

Northern District
2731 Milo Terr.
Lebo, KS 66856

Southern District
9346 Jewell Rd.
Fredonia, KS 66736

Payment Center
2501 W. 18th Ave., Ste. B
Emporia, KS 66801

4 RIVERS

Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

CURRENTS

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Board of Trustees

Michael Springer
President

Robert Converse
Vice-President

Gene Huston
Secretary

David Engelman
Treasurer

Tom Ayers
Trustee

Randal Bunnel
Trustee

Larry Felts
Trustee

Nick Frankenbery
Trustee

Robert Harkrader
Trustee

Stacy Heins
Trustee

David Kunkel
Trustee

Warren Schmidt
Trustee

Sandy Smith
Trustee

Carol Wehmeyer
Trustee

Staff

Dennis Svanes
General Manager/CEO

Mark Doebele
Assistant General Manager/COO

Roger Cole
CFO

Ken Caudell
Manager of Member and Corporate Services

FROM THE MANAGER

Cooperative Principle No. 2 Democratic Member Control



Dennis Svanes

I have written about the Seven Cooperative Principles in past months. The second principle — Democratic Member Control — means that you, the consumer-

members, have a say in how 4 Rivers is regulated. Any consumer-member who meets the criteria to be on the board (see article on Page 16B), has the opportunity to be on the ballot and run for a board seat.

What does it mean to be a trustee? The board of trustees is the regulatory body that represents the consumer-members of 4 Rivers. To fulfill those duties and understand how co-ops function, there is an education program that credentials board members. Our national organization, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), develops these courses for cooperatives. Our statewide organization, Kansas Electric Cooperatives (KEC), works with NRECA to provide much of that training locally in Kansas. Our lenders CFC and CoBank are also cooperatives and provide both board members and staff members education about the industry and the co-op business model.

There is a time commitment beyond the educational piece. 4 Rivers holds monthly meetings of the board, typically on the third Monday of the month. We have trustees who represent 4 Rivers in different organizations such as KEC and our generation and transmission supplier, Kansas Electric Power Cooperative (KEPCo). There are other meetings as well, such as in January when the 4 Rivers' board held a two-day strategic planning session. While there is a time commitment, the trustees of 4 Rivers and other co-ops, enjoy the role they have in governing their cooperatives and serving the consumer-members.

On Feb. 1, packets will be available to consumer-members who are interested in running for the board, including the petition needed to be placed on the ballot. You can view the packet online at www.4riverselectric.com or call our office at 620-364-2116 to make arrangements for pickup/delivery, since offices have been closed due to COVID-19 case numbers in our area. I encourage anyone who is interested to review the information and contact me if you have any questions. Ballots will be mailed in March, and the winners will be announced at our annual meeting in May.

Thanks for reading and I hope all of you stay safe and healthy!

Trustee Elections to be Held in 2021

Candidates to be Nominated by Petitions — Due by Feb. 26, 2021

As we proceed into our second year of consolidation, the cooperative shall hold an election of trustees to serve three-year terms on 4 Rivers Electric's governing board.

The election of trustees shall be by district, and only qualified candidates nominated by petition shall appear on the ballot. There are two positions in the north districts and three positions in the south districts holding elections this year. Your district of membership can be found at the top of your 4 Rivers monthly bill; please reach out to our office if you have any questions on your district of membership.

In the north districts, the terms of trustees **GENE HOUSTON** (District N1) and **WARREN SCHMIDT** (District N3) are expiring in 2021.

In the south districts, the terms of trustees **LARRY FELTS** (District S2), **MICHAEL SPRINGER** (District S3) and **NICK FRANKENBERY** (South District's At-Large position) are expiring this year.

Petition Requirements

To be placed on the ballot, a petition containing the signatures of at least 20 consumer-members of the cooperative who live in the district for which the election is being held, approving the nomination of the individual consumer-member to be placed on the ballot, must be delivered to the 4 Rivers office at either Lebo or Fredonia by 4:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 26, 2021.

For consumer-members interested in running for the board, candidate packets are available at www.4riverselectric.com or by calling our office at 620-364-2116 to arrange for pickup/delivery. Packets include more information on trustee duties, along with the

petition form for collecting consumer-member signatures.

In March, ballots will be mailed to the respective consumer-members in the districts for which an election is taking place. Only the names of the nominees for such district shall be on the ballot. Returned and completed ballots must be postmarked or received at the Lebo office on or before April 20. The results will be announced at the annual meeting of members to be held in May.

Qualifications for Candidacy

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a trustee of the cooperative who:

- A.** Is not a consumer-member, or is a member who is not in good standing pursuant to the provisions for members as set forth in Article I of the bylaws;
- B.** Is not an individual (natural person) who is a consumer-member;
- C.** Is in any way employed or financially interested in a competing enterprise or business that sells electric energy, items, materials, or products that can be used to create electric energy, or supplies to the cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures, services, or supplies to the consumer-members of the cooperative (this specifically does not include a consumer-member who installs renewable energy electric generation individually on his or her own property and is

interconnected with the cooperative's transmission lines);

D. Has equipment connected to cooperative equipment and has an agreement through which electricity is sold to the cooperative;

E. Is not a resident of the district they would otherwise represent (for purposes of this section, "resident" means that they have lived in the district for a minimum of at least three years prior to the election, and that their address during said three-year time period in Kansas within the district is such person's primary address and has been for such three-year period, and that such person is receiving electricity from the Cooperative at this residence);

F. Is a current employee of the cooperative, or a member of the family of a current employee of the cooperative (for purposes of this section, "member of the family" shall mean a spouse, father, mother, son, daughter, stepson or daughter, or any lineal descendant of a current employee);

G. Has been an employee of the cooperative within three years prior to the election, or is a member of the family of a person who has been an employee of the cooperative within three years prior to the election as "member of the family" is defined in section "E" above; or

H. Is a member of the family of a current trustee (incumbent) who is not up for election, as "member of the family" is defined in section "E" above.



Tindle and Tweedy Retire after 80 Combined Years of Service

Longtime employees **TRACY TINDLE**, area foreman, and **MIKE TWEEDY**, member service representative, retired last month after many years of service to the co-op.

Tindle retired Jan. 4 after 40 years of service to the cooperative. He began working for Radiant Electric in April 1981 and assisted with the building and restoration of countless miles of power line over the past 40 years. His knowledge and experience helped many new linemen to grow in their roles at the co-op.

Tweedy, also a 40-year veteran of the cooperative, retired on Jan. 11. He started working for Coffey County Rural Electric Association in May



Tracy Tindle



Mike Tweedy

1981 and served the membership through consolidation to Lyon-Coffey Electric Co-op and 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative. He has seen many changes along the way from both a lineman's perspective to his time in member services as he assisted consumer-members with their concerns and the community through programs such as Youth Tour and KidWind Challenge.

Our cooperative family wishes Mike, Tracy and their families the very best in their new life chapters. We are thankful for their many years of dedication to serving the cooperative and our consumer-members!

Let's Connect.

When we say that we live in a “connected” world, most of us think about technology, like smartphones and other devices and gadgets. When you are a consumer-member of an electric co-op (that's you!), there is so much more to being part of our connected co-op community.

We greatly value our connection to you, the members we serve. We want to help you maximize the value you can get from 4 Rivers Electric through a variety of programs, products and services that we offer our members. For example, we can help you save money with rebates on new electric water heaters and/or air or ground-source heat pumps.

When you download our SmartHub app, you can monitor and manage your home energy use, pay your bill online and access a menu of additional options. When you sign up for text alerts/push notifications, you can receive notices on outage and restoration information, billing updates and changes to 4 Rivers Electric event details.

When you follow 4 Rivers Electric on social media, you can stay up to date on power restoration efforts, tree trimming planning, co-op trustee elections, giveaways and more. You will also see photos of our line crews in action and our employees helping with community projects.

By connecting with us, you can get real-time updates from your co-op. That is why we want to make sure we have your most current contact information on hand. If we cannot connect with you on these platforms or in person, you could miss out on potential savings or important information.

4 Rivers Electric relies on data for nearly every aspect of our operations, and up-to-date contact information from

our members helps ensure we can provide the highest level of service that you expect and deserve.

Updated contact information can even speed up the power restoration process during an outage. That is because when you call to report an outage, our automated system recognizes your phone number and matches it with your account location. Accurate information helps our outage management system predict the location and the possible cause of an outage, making it easier for 4 Rivers Electric crews to correct the problem.

We hope you will connect with us whenever and wherever you can — whether that means attending our annual meeting or simply downloading our app. 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative exists to serve our members, and when we are better connected to you and our local communities, we are better prepared to answer the call.

To update your contact information or learn more about co-op products and services that can help you save, log on to the SmartHub app, visit www.4riverselectric.com or call us at 620-364-2116.

We look forward to connecting with you!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static. Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer's filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.

SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Getting to Know Your Co-op Team

From lineworkers to member service representatives to managers, your 4 Rivers team is dedicated to providing safe, reliable, cost-effective electric service to our membership. Meet three co-op team members who go above and beyond to serve you.



Ed Bambick

ED BAMBICK is approaching his five-year anniversary with the cooperative. He takes care of building and grounds maintenance and assists with mapping. He enjoys helping in a variety of jobs at the cooperative and learning more about the mapping program. Bambick lives in Fredonia and was raised on a farm just south of there. He enjoys golfing and woodworking in his free time and looks forward to the day when he can spend more time on the golf course and traveling. He is inspired by his parents and is grateful for the time he had with them and the life lessons they taught him. His message to our consumer-members would be that after the first year of consolidation, he is more comfortable with the changes occurring and looks forward to seeing what the future holds. Thanks for your hard work, Ed!



Bryan Sobba

BRYAN SOBBA is a journeyman lineman and works as an area serviceman in the north districts. He has been with the co-op for over two years, after working as a municipal line-

man for several years. He enjoys taking care of our consumer-members' needs, troubleshooting problems and working with the crews on various projects. Sobba lives in Garnett with his wife, Amanda, and three sons, Wyatt, 8; Chase, 6; and Logan, 3. He enjoys farming, ranching, hunting, fishing and sharing his love of the outdoors with his children. He likes to travel and hopes to share his favorite destination, Yellowstone National Park, with his family someday. He is proud of his family and also of his accomplishment of becoming a lineman. He has seen improvements in tools, equipment, safety and technology. He's learned that consumer-member engagement is an important part of being a co-op. He wants our consumer-members to know that we are here to serve them. Thanks for your dedication to our consumer-members, Bryan!



Terri Lofdahl

TERRI LOFDAHL will celebrate 23 years of service in March. She is a senior billing clerk and customer service representative, who has worked in various areas of the co-op allowing her to help consumer-members with, not only electricity, but water districts, propane and internet. She loves assisting our consumer-members and helping them understand their bills. She grew up in Dunlap, Iowa, but makes her home in Strong City along with her husband, Glenn. Lofdahl has a son, Dustin, and two stepdaughters, Julie and Jennifer, along with one grandson, Abram, 8. She looks forward to joining her husband in retirement someday and traveling more. They enjoy antique shopping and are always on the lookout for

something that catches their eye. Terri also has a love for Jesus and music; she's played the organ, piano and sang for church and many weddings. She's seen a lot of change in the technology used to serve our consumer-members and learned a lot about cooperatives, most of all, that serving our consumer-members is very gratifying. Above all, she wants our consumer-members to know that we value them and are dedicated to serving their needs. Thanks for your continued service to our co-op and members, Terri!

LIEAP Program Application Period Open

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that helps keep families safe and healthy by assisting eligible households with a portion of their home energy costs by providing a once-per-year benefit.

The 2021 LIEAP application period is open; applications must be received online or in a Kansas Dept. for Children and Families (DCF) office by March 31 to be considered for eligibility. For more information, call 1-800-432-0043 or visit www.dcf.ks.gov.

2021 LIEAP Income Eligibility Guidelines

Maximum gross monthly income for persons living at the address:

1	\$1,383	8	\$4,780
2	\$1,868	9	\$5,265
3	\$2,353	10	\$5,751
4	\$2,839	11	\$6,236
5	\$3,324	12	\$6,721
6	\$3,809		+1 \$486 for each additional person
7	\$4,295		