

MEET YOUR DIRECTOR CANDIDATES

Co-op membership has its advantages. One advantage of being a member of a cooperative is the opportunity to elect directors to the co-op's board. The chance to vote for your board will be held on April 9 at the Oconto Falls High School Performing Arts Center, at OEC's annual meeting.

There are three director terms expiring this year – district 2, incumbent David Hischke; district 3, incumbent Tony Wagner; and district 5, incumbent Ken Cisar. A meeting was held in January in each of these districts for the purpose of nominating at least one, but not more than two people, to run for election to fill the positions.

At the district 2 meeting, incumbent David Hischke was the only person nominated to fill the position of director. At the district 3 meeting, incumbent Tony Wagner was the only person nominated to fill the position of director. Their nominations will be approved at the annual meeting by voice vote.

In district 5, incumbent Ken Cisar, Ronnie Kruse, and Karl Markhardt were nominated to fill the director position. Since there were three nominations, an election was held at the district meeting. Ken Cisar and Ronnie Kruse received the most votes so they will advance to the final election by the membership at the annual meeting.

DISTRICT 2



David Hischke – is the incumbent director for district 2. He has served on Oconto Electric Cooperative's board for 18 years and is currently the board chairman.

Dave and his wife, Nancy, have two children, Robin and Luke, and two granddaughters, Kallie and Elizabeth. Dave, Nancy, Luke and his wife, Kayla, are involved in Sunrise Dairy LLC,

a multi-family farm they own and operate near Suring.

Dave is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin–Madison Farm short course. He has held various offices at St. John's Lutheran Church in Hayes, has been on the board of directors at Alto Dairy Cooperative, Pulaski Chase Cooperative, Cooperative Network, and has served on his local town board.

"Oconto Electric has improved many things in the past 18 years. One of the things I am most passionate about is increasing electric reliability. We have upgraded much of the system, including substations, greatly decreasing outages, while increasing rates as little as possible," stated Dave.

Spending time with his family is Dave's favorite pastime. He also enjoys traveling, hunting, and fishing when time allows.

DISTRICT 3



Tony Wagner – currently represents district 3. He has served on Oconto Electric Cooperative's board for the past 27 years, including past terms as secretary and treasurer. Tony is also past president of the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association board, president and vice-president of the Federated Youth Foundation board.

Tony works with his son, Hank,

on the family farm in the town of Green Valley. He and his wife, Judy, have five children and 11 grandchildren and one great-grandson. A graduate of Pulaski High School, Tony has also attended classes in agriculture. He has been active in the Farm Bureau (director and secretary), County and State 4-H (president and secretary), 4-H Foundation (director), and Milk, Feed and Breeders Cooperatives (delegate).

When asked what he liked best about being a director for Oconto Electric Cooperative, Tony said, "I like looking for ways to make Oconto Electric stronger and to better meet the needs of the members, especially with some of the challenges we are facing today. With some of the regulations the EPA is proposing, the entire electric industry could change."

In his spare time Tony enjoys gardening, hiking, and traveling with Judy.

CE DISTRICT 5



Ken Cisar – has been the director for district 5 since 1995 and was treasurer for the board from 1997 to 2011. He resides with his wife, Kate, in the town of Little River. The Cisars have six children, 17 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

Ken is a retired dairy farmer who also worked part-time for the federal

government in a soil conservation program for 45 years. He has been active in numerous organizations, including Oconto County 4-H Leaders Association (president and treasurer), Oconto County Fair Board (director), Oconto County Rural Urban Committee (president), First American Church (coun-



Ronnie Kruse – has been an OEC member for 35 years and recently was nominated as a director candidate for district 5. After attending Gillett High School, Ronnie joined the U.S. Navy. During his four years of service, he was stationed on the USS Brewton in Pearl Harbor and on the USS Chicago in San Diego.

After his military service, Ronnie returned to the area where he and his wife, June, started a dairy operation in the town of Little River and raised their family of four children. In addition to dairy farming, Ronnie has been an electrician for Electrical cil member and treasurer), Bay Lakes Cooperative (treasurer, vice-president and president), Oconto County DHIA (president), and St. Paul Bank for Cooperatives (various committees).

In 1986 Ken was awarded the Wisconsin Federation of Cooperatives Cooperative Builder Award.

When asked about the biggest challenge OEC faces today, Cisar said, "Government regulations. The Environmental Protection Agency and Clean Power Plan has to stop and think about what is best for the country as a whole because the regulations they have proposed will cause the cost of electricity to increase. If all of us pull together and let our voices be heard, we can make changes that make sense for everyone."

In his spare time Ken enjoys helping others and spending time with his family.

Service and Supplies in Oconto for 20 years.

In the past, Ronnie served as a supervisor on the Oconto County Board and as the council president of Sacred Heart Parish in Spruce. In his spare time, Ronnie enjoys traveling and spending time with his seven grandchildren.

When asked why he would like to serve as a director for Oconto Electric Cooperative, Ronnie replied, "Over the years I have sadly watched as some of the smaller farm supply co-ops have closed. I believe that co-ops are extremely good for our rural communities, so I would be honored to serve on the OEC board to help our co-op thrive for years to come. I will take the time to become fully invested in serving on the OEC board." Ronnie asks members for their support as he seeks the opportunity to serve on the OEC board.



Donate New Hygiene Items to LOCAL Shelters & Programs for Those 'At Risk'!

Most Needed Items:• Cleaning Supplies• Hair Care• Laundry Soap• Feminine Needs• Deodorant• Garbage Bags• Bathroom Tissue• Dental Care• Paper Towels• Diapers/Baby Care• Body Lotion• Paper Towels

Donations received in the Oconto/Marinette area will go to: Forward Service Corporation, NEWCAP Marinette (Community Access), NEWCAP Marinette (Housing), Oconto (Community Access), NEWCAP Oconto (Housing), Rainbow House Domestic Abuse Services (Oconto), Rainbow House Domestic Abuse Services (Marinette)

More information at thefamily.net or 800-236-9364 Thanks to our sponsors!



OCONTO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 79TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Pursuant to Article III, Section 3 of the bylaws of Oconto Electric Cooperative, notice is hereby given of the annual meeting of the members to be held:

Saturday, April 9, 2016 Registration opens at 9 a.m. - Meeting begins at 10 a.m. Held at the Performing Arts Center in the Oconto Falls High School

The following items of business will be conducted:

- Call to order/determination of quorum
- Invocation
- Adoption of rules of order
- Introduction of board members, guests, and former directors
- Reading of Notice of Meeting and Proof of Mailing
- Presentation and action on minutes of the 2015 Annual Meeting
- Presentation of 2015 Financial Report
- Chairman Report
- Approve/ratify reports and actions of officers & directors for 2015
- Election of Directors

- CEO's Report/RadioShack
- Presentation of 2016 scholarship recipients
- Presentation by Community "Change"
- Old business
- New business
- Final announcements
- Adjournment
- \$100 Cash drawing
- Prize drawings
- Progressive drawing

Members will receive the official notice and registration card in the mail during the week of March 14.

MINUTES FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING OF OCONTO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE HELD ON APRIL 11, 2015

The 78th Annual Meeting of Oconto Electric Cooperative was held on Saturday, April 11, 2015, at the Oconto Falls Performing Arts Center. Registration of members began at 9 a.m.

Chairman David Hischke introduced himself as director of District #2 and called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. With a current count of 224 members registered, the Chairman declared a quorum was present.

The invocation was given by Pastor Harvey Jeffers of St. John's Lutheran Church in Gillett, Wisconsin.

Cooperative Attorney Howard Eslien was introduced and would be conducting dual duties. Attorney Eslien was introduced as the Parliamentarian to assure that the meeting was governed by Robert's Rules of Order and would also be conducting the director election process.

Chairman Hischke introduced the board of directors along with recognizing former directors, retired employees, and special guests in attendance.

Chairman Hischke called on Secretary Todd Duame to read the official notice of the 78th annual meeting and the proof of mailing, which was a postcard mailed out March 13, 2015, to each member of the cooperative.

Chairman Hischke called for the reading or a motion to waive the reading of the 2014 Annual Meeting minutes. A motion was made and seconded to waive the reading and accept the minutes as published. *Motion Carried*.

Treasurer Dan Kanack provided the 2014 Cooperative's Financial Report. The 2014 income totaled \$16,247,071. Total expenses were \$14,795,129 with net margins for 2014 totaling \$1,451,942. Additional facts about the cooperative were also shared. Capital credits refunded to the membership in 2014 totaled \$655,245. The total refunded in capital credits since OEC began is \$13,771,428. Treasurer Kanack also stated that every year the board of directors has a strategic planning meeting to discuss the future of the cooperative. The directors set goals and expectations for management with one of the goals being set to maintain equity between 35–40 percent. This year even after major expenses of building a new substation in Little Suamico, repairs at the Stiles Hydro plant, maintaining OEC lines,





and refunding over \$655,000 dollars in capitals credits, Kanack was happy to report due to the excellent job of management, employees, and board of directors they have made this happen. At the end of December 2014 OEC's equity was 40.23 percent.

Chairman Hischke gave his report on the following areas:

• Strive For Safety – total hours worked without a loss-time-accident = 784,587 hours worked. OEC's worker's comp. ratio is .73% the lowest in the state for cooperatives

- Finance Update borrow less money keeping rates low
- Expansion of OEC's Radio Shack store

• New OEC scholarship category added – students attending the Lineman's Distribution Course through Northwest Technical College, Green Bay

Chairman Hischke called upon Cooperative Attorney Howard Eslien to explain and seek approval of the bylaw amendment. Attorney Eslien explained the bylaw amendment would no longer require the cooperative to send out membership certificates. Attorney Eslien called for a motion to approve. Motion was made, and seconded to approve the bylaw amendment as presented. *Motion Carried*.

At this time, in accordance with the Bylaws, a motion was called and seconded to approve and ratify all reports and actions of the officers and directors of the Oconto Electric Cooperative for 2014. *Motion Carried*.

Attorney Eslien explained the election process. This year District #1 having only one candidate, balloting would not be necessary. Attorney Eslien called for a motion to cast a unanimous ballot to approve incumbent director Vernon Gisenas of District #1 to serve on the Board of Directors for another term of three years. Motion was made and seconded. *Motion Carried*. District #7 had two candidates brought forward, Todd Duame and James Gilmet, requiring an election to be conducted. Each candidate was offered an opportunity to briefly address the membership. Attorney Eslien called for the membership to cast their ballot and requested the assigned tellers to collect the ballots.

While the tellers are counting the ballots Chairman Hischke called upon the CEO, Byron C. Nolde, for his report.

A moment of silence was requested in honor of those called to serve their country.

The CEO's report provided information concerning the following areas:

1. \$6 million returned in last 10 years in capital credits

2. Substation upgrades and a new substation in the Little Suamico area.

3. Stiles Hydro Plant repair

4. Purchase of additional property by hydro plant

5. Pole replacement, overhead – underground cable replacement 6. New services

7. Saw reduction in over-time hours worked

8. #1 Priority – safety

9. EPA regulations continue to be challenging

CEO Nolde ended his presentation with encouraging the membership to sign up on the Action.coop website for their voice to be heard concerning future electric rates skyrocketing. Nolde announced the 2014 employee charity selected was the Tech Ed department at the Lena, Coleman, and Gillett high schools. Employees raised \$10,000 for their chosen charity.

Chairman Hischke noted that the moment of silence requested by the CEO was in honor of those serving in the armed forces; Hischke stated that the military families of those serving make extreme sacrifices as well. Nolde's family is a prime example of that sacrifice. Hischke informed the membership that Byron's father was the last official casualty of the Vietnam War.

Election Results reported: District #7 -

Todd Duame 187 votes

James Gilmet 57 votes

Incumbent Director Todd Duame was re-elected to serve on the board of directors for another three-year term.

Chairman Hischke introduced Statewide Manager Share Brandt. Ms. Brandt provided an overview of WECA services, member co-ops, and affiliation with Cooperative Network. She summarized the EPA's Clean Power Plan goals, which seem to be complex and confusing. Brandt states the regulation's 2020 interim goal is unachievable and she thanked OEC members for sending in over 1,500 messages to the EPA. Brandt encouraged members to be ready to send in more messages once the final rule is issued.

The following attending 2015 OEC scholarship recipients were acknowledged: Faith Baldwin, Benjamin Giesler, Christina Jagiello, Matthew Lyng, Austin Noffke, Jordan Koppa, Tess Rosner, Jenna Langlay, Jackson Boulanger, and John Blaser.

Chairman continued the meeting with the Annual Report from Community "Change" presented by President Dale Baker. President Baker reported 22 grants were distributed totaling \$8,300 in 2014. Since the program began in 1999 the program honored 296 grants totaling \$150,000. Recent grants helped those with medical needs, house fire victims, and community events. President Baker encouraged those that are currently not rounding up their bill to consider signing up and being a part of this great community assisting program.

Chairman Hischke asked if there was any old or new business to be discussed. Hearing of no other old or new business, Chairman Hischke thanked the members for attending and made some final announcements.

This concluded the business meeting of Oconto Electric Cooperative. A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. *Motion Carried*.

Chairman Hischke announced that he would begin the attendee drawing for the cash prize of \$100 utilizing the meeting registration cards. The \$100 cash prize winner was Richard Scott. The drawing for other prizes donated by area businesses and OEC vendors concluded the morning's event. Lastly, the drawing for the special progressive prize of \$1,000 was conducted (all co-op member names are entered in the drawing – member must be present to win). James R. Kammerzelt's name of Oconto Falls was drawn. He was not in attendance. The progressive drawing will continue being offered until a winner is drawn.

> Respectfully submitted, Board Secretary, Todd Duame

COMPARATIVE BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

ASSETS		
	AUDITED	UNAUDITED
	2014	2015
UTILITY PLANT:		
Electric Plant in Service	\$52,754,466	\$54,673,126
Construction Work in Progress	\$1,314,302	\$346,707
	\$54,068,768	\$55,019,833
LESS: Accumulated Provision		
for Depreciation	\$19,797,339	\$20,603,243
Net Utility Plant	\$34,271,429	\$34,416,590
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OTHER PROPERTY AND IN		
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Investments in Associated	¢1.500.000	¢1 (10 100
Organizations	\$1,590,208	\$1,618,199
Other Investments	\$2,013	\$2,074
	\$1,592,221	\$1,620,273
CURRENT ASSETS:		
Cash - General	\$405,922	\$541,236
Accounts Receivable	\$2,401,373	\$2,323,375
Materials and Supplies	\$758,558	\$779,580
Prepayments	\$94,198	\$89,871
Other Current Assets	\$5,341	\$5,341
	\$3,665,392	\$3,739,404
DEFERRED CHARGES	\$51,185	\$73,680
TOTAL ASSETS	\$39,580,227	\$39,849,946
EQUITIES & LIABILITIES		
	AUDITED	UNAUDITED
EQUITIES AND MARGINS:	2014	2015
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Other Margins & Equities	\$1,013,210	\$1,125,349
Patronage Capital	\$14,908,802	\$15,843,876
	\$15,922,012	\$16,969,225
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES:		
RUS Mortgage Notes	\$7,851,110	\$8,623,478
Other Long-Term Debt	\$13,531,430	\$12,474,173
	\$21,382,540	\$21,097,651
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Notes Payable	\$400,000	
Accounts Payable	\$975,762	\$903,315
Customer Deposits	\$164,430	\$156,467
Other Current & Accrued Liabilit	ies \$371,843	\$374,253
	\$1,912,035	\$1,434,035
DEFERRED CREDITS	\$363,640	\$349,035
CONTINGENT LIABILITIES		
CONTINUEINT LIADILITIES	\$0	\$0

TOTAL EQUITIES & LIABILITIES \$39,580,227

\$39,849,946

STATEMENTS OF REVENUE & PATRONAGE CAPITAL

	AUDITED 2014	UNAUDITED 2015		
OPERATING REVENUE				
& PATRONAGE CAPITAL	\$16,003,187	\$15,653,308		
OPERATING EXPENSES				
Power Production Expense	\$57,455	\$77,620		
Cost of Purchased Power	\$8,723,969	\$8,322,331		
Transmission Expense	\$17,814	\$17,730		
Distribution Expense-Operations	\$826,872	\$796,842		
Distribution Expense-Maintenance		\$629,906		
Customer Accounts Expense	\$329,546	\$336,034		
Customer Service				
& Informational Expense	\$309,625	\$325,008		
Sales Expense	\$4,265	\$273		
Administration & General Expense		\$1,034,775		
Board of Directors per diem*	\$33,938	\$41,934		
Board of Directors				
Education & Travel Expense*	\$83,639	\$72,130		
Miscellaneous Board Expense	\$8,901	\$10,975		
Depreciation Expense	\$1,599,620	\$1,643,450		
Taxes	\$236,675	\$238,243		
Interest on Long-Term Debt	\$959,984	\$940,308		
Other Interest	(\$357)	(\$1,299)		
Other Deductions	\$7,210	\$6,296		
Total Operating Expense				
& Interest	\$14,795,129	\$14,492,555		
Net Operating Margin	\$1,208,058	\$1,160,753		
NON-OPERATING MARGINS				
Interest Income	\$62,428	\$100,282		
Other Non-Operating Margins	\$57,606	\$57,107		
Total	\$120,034	\$157,390		
CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATIONS				
	\$123,850	\$167,312		
NET MARGINS	\$1,451,942	\$1,485,454		
PATRONAGE CAPITAL AT BEGINNING				
	\$14,112,105	\$14,908,802		
Retirement of Capital Credits	(\$655,245)	(\$550,381)		
PATRONAGE CAPITAL AT END				
	\$14,908,802	\$15,843,875		

*In accordance with the cooperatives bylaws, directors do not receive a salary for their services. Instead, each director receives a fixed fee compensation (per diem) of \$295 per full day and \$175 per half day for attendance at board meetings, training seminars and while performing cooperative business. Directors are reimbursed actual out-of-pocket travel expenses when traveling for cooperative business purposes.





2015 EXPENSE DOLLARS



ANNUAL REPORT COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEARS

AUDIT REPORT

In accordance with our mortgage agreements with National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (NRUCFC), Rural Utilities Service (RUS) and CoBank, an independent audit is conducted of the cooperative's records each year. Our most recent audit was completed for the period ending December 31, 2015, by the auditing firm of Bauman Associates, Ltd., P.O. Box 1225, Eau Claire, WI 54702.

The audit included a complete examination of the past year's operations and the income and expense entries to determine if they are made in accordance with generally accepted auditing and accounting standards. Other tests are made of accounting records and procedures as considered necessary by the auditors.

The auditing firm will present its report directly to the board of directors at a regularly scheduled board meeting. Copies of the completed audit are sent to NRUCFC, RUS and CoBank and are available for review at the office of the Cooperative.

OPERATING STATISTICS

	AUDITED 2014	UNAUDITED 2015
Net equity due members	\$14,908,802	\$15,843,875
Interest paid RUS/CFC/CoBank	\$960,060	\$940,608
Total paid to RUS/CFC/CoBank (principle & interest)	\$1,671,670	\$1,711,969
Total kilowatt hours generated	4,999,438	6,007,182
Total kilowatt hours purchased	118,579,573	111,717,096
Average kilowatt hour usage per month (residential only) 1,063	1,016
Average cost per kilowatt hour to member (residential or	nly) \$.1382	\$.1445
Average member's bill per month	\$146.91	\$146.81
Number of connected services	9,640	9,729
Highest system demand	22,047	20,748
Cost per kilowatt hour generated in mils	15.800	17.915
Cost per kilowatt hour purchased in mils	75.530	78.148
Number of meters per mile	6.75	6.81
Miles of distribution line	1,424.17	1,423.96
Miles of transmission line	59.23	59.23
Capital credits refunded	\$655,245	\$550,381
Total capital credits refunded to date	\$13,771,428	\$14,321,809

ACE AWARD GOES TO DAN KANACK



(755201)

On February 3, 2016, the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) presented its ACE (Ally of Cooperative Electrification) Award to longtime OEC director, Dan Kanack. The ACE Award annual is given to a living individual credited with effort and achievement beyond the ordinary call of duty, in service to rural electrification at the local, state, or national level. This was the 50th year that the award has been presented, and this year's recipient has served his local distribution coop for almost as long as the award has existed. Kanack was honored for his 40 years as a

director of Oconto Electric Cooperative, a career that has included service as the board's secretary, treasurer, and president; 17 years as a WECA director; and a stint assisting an electric cooperative in Bolivia through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's International Program, along with terms in local elected office as a town supervisor.

WECA Statewide Manager Steve Freese, presenting the award, praised Kanack's "lifetime of commitment" as "truly outstanding," listing "loyalty, respect, civility, and honesty" among qualities attributed to Kanack in nominations submitted to the WECA selection committee.

"BAG LUNCH TO GO" IS BACK! Thursday, March 17

From 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., pick up your brown bag lunch at OEC headquarters!

Hot Pulled Pork Sandwich, BBQ Sauce, Chips, Cookie, Beverage Cost \$6 for the meal or \$3 for sandwich only

Proceeds go to 2016 Employee Charities

Annual Meeting Progressive Drawing \$1,000

The name of every member of Oconto Electric Cooperative is entered into the drawing. The person whose name is drawn must be present to win.



OEC will be closed March 25 to observe Good Friday



HAPPY EASTER!

HIDDEN ACCOUNT NUMBERS

Oconto Electric Cooperative hides two account numbers in the local pages of the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* each month. If you spot your account number, call our office before you receive the next issue, and OEC will give you a \$15 credit on your electric bill or a \$25 credit if you have a load management receiver. The February account numbers belonged to Robert Kamenick, Shawano, and Larry Pagel, Lena. TERRITORY SERVED BY YOUR COOPERATIVE



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Katie Jagiello, Editor

