



# news & views

from Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

# ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS

## 77TH MEETING OF THE MEMBERS IS APRIL 20

**P**LEASE join us on Saturday, April 20, at the Lincoln County High School auditorium, for the 77th Annual Meeting of the members! Registration begins at 8 a.m. with the business meeting starting at 9 a.m.

All registered members will receive \$20 in Eureka Chamber of Commerce bucks, which can be used the same as cash at businesses around town. Upon registering, you will also be entered into prize drawings. You could win from a variety of great prizes, such as gift certificates, tools, propane and more. One lucky member will even win Free Electricity for a Year!

The meeting will provide update reports on your cooperative, and the results of the trustee election. Per the bylaws, the election of trustees will be conducted via mail-in ballot. The trustee ballot is included in your notice of meeting, which was mailed mid-March.

The ballot also includes voting upon two proposed bylaws changes. Please see the accompanying article for more information on those proposals.

Please complete and return the ballot by April 15. Please see the accompanying article for more information on the trustee election.

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### 77TH ANNUAL MEETING:

## APRIL 20

### LINCOLN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 8 A.M.




When you attend the meeting, please bring along your notice of meeting to expedite registration. It can easily be scanned to register you for the meeting. It also contains your voting credentials in the event a voting matter is brought up during new business.

If you do not receive a notice of meeting by April 8, please call us at 406-889-3301 to verify your membership status and mailing address.

If you will be representing the membership of an organization, please bring the completed delegate certificate with you. There are two delegate certificates contained in the notice of meeting — one to be returned with the organization's mail-in ballot, and one to present during annual meeting registration.

We will draw for \$15,000 in Luck of the Draw scholarships at the annual meeting! If you or your dependent have applied and received an eligibility confirmation email, you must register for the annual meeting and at the Luck of the Draw table.

If you have any questions, please contact us at 406-889-3301. We hope to see you April 20! 

## LEC RETIRING OVER \$400,000 IN CAPITAL CREDITS

**L**INCOLN Electric Cooperative (LEC) is a cooperative, which is a non-profit organization. Instead of profits, we have margins. Margins are any revenue we have in excess of our expenses each year.

The total yearly margins are allocated to members who were billed during the year.

Allocations are based on the dollar amount each member contributed during the year by paying their electric

bill. For example, if you contributed one percent of our total yearly revenue, you would be allocated one percent of the total margins for that year.

For the 44th consecutive year, your Board of Trustees approved the retirement of capital credits. It authorized approximately 3 percent, or around \$407,000, of our total member equity to be retired in 2023. Capital credits will be retired as a 50/50 split between the oldest and newest contributions.

If you were an active LEC member in 2005, 2006, and/or 2022, you may have a check mailed in April. Checks are only written for capital credits of \$10 or more. If yours is less than that amount, it will be refunded to you once your retired capital credit balance exceeds \$10.

Since our incorporation in 1948, LEC has returned more than \$14 million to members in capital credits. RAM

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	YEAR TO DATE JANUARY 2024	YEAR TO DATE JANUARY 2023
KWh SALES	19,612,761	16,390,176
REVENUE	\$1,656,069	\$1,376,352
COST OF POWER	\$993,738	\$658,925
OPERATING EXPENSE	\$440,805	\$442,726
MARGINS	\$114,038	\$167,192
NUMBER OF MEMBERS	5,220	5,102
NUMBER OF METERS	6,530	6,538
MILES OF LINE	1,014	1,004
TOTAL UTILITY PLANT	\$39,262,478	\$38,295,598
MEMBER EQUITY	\$14,860,394	\$13,735,659
JANUARY AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL USE (KWH)	2,649	2,223
JANUARY AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL BILLING	\$218.05	\$184.13

## BUSINESS AND BOARDROOM BRIEFS

**The regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted on February 20. A quorum of trustees was present and the board took the following action:**

- Authorized future Youth Tour trips to be funded using the unclaimed capital credit education fund.
- Approved ratification of an email vote to present a proposed Bylaws change for Article III, Section 3, to be put before the membership in conjunction with the 2024 Annual Meeting.
- Approved the decision to not sign a PSA or PPA at this time.
- Approved a donation request for a \$375 Silver Sponsorship for the Kootenai Valley Rangers.
- Approved a donation request of \$2,500 for Eureka Robotics from the unclaimed capital credit education fund.
- Authorized Joel Graves to attend the NRECA Director's Conference in Nashville, TN, in April.
- Authorized Tina Taurman and Sandi Mason to attend the NRECA Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., in April.

## LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

## CONTACT

1-406-889-3301  
 info@lincolnelectric.coop  
 www.lincolnelectric.coop  
 Secure Payments: 1-833-890-6258

## ALWAYS REPORT OUTAGES TO:

1-406-889-3301

## OFFICE

312 Osloski Road  
 PO BOX 628  
 Eureka, Montana 59917

## OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday  
 7:00 AM - 5:30 PM

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Tina Taurman**  
 President

**Joel Graves**  
 Vice President

**Sandi Mason**  
 Secretary-Treasurer

**Myra Appel**  
**Becky Evins**  
**Rodney Kane**  
**Rick Peterson**  
**Marianne Roose**  
**Ethel White**

Lincoln Electric's Board of Trustees holds regular monthly meetings at the boardroom in the cooperative office. These are typically scheduled on the third Monday of each month at 6 p.m. Members are encouraged to attend. If you have any items of interest, please contact the general manager prior to the meeting.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:**  
**TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 2024**



**Lincoln Electric  
 Cooperative, Inc.**

**HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?**

**SEND YOUR IDEAS TO:**

memberservices@lincolnelectric.coop

# PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES

**T**HE Board of Trustees has approved presenting proposed bylaws changes to the membership for voting via mail-in ballot in conjunction with the 2024 Annual Meeting:

**Proposal #1** includes several different sections of the bylaws. The intent is to eliminate the need to have a mail-in

ballot election for uncontested trustee seats. In the event the number of qualified nominees received is equal to the number of expiring seats, no election would be required. This change requires several bylaws areas to be amended together to accomplish that objective.

**Proposal #2** is to rectify a reference made incorrect during the bylaws changes approved by the membership in 2020. A section was added, which caused the ensuing sections to be renumbered. A reference to one of those renumbered sections was overlooked, and is now referencing the incorrect section number.

## PROPOSAL 1

### ARTICLE III. MEETINGS OF MEMBERS SECTION 5. VOTING

Each member shall be entitled to only one vote per membership. All questions, except the election of trustees, shall be decided by a vote of the majority of the members voting, except as otherwise provided by law, the Articles of Incorporation or these By-Laws. Trustees shall be elected by receiving the highest number of votes; not necessarily a majority. If more than one trustee is to be elected in a district, all candidates who receive the highest number of votes on a single ballot for that district shall be elected to fill the positions. Tie votes shall be resolved by a coin flip.

**Proposed Addition:** If the number of qualified nominations received for a district are equal to the number of expiring and/or vacant trustee seats in the same district, no election need be held for that district, and the nominee(s) shall be trustee(s) for the district as if duly elected by the membership. If the number of qualified nominations for a district is less than the number of expiring and/or vacant trustee seat(s) in the same district, the Board of Trustees shall select nominee(s) to fill the vacant nomination seat(s), no election need be held for that district, and the nominee(s) shall be trustee(s) for the district as if duly elected by the membership.

A person who intends to vote a membership of an organization with multiple ownership, shall be required to furnish, at the time of registering for the meeting and submitting their mail-in ballot, a certificate from a duly authorized officer of the organization certifying that such person shall have the right to vote the membership at

the meeting and by mail-in ballot. All votes must be by ballot. No voting by proxy shall be permitted.

### SECTION 6. MAIL-IN BALLOTS

**Original:** *Members shall vote by mail-in ballot on all By-Laws amendments, By-Laws repeal, and trustee elections with the results announced at the annual meeting or last business day in April, whichever first occurs. All other voting arising from a meeting of the members shall be in person by written ballot.*

**Proposed Change:** Members shall vote by mail-in ballot on all By-Laws amendments and By-Laws repeal. Except as provided in Section 5 of this article, members shall also vote by mail-in ballot on trustee elections. Results will be announced at the annual meeting or the last business day of April, whichever first occurs. All other voting arising from a meeting of the members shall be in person by written ballot.

### ARTICLE IV. TRUSTEES SECTION 5. TRUSTEE NOMINATIONS

There shall be nominated from each district at least as many candidates as there are trustees to be elected from such district and there be elected from each district the number of trustees specified as hereinbefore provided.

**Proposed Addition:** If the number of qualified nominations for a district is less than the number of expiring and/or vacant trustee seat(s) in the same district, the Board of Trustees shall select nominee(s) to fill the vacant nomination seat(s) as provided in Article III, Section 5.

Each nomination of the office of trustee in any district shall be made by a petition for election of trustees submitted to the Secretary of the Cooperative not less than 100 days prior to the annual meeting or at

another time as determined by the Board of Trustees at their discretion. Each petition shall consist of the printed name, address, telephone number, Cooperative member number, and original dated signature of not less than five (5) members from the candidate's district. The petition shall be signed by the candidate asserting his or her qualifications for the position and agreement to serve as trustee is so elected.

## PROPOSAL 2

### ARTICLE III. MEETINGS OF MEMBERS SECTION 3. NOTICE OF MEMBERS' MEETINGS

**Original:** *Written notice, stating the place, day and hour of the meeting, and, in case of a special meeting or an annual meeting in which business other than listed in Article III, Section 6 of these By-Laws is to be transacted, the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called, shall be delivered to each member not less than twenty-five (25) days before the date of the meeting, by or at the direction of the Secretary, or upon a default in duty by the Secretary, by the persons calling the meeting.*

**Proposed Change:** Written notice, stating the place, day and hour of the meeting, and, in case of a special meeting or an annual meeting in which business other than listed in Article III, Section 7 of these By-Laws is to be transacted, the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called, shall be delivered to each member not less than twenty-five (25) days before the date of the meeting, by or at the direction of the Secretary, or upon a default in duty by the Secretary, by the persons calling the meeting.

## VOTE BY MAIL FOR TRUSTEE NOMINEES

**T**RUSTEE elections will be conducted via mail-in ballot. This year, there are three trustee seats up for election that must be filled by a vote of the membership. All three seats represent District 6 - Upper.

Per the bylaws, all members vote for trustees in all districts, regardless of which district you reside in. Even if you are in District 7, you still vote for the trustee seats in District 6. There are four nominees running for the three trustee seats in District 6. The three nominees with the highest number of votes will be elected.

At least two percent of our membership, about 105 members, must submit valid ballots to elect trustees. Members who submit a mail-in ballot will be entered into a

drawing for bill certificates! We'll randomly draw a winner each for a \$250, \$150 and \$100 credit to be applied toward your electric bill.

The mail-in ballot is contained in your notice of meeting, which was mailed mid-March. To vote, either drop your completed ballot in the mail or deposit it in the ballot box in Lincoln Electric's foyer. Ballots are due to Lincoln Electric by April 15.

Per the trustee election process, all nominees could submit a bio of under 200 words with their nomination petition. Please find those bios below.

### DISTRICT 6 - UPPER

#### JOEL GRAVES

(INCUMBENT)

Joel Graves brings over 12 years of proven leadership to the Lincoln Electric Cooperative board. As a longtime resident of Eureka, Montana, he understands the needs of the community and the co-op's member-owners.



Joel grew up right here in Eureka and has dedicated his career to the education of our youth. He has served Eureka Public Schools as an administrator for 17 years, the last 2 as superintendent. Joel has demonstrated wise decision-making, financial responsibility, and commitment to improving our coop and community. If reelected, Joel will continue working to ensure Lincoln Electric provides reliable, affordable power throughout our co-ops service area. His depth of knowledge and vested interest in the area make Joel an excellent candidate. We can count on Joel to maintain a member-driven, community-focused approach as part of the co-op board. He has faithfully served our community through schools and coop, and given the opportunity, will continue to do so.

#### RODNEY KANE

(INCUMBENT)

Keeping costs down – That is my goal. I know we have a large number of members that live paycheck to paycheck, and they need to have stable



electricity prices. I have worked for 40 years as an engineer reducing expenses and increasing reliability. I believe I can help LEC keep expenses down. My wife and I love Eureka. We want to see young people flourish, we want to see people enjoy their retirement, and the best way for that to happen is to keep the cost of electricity low and not follow California's lead. In my previous careers, I was able to reduce failures by greater than 50% and increase reliability. We have great people and trustees at LEC, some of the best I have ever worked with. Allow me to continue to work with them for a great future.

#### DAVID PURDY

My name is David Purdy. I was born and raised in Eureka, Montana. I have been married to my wife for 35 years. We have two children and three grandchildren who are also being raised in Eureka. I grew up on a dairy farm and attended Eureka Public Schools. After graduating from Lincoln County High School, I attended FVCC for one year. I then started my electrical career working for Don and Bonnie Carpenter. I spent ten years in Cincinnati, Ohio working for Willis Electric before returning home to Eureka. While in Ohio I studied and took the Montana Electrical test to become a Master Electrician. I received my license in 1995. I have been working as a Master Electrician for the past 28 years in Northwest Montana. I have worked in all areas of the electrical field. I have worked with the staff and personnel of LEC and have over 45 years of experience in the electrical field. I am eager to continue learning, and feel I would be an asset to the LEC Board. I would like to serve on this board to help this community and be a voice for all those that the Co-op serves.



#### BARRY ROOSE

Born in Whitefish & raised in Eureka and attended Eureka schools from grade 1-12

Graduated in 1972. Attended Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Mt 1972-1977 earning Bachelor of Science degrees in Accounting/Finance and Secondary Education. Worked in Public Accounting, Economic Development, General Contracting and Construction Project Management. Owned and operated 2 Full Beverage licensed establishments with gaming and currently own and operate Koocanusa Brewery. Served on Gallatin Development Economic Development Board. Served on Private Industry Council Board.

