



Bluestem NEWS

Bluestem Electric Cooperative

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Assistant Manager

John Bettencourt
Manager of AMI and IT

Trisha Bradley
Manager of Accounting and Finance

Tim Diederich
Manager of Line Operations

Kevin Heptig
Manager of Member Services

Contact Us

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Wamego, KS 66547
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FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Why We Love Serving Our Members



Mike Morton

February may be the shortest month, but it is packed with special observances like Presidents Day, Black History Month and Valentine's Day. In addition to a host

of unofficial "national" days you have probably never heard of like "National Tater Tot Day," but they all have something in common. They were created to draw attention to a particular issue or theme.

Valentine's Day may seem like an observance originally created by a greeting card company, but over time, it's become a widely celebrated day generating millions of dollars spent on flowers, candy and of course, greeting cards professing our love. But Valentine's Day isn't just for the lovebirds. It's also the

perfect time to let our friends, family, co-workers and other special people in our lives know we care about them — with or without a store-bought greeting card.

With that in mind, we've created the top five reasons why we love serving you, the members of Bluestem Electric.

1 WE LOVE SERVING OUR MEMBERS BECAUSE WITHOUT YOU, THE

CO-OP WOULDN'T EXIST. Our purpose is to provide you with reliable, responsible and safe electricity. Simply put, Bluestem Electric exists to serve you. That's why we were formed in 1938 — to bring power to our local area when for-profit utilities would not.

2 YOU ENABLE US TO COMPLETE OUR MISSION BY SUPPORTING

OUR EFFORTS TO GIVE BACK. A major part of our mission is to serve our community and look after the greater good. With your assistance, we're able

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Bluestem Trustee Election Results

Bluestem Electric Cooperative members of the respective districts elected the following cooperative members for three-year terms on the Bluestem Electric Board of Trustees by mail ballot in December 2021.

District 1 & 2, Position At Large
MARK DIEDERICH – Greenleaf

District 3, Position 2
MICHAEL LEITCH – Westmoreland

District 3 & 4, Position At Large
RICHARD RIDDER – St. George

Proposed Bylaw Revisions

You are hereby notified, pursuant to K.S.A. 17-4608 and Article XIII of the bylaws, that the following proposed amendments to the bylaws are being submitted to a vote of the membership at the Annual Meeting, as provided by Article III of the bylaws. The sections of the bylaws in which changes are proposed follow this notice. Deleted language is indicated by ~~strike-through~~ and additions to the bylaws are blue.

The board of trustees recommends the adoption of the amendments to the Bylaws of Bluestem Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. A “yes” vote is a vote in favor of the proposed changes. A “no” vote is a vote against the proposed changes. A complete version of the bylaws can be found at www.bluestemelectric.com

ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1.11. ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION. Any and all disputes, claims or controversies arising from or related to the electric system’s provision of services in any way shall, at the request of either party, be resolved by binding arbitration pursuant to the written procedures established by the Board of Trustees. Each member agrees to arbitrate all such disputes, claims or controversies according to this bylaw and in accordance with the written procedures and rules of arbitration. Arbitration proceedings shall be held at a neutral location within any County that the Cooperative is providing a Cooperative service. This arbitration agreement remains in effect even in the event of membership withdrawal or termination.

SECTION 3.01. ANNUAL MEETING. The Annual Meeting of the Members shall be held ~~during the months of March or April~~ each year on a date and at a time designated by the Board, for the purpose of passing upon reports covering the previous fiscal year and transacting such other business as may come before the meeting. Annual Meetings will alternate between **District #1 and #2 and District #3 and #4, at a location determined by the Bluestem Board of Trustees.** ~~Wamego and Clay Center.~~ Or, in the alternative, the Board may, by a 2/3 majority, designate the annual meeting to be in any County where the Cooperative is providing a Cooperative ~~electrical~~ service. **To the extent authorized by the Board, however, and subject to guidelines and procedures adopted by the Board, an Annual Meeting may be held without a geographic location if the Meeting is held through the Internet or other Electronic communications technology in a manner; (1) permitting the Cooperative to verify that each Person participating in the Meeting is a Member; and (2) permitting Members the opportunity to read or hear the proceedings substantially con-**

currently with their occurrence, vote on matters submitted to the Members, ask questions, and make comments. Failure to hold the annual meeting at the designated time shall not work a forfeiture or dissolution of the Cooperative.

SECTION 3.02. SPECIAL MEETINGS. Special meetings of the members may be called by resolution of the Board or by petition signed by at least ten percent of all members of the cooperative or of a district. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to cause notice of the meeting to be given as specified in Section 3.04. The Board may designate the special meeting to be in any County where the Cooperative is providing a **Cooperative electrical** service.

SECTION 3.03 SPECIAL DISTRICT MEETINGS. Special meetings of districts one and/or two, and three and/or four may be called by resolution of the Board of Trustees or by a petition signed by at least 10% of all members of the district or districts for the purpose of receiving and acting on information relative to the removal of a Trustee as set out in Section 4.06. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to cause notice of the meeting to be given as specified in Section 3.04. If the special meeting is of members of district one and/or two, it shall be in **any County within District #1 and/or District #2 where the Cooperative is providing a Cooperative service** ~~Clay Center,~~ and if the special meeting is of members of district three and/or four, it shall be in **any County within District #3 and/or District #4 where the Cooperative is providing a Cooperative service** ~~Wamego.~~

SECTION 3.05 QUORUM. Business may not be transacted at any meeting of the members unless there are present, in person or by proxy **or through the Internet or other Electronic communications technology as described in Section 3.01,** at least ~~fifty~~ **seventy-five** members, except that, if less than a quorum is present at any meeting, a majority of those

present in person may adjourn the meeting to another time and date. At all meetings of the members, whether a quorum is present or not, the Secretary shall affix to the meeting minutes, or incorporate therein by reference, a list of those members who were registered as present in person or by proxy. A quorum for a special meeting of members of one or more districts shall be twenty five members from each district in person or by proxy.

SECTION 3.07 MAIL BALLOT and/or Electronic Ballot. Issues may be presented to the members by means of a written ballot forwarded to the members and returned to the Cooperative by **electronic format,** mail, or hand delivered. Except as provided hereinafter, the Board shall determine which issues are decided by a mail **and/or electronic** ballot and the terms, conditions and procedures to regulate its use. Issues will be decided by a majority of the mail **and/or electronic** ballots received and shall have the same force and effect as a vote taken at a meeting of the members.

SECTION 3.08 PROXY VOTING. Members may vote by proxy at a meeting of members. The member voting proxies must be a voting member of the meeting. A member may be a proxy for no more than three members. All proxies must be in writing and signed by the member on a form provided by the cooperative or deemed satisfactory by the Secretary. Proxies may not be used for mail **and/or electronic** ballot voting.

SECTION 3.10 Any requested items of new business must be presented to the Board, in writing, not less than ninety (90) days before the annual meeting. The Board shall take action on any items of new business presented by a Petition signed by not less than five percent (5%) of the members, by submitting the question(s) to the members by a mail **and/or electronic** ballot or by inclusion on the agenda of a Special Meeting or Annual Meeting. Notice

of new business for consideration at the annual meeting shall be included in the written notice of the Annual Meeting as provided in Section 3.04.

ARTICLE IV BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

SECTION 4.02 QUALIFICATIONS TO BE NOMINATED, ELECTED AND REMAIN A TRUSTEE. Any natural person shall be eligible to be nominated, elected and remain a Trustee of the Cooperative who:

(1) Is a member of the cooperative and is a bona fide resident, in the Trustee district which the member is to represent.

(2) Is not an employee of the Cooperative or has not been an employee of the cooperative within the last three (3) years or in any way financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business engaged in selling energy, energy services or energy supplies or maintaining energy producing or selling facilities. However, the Board may grant exceptions for “de minimus” competing enterprises; **A Trustee, current and/or past, seeking to gain employment with the Cooperative shall not be serving and/or have served on the Board of Trustees for one (1) complete year prior to date of employment;**

(3) Is not related to an incumbent Trustee or an employee of the Cooperative. The term “related” means the relationship of spouse (including common law spouse), child (step/in-law/grand), brother (step/in-law), sister (step/in-law), parent (step/in-law), grandparent, aunt, uncle, nephew, niece, or co-habitant. Upon establishment of the fact that a Trustee is holding the office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the Trustees shall remove the Trustee from office.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the Trustees.

SECTION 4.03 DISTRICTS. The territory of the Cooperative shall be divided into four Trustee districts for the purpose of constituting the Cooperative’s Board of Trustees. The Trustee districts shall include all of the area contained within the exterior boundaries of the Cooperative service territory, as amended from time to time, together with all of the area within any exterior square mile section which contains any Cooperative service territory (herein a “service section”). The boundaries of Trustee districts shall be depicted on an official territory and Trustee district map adopted and approved

by the Board of Trustees of the Cooperative. An official territory and Trustee district map shall be maintained, for membership review and inspection, at ~~both the Wamego and Clay-Center~~ offices. Except for service sections bisected by the Kansas River, no service section shall be within more than one Trustee district. The Board may amend the boundaries of the districts, from time to time, as deemed necessary or appropriate.

SECTION 4.04 TRUSTEE POSITIONS AND TERM OF OFFICE. Trustees shall be elected from each district, only by the members from such district (eligible members), as described hereinafter, for a term of three calendar years as terms of office expire or until their successors shall have been elected and qualified. The number of Trustees for each district and the three-year election cycle for each position within each district shall be as described below.

- ▶ District One shall have two Trustees.
Position One begins January 1, 2020~~14~~; and
Position Two begins January 1, 2021~~15~~.
- ▶ District Two shall have two Trustees.
Position One begins January 1, 2021~~15~~; and
Position Two begins January 1, 2020~~14~~.
- ▶ Districts One and Two shall have one Trustee “At Large”.
“At Large” begins January 1, 2022~~16~~.
- ▶ District Three shall have three Trustees.
Position One begins January 1, 2021~~15~~;
Position Two begins January 1, 2022~~16~~; and
Position Three begins January 1, 2020~~14~~.
- ▶ District Four shall have two Trustees.
Position One begins January 1, 2021~~15~~; and
Position Two begins January 1, 2020~~14~~.
- ▶ Districts Three and Four shall have one Trustee “At Large”.
“At Large” begins January 1, 2022~~16~~.

SECTION 4.05 NOMINATION OF TRUSTEES. The Board shall appoint a nominating committee, on or before the first day of October of each year, consisting of not less than one, nor more than five members from each district for whom a Trustee is to be elected. Board members may not serve on the nominating committee. Only committee members from each district will nominate their own candidate. Committee members from districts one and two will meet together **in any County within District #1 and/or District #2 where the Cooperative is providing a Cooperative Service at Clay-Center** and committee members from

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2022 Annual Meeting

The Bluestem Electric Cooperative, Inc. Annual Meeting will be held on March 28, 2022, at the United Methodist Church Family Life Center in Clay Center, Kansas. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. The annual meeting notice will be included in the March issue of *Kansas Country Living* magazine this year. Please look for this issue as there will not be a separate booklet mailing. Official Notice of the Annual Meeting will be mailed prior to the meeting. Again, this will be included in the March *Kansas Country Living* magazine.

We hope you will plan to attend the annual meeting and take part in the business of the cooperative.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Tip of the Month

About 30% of a home’s heating energy is lost through inefficient windows. Caulk and weatherstrip windows to seal air leaks. When running your home heating system, lock all operable windows to ensure the tightest seal possible.

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY



Why We Love Serving Our Members Continued from page 12A ▶

to help the most vulnerable members of our community through food and toy drives and programs like the Sharing Success Program that helps local families pay their energy bills when times are tough.

3 MEMBERS OF OUR CO-OP ALSO SERVE ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. They provide guidance for setting co-op priorities and helping make big decisions. Because our board members live in the area, they're able to serve as the pulse of the larger community and identify immediate and long-term needs. The broader co-op membership provides helpful input through their vote on director elections

and by weighing in on co-op and community issues.

4 YOU HELP US GET IT RIGHT. Bluestem Electric members are great about keeping us in the know. We do our best to avoid power outages, but Mother Nature can occasionally throw us a curveball; our members are quick to report any power disruptions and are patient as our crews work to safely restore power. We know outages are frustrating, and your support as we work through storms means so much to our employees. We also appreciate your feedback on co-op programs and services. Your opinions are critical for the co-op's success, and we thank you for that.

5 YOU AND OTHER BLUESTEM ELECTRIC MEMBERS MAKE UP THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE — AND FOR US, IT'S ALL ABOUT COMMUNITY.

Our employees live and work here too and care about our community the same way you do. We're invested and work to help our area thrive. It's also why we invest in economic development, and why you'll see our employees volunteering at local schools and other charitable and community endeavors.

As a co-op, our mission is to enhance the quality of life in our community and look after its long-term interests. We love serving our members and our local community, and just like you, want to see it continue to thrive.

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districts three and four will meet together **in any County within District #3 and/or District #4 where the Cooperative is providing a Cooperative Service at Wamego.** Nominating committees shall meet during the month of October. On or before the first day of November, the nominating committee shall prepare and post a list of nominations for Trustee at the Wamego office **and on the Cooperative Website and/or other Cooperative Social Media sites.** ~~if a Trustee is to be elected from districts three and four and at the Clay Center office if a Trustee is to be elected from districts one or two.~~ The committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each position.

Nominations may be made by petition, filed on or before the close of business, November 30, at the Wamego office ~~for Trustees to be elected from districts three and four, and at the Clay Center office for Trustees to be elected from districts one or two.~~ The petition must be signed by not less than 5% of the members of the district for whom the Trustee is to be elected. The secretary shall immediately post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations by the committee is posted. Nominations made by petition shall appear on the ballot in the order received.

SECTION 4.06 ELECTION OF TRUSTEES. The election of Trustees shall be by mail ballot **and/or electronic ballot as determined by the Trustees.** Only those nominees selected by the nominating committee or nominated by petition shall appear on the ballot. There may be write in votes for a qualified member not named on the ballot. The ballot shall first list the name(s) nominated by the committee, then the name(s) nominated by petition in the order received and, at the end, a place to write in a name. Failure of strict compliance with the provisions of this section shall not affect the validity of any election of Trustees.

The secretary shall mail the ballots to the respective members on or before the 10th day of December of each year. On or before the first day of January of each year, ballots must be post marked or received at the Wamego office ~~or the Clay Center office.~~

ARTICLE V MEETINGS OF THE BOARD

SECTION 5.01 REGULAR MEETINGS. A regular meeting of the Board shall be held periodically, but not less than bi monthly, at a date and time as the Board may provide by resolution.

Regular Trustees' meetings will ~~be held in alternate between Wamego, and Clay Center,~~ Kansas. Or, in the alternative, the Trustees may, by a 2/3 majority, designate the regular meeting to be in any County where the Cooperative is providing ~~a Cooperative electrical~~ service.

Regular Trustees' meetings may be held without notice other than such resolution fixing the time, date and place thereof. Failure to hold the regular meeting at the designated time shall not work a forfeiture or dissolution of the Cooperative.

ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

Amendment of Bylaws may be initiated by a majority of the Board or a Petition signed by not less than five percent (5%) of the members. These bylaws shall be altered, amended or repealed by the members by mail ~~and/or electronic ballot~~ or at any annual or special member meeting by a majority vote of the members voting by ballot or attending such meeting, in person or by proxy, provided the notice of such meeting, or the ballot shall have contained a copy of the proposed alteration, amendment or repeal, or an accurate summary explanation thereof. The Board shall determine the method and time schedule of presenting the question(s) to the members.