

HI-LINES

A NEWSLETTER FOR JO-CARROLL ENERGY MEMBERS

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Elizabeth, Illinois



800-858-5522



www.jocarroll.com



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Back to school

Cooperative growth, value and operational excellence

Your board of directors, through a strategic planning process, have developed objectives from input and feedback from multiple sources. From those objectives we develop initiatives based on feedback from you, as well as internally.

Cooperative growth, value and operational excellence continue to be our areas of focus in 2022.

You may have noticed passing by our east campus in Elizabeth that we are growing. The first phase has been several years in the making; a new mechanic shop, an initiative that focuses on our core value of safety and strategic objective operational excellence. The second phase of this project will be a truck garage to protect your investment in our fleet vehicles.

Growth, specifically in our broadband business unit, continues. By print date, we expect to have more than 4,000 members who we will be providing broadband service to, the majority with fiber.

We aren't stopping there. Within the next three years, we expect to connect an additional 6,000 members with high-speed fiber internet service. Not only does this growth help stabilize rates across all business units, it enhances the value to you, our members.

To date, we have been awarded nearly \$25 million in grant funds and continue to seek additional funds to help accelerate the buildout in rural areas that are eligible for funding. Within seven years, we expect to make fiber available to everyone in our current electric and natural gas



CEO'S REPORT
by Mike Casper

service territory, as well as countywide for those who want it.

You may have also noticed the numerous contractors that we have specifically selected to accelerate the buildout so that we can grow faster. An extra benefit to our area from this growth is that these contractors and their employees are spending millions of dollars locally on lodging, food and other services, which helps support our local businesses and communities through multiple revenue streams. A win-win for all of us.

We are also growing our team to support the buildout of fiber so that you receive reliable service, which you expect.

Besides growth and value, fiber improves safety, reliability and efficiencies within our electric and natural gas business units, as well as the communities that we serve. This in turn saves the cooperative money and provides you with better service, which also enhances the value we provide.

Looking at the big picture, everything we do revolves around meeting the objectives your board has developed intending to provide you with more value.

We look forward to your continued feedback on ways we can improve the services that we currently provide and bring additional value to you through added affordable services.

For your information

Your Board of Directors:

David Senn

Chairman

District 7

Russell Holesinger

Vice Chairman

District 8

Marcia Stanger

Secretary

District 3

Robert Kuhns

Treasurer

District 10

Jerry Meyer

District 1

Joseph Mattingley

District 2

Dan Tindell

District 4

Patricia Smith

District 5

Thomas Lundy

District 6

Larry Carroll

District 9

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday

Elizabeth

793 U.S. Route 20 West

7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Savanna

103 Chicago Ave.

7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

1:30 to 4 p.m.

Geneseo

1004 S. Chicago St.

7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

1:30 to 4 p.m.

Services and Billing Questions:

(800) 858-5522

www.jocarroll.com

For emergencies and outages call:

(800) 858-5522

Resume of Minutes

May 25, 2022

The regular board meeting of Jo-Carroll Energy, Inc. (NFP) was held on Wednesday, May 25, 2022.

A Safety Moment was provided by Director Bob Kuhns on the early signs of dementia and ways to help improve the symptoms through diet and exercise.

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the agenda.

Consent Agenda – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the consent agenda

Presentation – None.

Governance Topics & Board Policy Review

A video was shared with the board on Dealing with Conflicts of Interest in the Board Room.

Board Policy 104/Travel – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve Board Policy 104/Travel.

Board Policy 106/Service Recognition and Retirement of Directors – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve Board Policy 106/Service Recognition and Retirement of Directors.

Board Issues and Action Items

Resolution to Restate Jo-Carroll Energy Retirement Plan – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to restate the Jo-Carroll Energy Retirement Plan.

Irrigation Rate Policy/745 – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve Irrigation Rate Policy/745.

Board Policy 137/Privacy Principles Members – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve Board Policy 137/Privacy Principles Members.

Engagement Letter of CJT Energy Law, LLC – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the Engagement Letter of CJT

Energy Law, LLC.

Select AIEC Voting Delegate/Alternate Delegate – Dave Senn was selected as the voting delegate and Marcy Stanger was selected as the alternate voting delegate for the AIEC Annual Meeting.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to change the September 28 board meeting date to September 29.

An update was provided to the board regarding the CFC patronage capital refund to the cooperative systems integrity fund in which Jo-Carroll Energy participates.

CEO/Financial Operating Report

CEO Report – President and CEO Casper shared that the price of natural gas continues to be higher than previous years, which will impact natural gas bills, as well as electric bills, since a portion of our power is generated from natural gas.

Financial Operating Report – Chuck Woods, Chief Financial Officer provided a summary of the financial operating report for April. Revenue for April is approximately \$22.7 million vs. a budgeted amount of approximately \$22.25 million. Total operations and maintenance expenses were approximately \$860,304 under budget. Margins are approximately \$2.6 million vs. a budgeted amount of approximately \$578,155. By general consent, the board moved to file the financial operating report with the auditor.

Operations and Regulatory/Legislative Update

Operations Update – Senior V.P. and Chief Operating Officer, Kyle Buros, commented on the progress of the

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phase one remodel of the Jo-Carroll Energy truck bay. Buros also provided an update on the Burns Rd. project, noting that the 2-inch main pipe repair has been completed. Buros also commented that two new natural gas services were added. In addition, installs of new fiber services are increasing.

Strategic Plan – V.P. of Member Services, Jennifer Meyer, provided an update on the 2022 Strategic Plan, which included its current progress and metrics.

External Affairs/Legislative Update – President and CEO Casper provided an update on legislative issues affecting the cooperative and provided messaging on fiber grant opportunities that Jo-Carroll Energy is seeking.

Reports/Updates

Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) Report – Director Senn provided an update from the latest AIEC meeting and noted that AIEC President and CEO, Duane Noland will be retiring.

American Public Gas Association (APGA) Report – Director Carroll discussed the various topics within the natural gas (NG) industry and the advancements in technology that aid in preventing cyber-attacks. Carroll reminded the board that cyber-security remains a top priority in the industry and that municipalities have become a target of attacks. Nevertheless, Jo-Carroll Energy is committed to enhancing our cyber security efforts.

Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC) – Director Mattingley provided highlights from the

Dairyland Board and Managers Meeting. Mattingley also commented on the Section 5 natural gas reform bill, noting that it may be put on the backburner and could be awhile before anything gets pushed through congress. Director Mattingley provided an update on the Cardinal-Hickory Creek Project. Casper commented that DPC continues to diversify its electric generation portfolio that includes resources that will maintain reliable power to our members.

Prairie Power Incorporated (PPI) Report – Director Kuhns provided a summary of the PPI board meeting highlights and the most recent generation numbers.

Executive Session – None.

Out of Executive Session – None.

Action Resulting from Executive Session – None.

Other Business – None.

Adjournment – Chairman Senn adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m.

JCE mourns loss of employee

It is with a heavy heart we share the news of the passing of Robert “Bob” Pelelo, Jo-Carroll Energy’s director of utility operations.

Bob served the cooperative and its members for almost 19 years. After working for JCE as a contractor with a GIS mapping provider, Bob joined the JCE team in 2003 as a staker. Over the years, he fulfilled many roles progressing from staking supervisor and right-of-way agent to assets manager, ultimately taking on the leadership role of director of utility operations to oversee the day-to-day operations of JCE’s natural gas and electric business units. Bob played a large part in the successful Alliant Energy acquisition in 2007 and again during the Farmers Mutual Electric Company merger in 2013.

Born in Iowa in 1968, Bob grew up on his family’s farm in Merrill, Iowa. He married Ann Ritt, in January 1998. The couple had two sons, Thomas and Joshua. Bob earned a degree in computer information systems from Clarke University.

Bob cared deeply for his cooperative family and always provided dedicated service to our members. We will miss his mentorship and friendship.



Reader prize

Each month we print the name of a Jo-Carroll Energy member who is eligible to win a monthly \$25 readership prize. If your name is printed in this month’s edition, and not a part of any article, contact Jo-Carroll Energy.

Two students represent JCE on Youth Tour

The Youth to Washington Tour is an exceptional opportunity presented to our young future leaders that has been provided since the late 1950s.

Through the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, Jo-Carroll Energy sends two students each year to Washington, D.C. to experience the nation's capital and learn about the value of rural electrification.

The trip also allows our students to become familiar with the historic and political

environment of the capital with hands on and first looks at our monuments, government buildings and cooperative organizations.

For the 2022 Youth Tour, JCE was represented by Emma Blaum and Ruby Dickerson, both of Galena. Both students had the privilege of meeting U.S. Rep. Cheri Bustos, as well as our U.S. Senator Dick Durbin.

Along with visiting many museums, monuments and memorials, Blaum and Dickerson were able to network

with other rural cooperative students from all over the country, starting with Youth Day sponsored by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Youth Day brings together all these students and unites them with activities, including the collecting of state pins, listening to guest speakers, and having fun all around.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for our young minds to learn about why rural cooperatives are so important, and the role that they will play in our future for rural America.



Ruby Dickerson and Emma Blaum at the Gettysburg National Cemetery, Gettysburg, Penn.



The 2022 Youth Tour students in front of the White House, Washington, D.C.



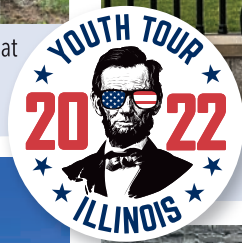
Youth Tour students in front of the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington, Va.



Emma Blaum and Ruby Dickerson at the FDR Memorial in Washington, D.C.



Right to Left: Emma Blaum, Rep. Cheri Bustos and Ruby Dickerson at the House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.



Jo-Carroll Energy holds annual meeting

An estimated 200-plus co-op members, employees and associates of Jo-Carroll Energy (JCE) gathered to celebrate “The Power of Co-op Membership” during the cooperative’s annual meeting of members held June 2 at the Fulton High School in Fulton, IL.

During the business session, three directors were re-elected to the Jo-Carroll Energy board by a vote of acclamation. Board directors Jerry Meyer, District 1; Joe Mattingley, District 2; and Dan Tindell, District 4 were all unopposed in their bids for reelection. All directors serve three-year terms.

Members also approved a bylaw amendment revising how directors may participate in monthly board meetings, providing the option to meet virtually or participate by telephone. It was noted that during the pandemic, technology was utilized to provide the board with more flexibility to continue essential cooperative business.

In keeping with the meeting theme, JCE president and CEO Mike Casper opened his remarks noting the purpose of rural electric cooperatives



(formed after the enactment of the Rural Electrification Act in 1936) – to raise the standard of rural living.

“Eighty plus years later, Jo-Carroll Energy, along with more than 800 other electric cooperatives, continue as not-for-profit, trustworthy and community-focused energy and now high-speed internet service providers,” Casper said. “Electric co-ops are built by and belong to the communities they serve. We are focused on people instead of profits to make our communities stronger.”

Casper added that the co-op also provides value-added

services that empower members, businesses and communities to be more successful. Providing an example, he noted how JCE, with the assistance of nearly \$25 million in grant awards, is accelerating buildout of high-speed fiber internet in northwest Illinois.

Just like 80 years ago when electricity empowered rural America to raise the standard of living, JCE and its Sand Prairie broadband division is now empowering members to raise the standard of rural living with high-speed internet service, Casper noted.

“Our vision is to enhance your quality of life providing value added services to the businesses, communities and member-consumers that we serve,” Casper said. “The power of co-op membership is your success.”

“You depend on the services that Jo-Carroll Energy and Sand Prairie provide to be there when you need them,” he continued. “The dedication and commitment of our team is admirable. What drives that passion is our local presence. We are embedded in our





Four Director's Scholarships were awarded during the 2022 JCE Annual Meeting. Awards went to Maya Dickerson of Galena, Carson Miller of Galena, Connor Miller of East Dubuque and Dawson Feyen of East Dubuque.

communities and deeply care about each of you, our family, friends and neighbors.

"While our primary purpose is keeping the lights on, the gas flowing and the internet connected, our passion is our community. Because we are local, we have an invested interest to help grow and improve our communities. We take pride in giving back to our communities, first responders and not-for-profits through unclaimed and donated capital credits, which return money back to our communities, helping make them more attractive places to live, work and play," Casper concluded.

Board president David Senn also spoke about the importance of the co-op and touched on electric generating capacity and the need for additional base-load generation.

"When and when not to use energy will play an important role in helping to curb the need for adding new generation," Senn said.

Noting that the cooperative

does not produce but purchases electricity, he said the members of the generation and transmission cooperatives have tasked the G&Ts with

providing long-term affordable, reliable and environmentally sustainable electricity. "Our providers are doing their best to move to cleaner generation while monitoring the reliability needs of the grid system," he said.

Guest speaker Dave Schryver, president and CEO of the American Public Gas Association (APGA), discussed the natural gas price spikes in February 2021 caused by extreme cold weather and major increases in demand that hit public gas systems particularly hard. He outlined

responses to the high prices including outreach to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the Department of Energy, Commodity Futures



Trading Commission, the President and Congress. He also noted safeguards are being identified and put in place to prevent such an event in the future.

Schryver said natural gas has a role in America's clean energy future, citing it is reliable and abundant, a domestic source of energy and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

August is Back to School Safety Month!

Sending a child to college? Discuss safety first

When shopping for dorm room supplies, décor and other back-to-campus items, take a moment to discuss safety with your child before.

Here are some safety TIPS to help keep your college student safe.

Electrical safety tips

- When shopping for items that run on electricity, look for a safety endorsement label, such as UL (Underwriters Laboratories).
- Do not put a cell phone under a pillow or place it on or under bedding. It could overheat or catch fire.
- In the dorm or apartment, make sure outlets near water sources are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters

(GFCIs). If they are not, contact the resident assistant, campus housing staff or landlord.

- Use power strips with an over-current protector that will shut off power if too much current is drawn.
- Avoid overloading extension cords, power strips or outlets.
- Do not hang decorative lights with nails or tacks; always use plastic hooks.
- Do not run electrical cords across traffic paths or under rugs.

General safety tips:

- Find out what type of public safety department is on campus and how it functions; ask which services the department offers and the steps it takes to prevent crime.

- Locate emergency call buttons or phones across campus in case of an emergency.
- Walk with a friend, especially at night.
- When attending events or parties, go with at least one person you know and trust. If your friend leaves, do not stay.
- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- Avoid being distracted (listening to music, texting and so on) while walking on campus.



A little efficiency goes a long way when we all work together...

Shift unnecessary electricity use to before 11 a.m. and after 7 p.m. Monday thru Friday this summer.

The Summer Slowdown: Preparing Your Home Internet for Increased Demand

The summer television viewing season isn't what it used to be. Once known for endless reruns and launches of shows that studios deemed less likely to be successful, the world of streaming entertainment and the production houses it created are churning out phenomenal content you've just got to see.

The trouble is, lots of other people want to watch it too! And quite often, they're streaming at the same time as you. And with kids out of school for the summer and many people heading indoors to escape the heat, internet usage increases during the dog days of summer. Unfortunately, along with the increased demand, streaming picture quality and overall reliability often decline, frequently turning what should be a relaxing evening into a frustrating experience.

So what can you do to prepare for all of this increased demand? Or are you doomed to suffer repeated buffering, pixelation, and loading errors during the summer slowdown?

Fortunately, there are some steps you can take to improve your internet connection and performance, even during the summer's high demand. And your friends at Sand Prairie Fiber Internet are standing by to help you learn more about high-speed fiber internet and suggest adjustments inside your home to improve your Wi-Fi's range and overall streaming experience.

Below we suggest five tips to help you beat the summer slowdown so you and your family can enjoy a better streaming experience.

Tip #1: Upgrade to Fiber Internet

The single best thing you can do to improve your internet speed and connection is to upgrade to fiber internet. A technological wonder, fiber internet utilizes fiber-optic cables composed of ultra-thin, tiny strands of glass and other materials that transmit internet data near the speed of light.

As a result, fiber internet's speeds exceed cable internet, which uses older technology and copper-based materials that cannot compete with fiber's highest speeds. Getting a dedicated fiber internet line through Sand Prairie Fiber Internet directly to your home means you no longer have to share bandwidth with your neighbors.

Tip #2: Select the Bandwidth to Meet Your Family's Needs

Once you've upgraded to fiber, talk to our member service specialists at Sand Prairie Fiber Internet about which level of broadband you need.

This will vary from household to household, and we can help you determine what will provide the proper amount of bandwidth. If you have multiple people in your home, be sure to choose a plan that offers enough bandwidth for the whole family to use it simultaneously. This tip will help keep



the high-speed internet flowing into your home and devices and help keep the peace in your family!

Tip #3: Consider Whole-Home Coverage

Now that you have a perfect fiber internet plan for your needs, you should consider whole-home Wi-Fi coverage. You can use Wi-Fi extenders and other technology to "extend" the Wi-Fi throughout your house—even in harder-to-reach rooms upstairs or even on your back porch.

With the right setup, you may even get a strong enough Wi-Fi signal in your backyard for outdoor movie nights! Of course, the experts at Sand Prairie Fiber Internet can help you set up whole-home coverage, too, so be sure to reach out to our member service specialists.

Tip #4: Optimize the Position of Your Wi-Fi Router

After you've set up your fiber internet service, bandwidth plan, and whole-home coverage, make the most of Sand Prairie Fiber Internet's high-speed fiber internet by optimizing the location of your Wi-Fi router in your home. Remember that obstructions like too many walls and windows can interfere with and weaken the Wi-Fi signal and reduce streaming quality as it disperses through your home.

The simplest way to assess your Wi-Fi router's placement is to run speed tests throughout your home (where your devices are most frequently used to stream). Speed tests let you experiment with your Wi-Fi router's position—and making even minor adjustments, like elevating the router or separating it away from other electronic devices, can make a significant difference in streaming performance.

Tip #5: Utilize Parental Controls

Finally, don't forget about parental controls! This is much more than limiting or even policing content your kids may use. Parental controls let you prevent your children from using online devices during certain times of day or night, which both reduce their screen time (something all parents aim to do) and increases the amount of bandwidth for you to enjoy! Ask about our home internet security solutions with our member service specialists.

By implementing these tips, you can significantly improve the picture quality and reliability of your streaming experience, even with the increased internet demand and higher usage of the summer. So sit back, relax, and enjoy a summer of streaming!