

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

Larry Felts
Treasurer

Tom Ayers
Trustee

Randall Bunnell
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

Safety is Everyone's Business



Dennis Svanes

As you can imagine, safety is one of the most considered topics in the electric industry. We constantly look for better and safer work practices, better safety equipment, and better ways to keep safety in the forefront of what we do. Our linemen work daily with high voltage at great heights and in all weather.

High voltage is dangerous to be around and unforgiving. It is important for us to make sure that you, our consumer-members, and the public are aware and stay safe around our equipment. Hence why safety reminders such as looking up when working with high profile equipment, calling 811 before you dig, being safe around storms and downed power lines, burning pastures, reporting trees in the lines, and other safety messages are published and shared so frequently.

Working for the electric cooperative

is not the only high-risk occupation in our service area. Many of our members hold a position with a high degree of risk. Growing up on a farm, I learned the dangers involved in farming and ranching. I have family who work in the oil fields and others in law enforcement. Creating a safer workplace, using safer equipment, and continually improving safety practices are as important in their occupation as it is in the electric cooperative. Safety is an important message for all of us, and we must share it and practice it. **SPEAK UP** to notify those around you of dangers. **LISTEN UP** when someone notifies you of those risks. Practice safety at work and at home, because going home at the end of the day is the most important thing we can do for our community and our family.

On a final safety note, Independence Day is here, and many celebrate with friends, family, and fireworks. Please make sure that everyone stays safe, and those using fireworks practice safety first.

I hope all of you have a wonderful and safe 4th of July!



4TH OF JULY

Our offices will be closed on
Monday, July 5, for the holiday.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Bylaws Govern Our Cooperative Processes



Michael Springer
Board President

I want to thank everyone who joined us for our first 4 Rivers Annual Meeting on May 22. The membership passed the proposed bylaws for 4 Rivers. The bylaws are the governing document of the cooperative. It defines things like who can be a member, who can serve on the board, how capital credits are allocated back to the members and many other important functions.

Serving as a trustee on the board is limited to members who are a natural person and reside in the district they represent. While there are corporations that would like to be on our board making decisions, it is not allowed. This is primarily to ensure that board decisions are made by local individuals who have the best interest of the membership at heart. Someone who works for a competing enterprise or business that sells electric goods to the cooperative or consumer-members is also prohibited from serving on the cooperative board per our bylaws. There are a few other restrictions, such as employees, family members of an employee and family of other trustees are not eligible to become a trustee.

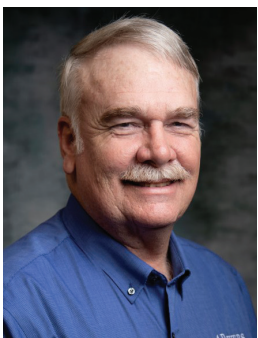
To be on the ballot for a trustee position you must be nominated by petition, which is a little different from the Lyon-Coffey or Radiant processes. Twenty signatures by valid

consumer-members in the election district are needed to get on the ballot. This is the same for anyone who wishes to be nominated, whether incumbent or challenger, making it equitable for anyone interested in running for the board. Prior to an election, the cooperative issues election notifications in *Kansas Country Living*, on social media and on our website. However, for this year's election, only the incumbent trustees submitted petitions for nomination. In the future, if you are interested in serving on the cooperative board or staying up to date with other cooperative communications, please watch for notices of election and other events in your monthly *Kansas Country Living* publication and online.

While preparing the bylaws, the board discussed trustee term limits at length and decided not to include term limits on the proposed bylaws due to the ease of any eligible member to appear on the ballot. The best term limit is the membership's vote. Another reason term limits were omitted is the time it takes to learn and have a firm grasp of the industry. The electric industry is more complex than one may realize. With that being said, we are always looking for consumer-members interested in serving and caring for the membership on the board of trustees.

The bylaws govern many more aspects of the cooperative. Please go to our website, www.4riverselectric.com, to review our bylaws and other cooperative information.

Engelman Retires from 4 Rivers Board of Trustees



David Engelman

Special thanks to **DAVID ENGELMAN** for serving on the board of trustees for the past 12 years. Engelman was elected to the Radiant Electric Cooperative board of directors in

2009 and retired from 4 Rivers' board May 22 after the annual meeting. We appreciate Engelman's contributions to the cooperative over the years.

KEY Leadership Conference

Two upcoming high school seniors, **MADISON COULTER**, Fredonia, and **WYATT WILSON**, Burlington, represented 4 Rivers Electric in the Kansas Electric Youth (KEY) Leadership Conference June 21-25.

The KEY Leadership Conference, held virtually, focused on different aspects of leadership and included dynamic speakers, engaging activities and teambuilding challenges. The speaker lineup included Senator Jerry Moran and several motivational cooperative professionals. The keynote speaker of the conference, Kansas City Chiefs mascot, Dan Meers, shared his inspiring message "Wolves Can't Fly."

Networking is always a big part of the electric cooperative youth programs as delegates connect with peers across the state through teambuilding activities. A panel of Youth Tour alumni shared tips and answered questions from conference participants about life after high school.

4 Rivers encourages youth to be involved in our cooperative, community and leadership opportunities whenever possible.



Madison Coulter



Wyatt Wilson

2021 Annual Meeting Highlights

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative held the inaugural annual meeting of the consumer-members on Saturday, May 22, at Burlington High School. The meeting was originally planned to be drive-in style in the school parking lot, but due to inclement weather, the meeting was moved into the gymnasium to allow business to be conducted in a safer, more conducive environment.

Consumer-members in attendance received a 4 Rivers reusable tote bag and a ballot for voting on the approval of the proposed cooperative bylaws, along with ballots for any proxies they carried.

All trustees attended the meeting, including Tom Ayers, Randall Bunnell, Vice-President Robert Converse, Treasurer David Engelman, Larry Felts, Nick Frankenbery, Robert Harkrader, Stacy Heins, Secretary Gene Huston, David Kunkel, Warren Schmidt, Sandy Smith, President Michael Springer and Carol Wehmeyer.

With 94 members registered including the proxies, a quorum was declared. Springer called the meeting to order, and Felts gave an invocation. Huston reported the official notice of meeting was mailed to members in our *Kansas Country Living* newsletter. General Counsel Tim Larson explained the voting process for consideration of the bylaws and asked if anyone had questions or discussion prior to voting by secret ballot. Members approved the bylaws by a majority of votes.

The results of the election for the 4 Rivers board of trustees were announced. By majority vote of the mail-in ballots, the three-year terms were filled by **A. EUGENE HUSTON**, re-elected to North District 1; **WARREN SCHMIDT**, re-elected to North District 3; **LARRY FELTS**, re-elected to South District 2; **MICHAEL SPRINGER**, re-elected to South District 3; and **NICK FRANKENBERY**, re-elected to the South District's At-Large position.

Springer delivered his president's report focusing



Six lucky members won bill credits during the annual meeting prize drawings.



Some of the approximately 55 members and guests attending our annual meeting.

on the seven cooperative principles: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; members' economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community.

Engelman reported the first year revenue for 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative. General Manager Dennis Svanes spoke on the challenges with the consolidation and how COVID-19 changed the day-to-day operations of the cooperative. Svanes also spoke about the installation of two 1-mega-watt solar farms located near the Americus and Studebaker substations.

Door prizes were drawn, and the inaugural meeting of 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative members was adjourned. The board of trustees and cooperative staff were pleased to have the membership meet together and look forward to our next meeting in 2022.



4 Rivers Lineman Apprentice Brandon Munger collects ballots during the meeting.

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 four co-op team members who go above and beyond to serve you.



Roger Cole

ROGER COLE started with Lyon-Coffey Electric 12 years ago and is 4 Rivers' chief financial officer. Roger spends most of his time accounting, managing co-op finances and working with staff on business needs. He has worked at three different co-ops giving him 45 years of employment with electric co-ops. He also has served on the advisory committee of the NRECA Tax, Finance and Accounting Conference for 14 years.

He enjoys working with his team and is proud of the friendship and support of those around him. He believes everyone at the co-op is important and plays a role in making the co-op operate efficiently.

Roger and his wife, Kathy, have been married for 43 years and have two children and six grandchildren. He enjoys reading and watching movies. Roger's favorite vacations spots are Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and Bentonport, Iowa, for a quiet retreat with historical flair. Roger is inspired by President Harry Truman who led our nation through challenging times after the passing of Franklin Roosevelt.

Roger would like consumer-members to remember that they each have a voice at the co-op; their participation and votes are important to the operation of 4 Rivers — their electric co-op.



Brian Sumner

BRIAN SUMNER started working for Radiant Electric nearly 20 years ago and works out of the south office. His day-to-day activities are filled with IT, member services, rebates, compliance, dispatch, meter reviews, billing and any other office duties that come along. During Brian's career with the cooperative, he has seen many technological changes, such as solid-state drives, mobile apps and smart meters. One thing that stays the same is

that the cooperative never stops growing and working to provide support for our consumer-members.

Brian has been married to his wife, Julie, for 40 years, and they live in Fredonia. They have one daughter, Erika, who recently married. Brian looks forward to every day, loves to stay busy and is not quite ready for retirement. When Brian is not working, he can be found working out, doing yard work, fishing or cruising the neighborhood in his Honda side-by-side. Some of Brian's favorite vacations spots are the Grand Cayman Islands and Ontario, Canada, because he loves being outside, and the scenery is breathtaking.

Brian would like our consumer-members to know that safety is most important for our employees, the consumer-members and their families. We are always here to help our members, and if we do not know the answer to your question, we will make it our mission to find out.



Chase Dressler

CHASE DRESSLER is a third-year apprentice lineman and generally works in the north district. His workday is filled with changing out electric poles, pole and line repair and ensuring that our consumer-members have safe, reliable power. Chase's favorite part of the job is maintaining and repairing existing lines. Chase is inspired by the other linemen at 4 Rivers Electric. He enjoys working with them and appreciates

what they have taught him along the way. Chase is looking forward to growing with his team, becoming a journeyman and reinforcing safety at the cooperative.

Chase is from Eudora and enjoys working with cattle on his family ranch, hunting, fishing and being outside. In the fall, you can find Chase helping on the family pumpkin patch. Chase's favorite vacation spot is Mexico because of the awesome scenery and amazing beaches. One of Chase's proudest moments will be marrying his fiancé, Elizabeth.

Chase wants our consumer-members to know that aside from safety, our team is focused on taking care of our members and making sure their power stays on even in the worst of weather.



Josh Hite

JOSH HITE is a third-year apprentice lineman working primarily in the south district. His daily routine consists of building new power lines and keeping them maintained. Josh enjoys going to work knowing his daily activities help provide power to consumer-members. Josh knew he wanted to be a lineman after picking that job title out of a hat for an eighth grade school project on being a lineman as a career. The hard work, skillset and dedica-

tion required of a lineman captured his attention making it his dream job.

Josh is from McPherson but moved to Fredonia in third grade. He is inspired by his brother who has been serving in the military for over 13 years and raised a family of three wonderful little girls. Josh's favorite vacation was with his brother in Pensacola when they spent time hanging out on the military base and fishing. Josh is looking forward to the future and raising a family of his own with his new wife, Leslie.

Josh wants our consumer-members to know that we appreciate them; they are our friends and family. We are always ready to go the extra mile to serve our members and ensure they are safe and supplied with power.