Oak Ridge National Laboratory, measures such as tank insulation, temperature setback, timers, heat traps, and low-flow shower heads are more practical, much less expensive, and have a greater return on investment than installing a tankless water heater in an existing home with a conventional water heater. ■

Mountrail-Williams Electric accepting applications for 2014-2015 scholarship program



For more information and for a scholarship application form, contact Mountrail-Williams Electric Cooperative, Attention: Mark Holter, PO Box 1346, Williston, ND 58802-1346.

Or call toll-free at 800-279-2667 or 701-577-3765 for local calls.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative is again offering \$1,000 college scholarships to more than 167 students in the eight-state region served by its members. The scholarships are for the 2014-2015 school year.

Each of the 127 member cooperatives of Basin Electric, including Mountrail-Williams, will award a scholarship to a dependent of a consumer. In addition, 20 scholarships will be awarded to dependents of member-system employees, and 20 will go to dependents of employees of Basin Electric and its subsidiaries.

Recognizing academic achievements

The scholarship program recognizes and encourages the academic achievements of students in its region. It also serves as an investment in the economic future of rural areas.

Applicants for the scholarships must be U.S. citizens and the dependents of member-system employees or consumers, or of active, full-time employees of Basin Electric or its subsidiaries. Applicants also must be students enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate course of study at an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school.

Scholarship recipients will be chosen based on a combination of SAT/ACT scores and overall grade point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals and a written recommendation by a third party.

Deadline for application is Feb. 13

Applications for the 2014-15 school year will be accepted until Feb. 13. Each member cooperative will select the scholarship winner from its applicant pool comprised of consumers' children. A Basin Electric selection committee will choose the 40 scholarship winners from the member-system employee group and the Basin Electric and subsidiary employee group. ■

Mountrail-Williams is a member of Basin Electric, which is a consumer-owned and controlled regional cooperative responsible for supplying wholesale electric power to eight Midwestern states.



What are capital credits?

Did you know that electric cooperatives return money to their members in the form of capital credits? While you may like receiving those capital credit checks from your local cooperative, you may not be sure exactly why you get them. It's simple, really.

Capital credits reflect each member's ownership in the cooperative. Electric cooperatives do not earn profits. Instead, any margins or remaining revenue after all expenses have been paid are returned to the cooperative's members in proportion to their electrical usage.

How are capital credits returned to you, the member?

Step 1: Allocation

An allocation determines your share of the cooperative's margin in a particular year. Margins are "allocated" or assigned to members who belong to the cooperative during the year in which a margin is generated. The allocation is based on the member's proportion of

electrical usage for that year. Each member's portion is referred to as a "capital credit allocation."

Step 2: Retirement

Once capital credits are allocated, they are retained by the co-op for a certain time. Capital credits are the most significant source of equity for the cooperative. Equity is used to help meet the expenses of the co-op, such as paying for new equipment to serve members and repaying debt. Capital credits help keep rates at an affordable level by reducing the amount of funds that must be borrowed to grow and maintain a cooperative's existing electric system.

Upon completion of the rotation period, the board of directors will review the cooperative's financial health and can declare a retirement (your cash payment), and a portion of your capital credits are returned to you.

If you have questions about capital credits, contact your local electric cooperative. ■

It's a co-op principle!

The allocation of capital credits is exemplified in one of the seven principles that guide all cooperatives.

The principle states:

Members' economic participation – Members contribute equitably to, and

democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members

allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

The ABCs of home safety devices



A GFCI should be used in any area where water may come into contact with electrical products, such as the bathroom, kitchen or outdoors.

The statistics are staggering. Electrical failures or malfunctions were factors in an estimated 47,700 home fires in 2011, according to the National Fire Protection Association. And fire is not the only danger. Thousands of children and adults are critically injured and electrocuted annually from electrical hazards in their own homes.

But technology such as arc fault circuit interrupters and tamper-resistant receptacles are preventing tragedy before it ever occurs. Incorporating this technology into your home can help reduce the risk of fires and electrocutions:

Arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) – An AFCI is a new type of circuit breaker which recognizes fire hazards and immediately shuts off the power.

There are three types of AFCIs:

- Branch/feeder AFCIs, the most common type of AFCIs, replace standard circuit breakers in your home's electrical service panel and provide arc-fault protection to the entire circuit from the service panel to the outlets.

- Outlet AFCIs are receptacles that provide protection to power cords and appliances that are plugged into the receptacle.
- Combination AFCIs combine the features of branch/feeder and outlet AFCIs and detect arcing faults in the complete circuit.

Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) – GFCIs are special outlets that have saved thousands of people from electrocution over the last three decades. If GFCIs were installed in older homes, experts suggest that 70 percent of the electrocutions that occur each year in the home could be prevented.

GFCIs are electrical safety devices that trip electrical circuits when they detect ground faults or leakage currents. A person who becomes part of a path for leakage current will be severely shocked or electrocuted. These outlets prevent deadly shock by quickly shutting off power to the circuit if the electricity flowing into the circuit differs by even a slight amount from that returning.

A GFCI should be used in any indoor

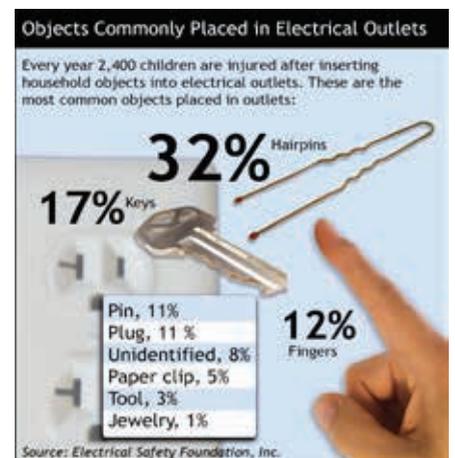
or outdoor area where water may come into contact with electrical products. The National Electrical Code currently requires that GFCIs be used in all kitchens, bathrooms, garages and outdoors.

GFCIs should be tested once a month to make sure they are working properly. To test your GFCI:

- Push the “reset” button on the GFCI to prepare the outlet for testing.
- Plug in an ordinary nightlight into the GFCI and turn it ON. The light should now be on.
- Push the “test” button of the GFCI. The nightlight should turn OFF.
- Push the “reset” button again. The nightlight should now go ON again.

If the nightlight does not turn off when the “test” button is pushed, then the GFCI may have been improperly wired or damaged and it does not offer shock protection. Contact a licensed electrician to check the GFCI and correct the problem.

Tamper resistant receptacles (TRRs) – Tamper resistant receptacles feature an internal shutter mechanism to prevent small children from inserting foreign objects into them. These specialized outlets have been so effective in preventing injuries to children that the National Electrical Code requires that tamper resistant receptacles be installed in all newly constructed homes. ■





GAME OVER

TURN gaming consoles off to save energy

More than 40 percent of homes have video game console systems, and many of those devices are left on all the time. Surprisingly, most gaming systems use nearly as much power in idle mode as when they are actually being played. Turning them off could save gamers about \$100 a year. In fact, gaming systems use more than \$1 billion worth of energy a year, which is enough to power a major city for the year.

The easiest and most effective way to save energy is to **TURN OFF** and **UNPLUG** the device when it's not being used.

What else can you do to make sure your video game system isn't driving up your electricity bill? Here are a few tips:

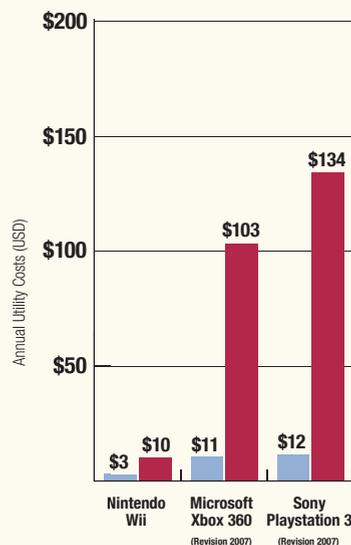
- Use the power saver mode. If you have a PlayStation or Xbox, you can save energy by selecting the auto power-down option in your system preferences.
- Don't watch movies on your game system. Watching a Blu-Ray movie on the PlayStation uses five times more power than watching it on a standard Blu-Ray player.

So what's the most energy-efficient video game system?

When comparing older models, the Wii used only 16 watts of energy while in active mode. The Xbox used 119 and the Playstation used 150. Newly released gaming systems score higher in energy efficiency ratings. ■

The Price of Play:

Annual energy use and costs for three popular gaming systems



- Annual energy use (KWH) for users who turn console **off** after use
- Annual energy use (KWH) for users who leave console **on** after use

All utility cost estimates assume typical retail electricity rates of 10 cents per KWH. Data courtesy of NRDC.



MOUNTRAIL-WILLIAMS BOARD MINUTES

Regular board meeting of Dec. 20, 2013

Directors present: Sorenson, Grant, Hartsoch, Johnson, Lynne, Bratvold, Haugen, Solberg (via telephone)

Directors absent: Jorgenson.

Others present: General Manager Haugen, In-House Counsel Ellis, Staff Members

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 A.M. at the Williston office. The agenda for the meeting was approved. Minutes of the November 27, 2013, were approved as amended.

Attorney's report: In-House Counsel Leah Ellis reported that the Cooperative had answered the narrowed Subpoena. She also updated the Board on a landowner easement.

Attorney Ellis also discussed a proposed change to the Policy 105 Conflict of Interest. After discussion, the Board approved the changes.

Executive session: At 10:10 A.M. the Board met in executive session to discuss a lawsuit. The Board left executive session at 10:22 A.M.

Meeting reports: The Board watched the Basin Electric monthly video.

Robert Grant discussed the NDAREC Executive Committee meeting, highlighting health care and potential bylaw changes. Aaron Lynne will represent the Cooperative at the Rural Development Finance Corporation's Annual Meeting.

Dorvan Solberg was reelected to the Mid-West Electric Consumers Association Board. He reported that WAPA rates should be steady next year.

Chairman Sorenson gave updates on RESCO and Upper Missouri. He emphasized compliance has become a focus for Upper Missouri.

Robert Grant reported that there will be a CFC financial workshop in February. He also participated in a CFC planning forum.

Financial reports: There was no financial report due to the early board meeting. Jay Lux reported that TCAC charge is below \$3.00.

Capital credit retirements: The Board approved the retirement of the following capital credit accounts:

Alyce Spotted Bear Estate

Bad debts: The Board approved the transfer of \$1,012.08 from accounts receivable to bad debts. Capital credits will be retained and other efforts will be made to collect these sums.

Closeouts: The Board approved the special equipment/work order closeouts for the following projects:

Closeout # 476: \$1,004,399.17

Closeout # 477: \$9,111,751.07

TOTAL \$10,116,150.24

Outage report: Jerry Rehak presented an outage report for November 2013.

Safety report: Mark Holter gave a safety report and reported two incidents: An employee cut his finger in October; and another employee slipped on the ice in December. There were three (3) recordable accidents in 2013. Mark Holter also discussed the newly formed Safety Committee and its goals.

Manager's report: Manager Haugen discussed member concerns about connects. He also discussed member concerns about the TWACS system and dirty electricity.

Manager Haugen presented NERC Compliance issues. The Board discussed managing the compliance

either internally or externally. After a lengthy discussion, the Board's consensus was to stay under the Basin Electric system for the time, and to reevaluate the options if that relationship changes, with the potential of keeping the compliance based out of the Cooperative instead of Upper Missouri.

Manager Haugen gave a presentation about the transmission systems and RTOs. He also provided the Board with an update about substations.

The Board clarified the intent of its sale of the land to a landowner was to also sell the smaller parcels in addition to the land he sold to the Cooperative.

The Board also approved the prepayment of land purchases for substations.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 P.M.

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Robert Grant.....	Vice Chairman
Dorvan Solberg.....	Secretary
Blaine Jorgenson.....	Treasurer
Cheryl Hartsoch.....	Director
Nick Haugen.....	Director
Larry Johnson.....	Director
Warren Bratvold.....	Director
Aaron Lynne.....	Director
Neff, Eiken & Neff, PC.....	Project Attorney
Dale Haugen.....	General Manager

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