

# HI-LINES

A newsletter for members of JCE Co-op

DECEMBER 2025



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### DECEMBER TOPIC—SENIOR PLANET

We'll explore Medicare online and a sample private insurance website to learn about the tools and resources they offer.

### DECEMBER 4

Senior Planet—Mount Carroll District Library 1:00–2:00 p.m.

### DECEMBER 9

Senior Planet—Schmaling Memorial Public Library Fulton 11:00 a.m.–Noon

### DECEMBER 11

Senior Planet—Apple Canyon Lake Clubhouse 1:00–2:00 p.m.

### DECEMBER 18

Geneseo Public Library 10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

### DECEMBER 23

Senior Planet—JCE Co-op Elizabeth West Campus 10:00–11:00 a.m.

### DECEMBER 24 & 25

JCE Co-op offices closed for Christmas.

### JANUARY 1

JCE Co-op offices closed for New Year's.



**JCE CO-OP**  
Electric • Gas • Fiber

Elizabeth, IL

800-858-5522

[jcecoop.com](http://jcecoop.com)



### CEO'S REPORT

by Mike Casper

## A season of gratitude and progress at JCE Co-op

As the holiday season approaches, it's a time for reflection and gratitude. At JCE Co-op, we have much to be thankful for, and I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for each one of you, our valued members. Your support and patience during this transformative period have been instrumental in our journey toward a brighter, more efficient future.

This year has been marked by significant advancements at JCE Co-op, all aimed at enhancing the services we provide to you. One of the key milestones is our transition to the new NISC platform, which includes the introduction of SmartHub. This innovative tool empowers you with greater control over your energy usage, providing real-time insights and the ability to manage your account from the convenience of your smartphone or computer. SmartHub is designed to make your experience with us more seamless and interactive, and we are thrilled to see many of you already embracing its benefits.

In addition to SmartHub, we are also implementing a new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). This state-of-the-art technology represents a significant leap forward in how we deliver power and manage our grid. AMI will enable us to detect and address outages more swiftly, optimize energy distribution, and ultimately enhance the reliability of our service. For you, our members, this means fewer disruptions and a more resilient energy supply.

While these changes are exciting and necessary, we understand that transitions can sometimes be challenging. Your patience and understanding as we implement these new systems has been

nothing short of remarkable. We are committed to ensuring that these upgrades are as smooth as possible and that any concerns you have are addressed promptly. Your feedback is invaluable to us, and we encourage you to continue sharing your thoughts and experiences.

As we forge ahead, it's important to recognize that these advancements are not just about technology, they're about building a stronger, more sustainable co-op and community. By embracing these changes, we are positioning JCE Co-op to better serve you today and well into the future. Our goal is to provide you with safe, reliable, and efficient solutions that meet the evolving needs of our community.

During this season of gratitude, I also want to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the JCE Co-op team. Their commitment to excellence and their willingness to adapt to new challenges have been critical in driving these improvements. Together, we are building a cooperative that not only meets but exceeds the expectations of our members.

As we celebrate the holidays, let us remember the spirit of community and cooperation that defines us. We are grateful for the trust you place in us and are excited to continue this journey with you. Together, we can achieve great things and create a future filled with promise and possibility.

From all of us at JCE Co-op, we wish you a joyful holiday season filled with warmth, happiness, and cherished moments with loved ones. Thank you for being an essential part of our cooperative family. Here's to a bright and prosperous future for us all.



## Members!

We want to extend a heartfelt **THANK YOU** to all our members for your patience and participation during our recent transition to SmartHub. We know change can be challenging, and we truly appreciate everyone who took the time to call, email and work through the new system with us.

"As a cooperative, our goal is to make sure members have the tools and information they need to manage their accounts easily and confidently," said Jennifer Meyer, Vice President of Cooperative Services. "SmartHub helps put the power back in our members' hands by giving them access to their usage data, billing history and payment options anytime, anywhere."

As we move forward, we'll continue sharing helpful tips on how to get the most out of your SmartHub experience, from monitoring your usage to managing your payments with ease.

If you haven't registered yet or still need help logging in or setting up Auto Pay, we're here for you! Visit [jcecoop.com/smarthub](http://jcecoop.com/smarthub), give us a call or email us at [info@jcecoop.com](mailto:info@jcecoop.com)

You can also check out our library of how-to videos available on our website and YouTube channel for step-by-step guidance.

Thank you again for your continued support, patience, and trust as we make these improvements to better serve you.

*Your team at JCE Co-op*

## Why capital credit payments are postponed for 2025

### Understanding capital credits and margins

At JCE Co-op, our members aren't just customers—you're owners. One of the biggest differences between a cooperative and an investor-owned utility is that when we have money left over at the end of the year, it doesn't go to shareholders somewhere else. It goes back to you.

### What are margins?

Think of margins as the cooperative's version of "profits." They are the funds left over after all expenses are paid — including the cost of electricity, broadband, natural gas, operations, maintenance, and administrative expenses.

But because JCE Co-op is a not-for-profit cooperative, those margins aren't distributed to outside investors. Instead, they are allocated to our

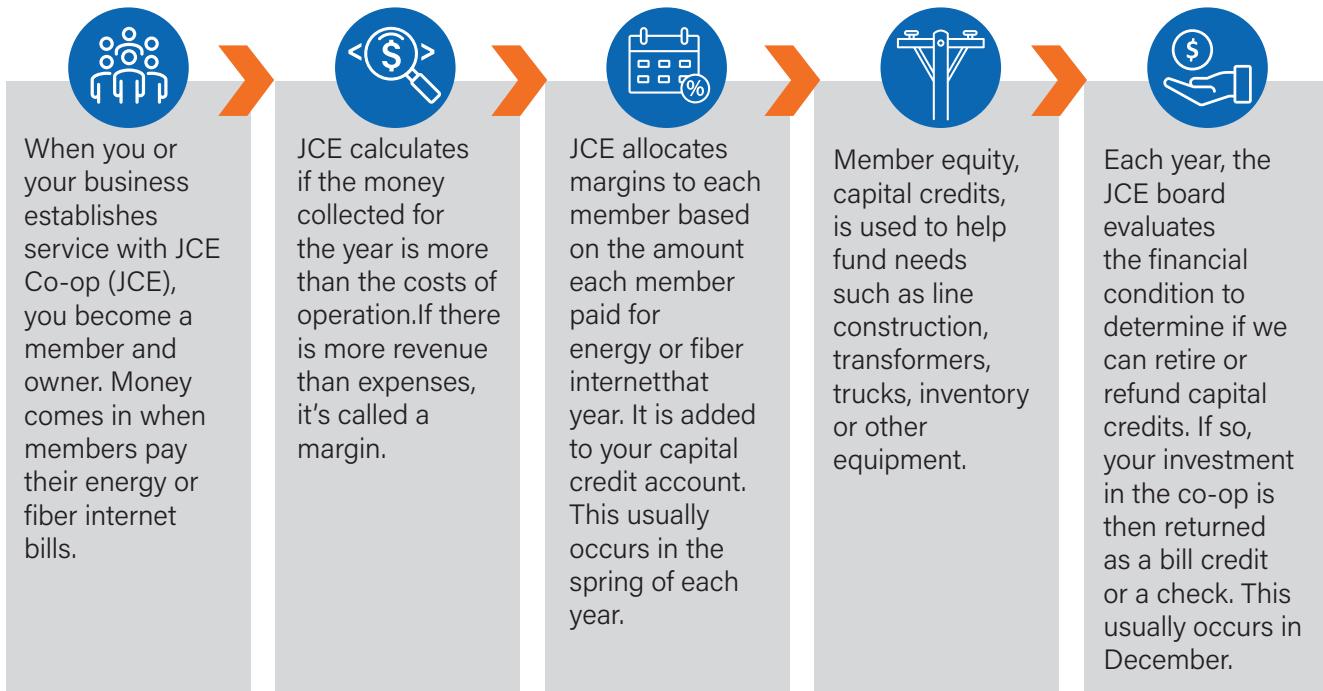
members based on how much energy or broadband they used that year. This reflects one of our founding cooperative principles — Members' Economic Participation — and demonstrates our commitment to financial responsibility, transparency, and community.

### What are capital credits?

When JCE Co-op earns more than it spends, those margins are divided among members and recorded in your capital credit account.

Think of capital credits as your share of the co-op's success — the tangible proof of your ownership in JCE Co-op. These credits aren't paid out immediately; instead, they're held for you and returned later when the co-op's financial position allows.

# How capital credits work



Margins for electric, natural gas and fiber internet are allocated separately.

## How do members receive capital credits?

When JCE Co-op is able to return those funds to members, we call it a capital credit retirement. Sometimes members receive this as a bill credit, other times as a check in the mail.

JCE Co-op uses a hybrid retirement method—paying out older credits after 25 years and also returning 5 percent of all remaining credits at a discounted rate. Each year, your elected Board of Directors carefully reviews the co-op's financial standing before deciding if a retirement is possible.

## Why no retirement in 2025?

This year, your board made the difficult decision to postpone the retirement of capital credits. That decision wasn't made lightly. Here's why it's important for the long-term health of the cooperative:

- **Building financial strength:** Retaining capital credits increases the co-op's equity, strengthening our balance sheet.
- **Lower borrowing costs:** Stronger equity helps us secure better loan rates—saving money for everyone over time.
- **Investing in growth:** Retaining these funds allows JCE Co-op to invest in infrastructure, technology, and system reliability to better meet members' needs.

- **Long-term stability:** This approach supports stable rates and ensures the co-op remains financially strong for decades to come.

## What does this mean for you?

While you won't see a payout this year, the long-term benefits are significant. A financially healthy cooperative means reliable service, stable rates, and a stronger future for all members.

The funds that would have been paid out are still being allocated to your account and remain part of your member ownership record. Allocations are tracked separately for electric, natural gas, and fiber internet. These balances continue to accrue and will be paid out to you when the Board of Directors determines that the cooperative's financial position allows for a capital credit retirement. Your money is still working for you, helping to keep JCE Co-op strong while preserving your ownership equity for future payout.



## Learn more

To understand more about capital credits and how they work, visit [jcecoop.com/capitalcredits](http://jcecoop.com/capitalcredits) or call 1-800-858-5522.

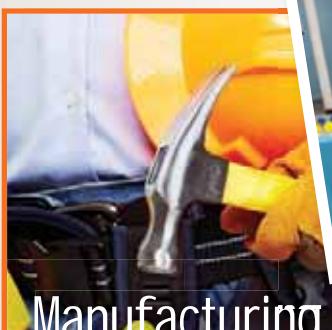
# A BUSY FALL FOR JCE CO-OP!

This fall was a busy and rewarding season at JCE Co-op. From celebrating members to connecting with students and supporting local events, the cooperative stayed active across the communities it serves.



The season kicked off with four successful **Member Appreciation Days**, where staff served more than 900 members. Each event offered food, giveaways and the chance for members to visit with employees and learn more about co-op programs.

## MEMBER APPRECIATION DAYS



## Manufacturing & Trade Days

JCE Co-op also participated in **Manufacturing and Trades Days**, where employees met with 343 students from 10 schools. The cooperative partnered with 25 local businesses to help make the event possible. Crews brought trucks, technology staff and a lineman to several locations, giving students a hands-on look at energy careers and the equipment used to keep power flowing.

### VEIN DRAIN BLOOD DRIVE

In October, JCE Co-op hosted a **blood drive** in partnership with ImpactLife. We had 13 donors and all those donations stayed local.

## TRUNK OR TREAT!



We also participated in two **Trunk or Treat** events, handing out candy and goodies to kids and families.

*It was a full fall season for JCE Co-op, and the cooperative looks forward to carrying that community spirit into the months ahead.*



# HOLIDAY SCAVENGER HUNT



*A family activity with Inspector Watts & Scout!*

*Find (or learn about) household items and habits that use or save energy — all with a fun Christmas twist.*

- A power strip** – Look for one that's not overloaded!
- A light timer** – Helps save energy by turning lights off automatically.
- A LED holiday light** – Energy-efficient and cooler to the touch.
- Wrapped present** – Bonus: Guess what's inside before shaking!
- A sparkly ornament** – The brighter, the better!
- Insulated gloves or mittens** – Just like lineworkers wear for protection.
- A fire extinguisher or smoke alarm** – Keeps your home safe for the holidays. (Bonus if you have BOTH!)
- A cozy blanket** – The cozier, the better for energy savings!
- A warm drink** – Hot cocoa, tea or cider (Bonus: energy-efficient kettle use!).

# Ho, Ho . . . HOLY COW, that's fast!

Impressing Santa with  
**LOCAL** JCE Co-op fiber  
internet speeds!

"the other guys" never let poor Rudolph stream any Reindeer Games!

fiber internet

- Future proof technology
- More reliable/less interruptions
- Connect multiple devices
- Blazing fast speed
- Increase in home value

VS

cable/satellite/wireless internet—The other guys

- Slower downloads/uploads
- Multiple users/peak usage interference
- Limited and inconsistent coverage
- Less reliable

  
**JCE CO-OP**  
Fiber

800-858-5522 | Elizabeth, IL

\$59.99 per month

**Fiber-Link Home**

100 Mbps  
Download & upload  
speeds

\$74.99 per month

**Giga-Link**

1,000 Mbps  
Download & upload  
speeds

\$99.99 per month

**Giga-Link Plus**

2,000 Mbps  
Download & upload  
speeds

\$149.99 per month

**Hyper-Link**

5,000 Mbps  
Download & upload  
speeds



**NO DATA CAPS**

**NO HIDDEN FEES**

**NO CONTRACTS**

[JCECOOP.COM/FIBER](http://JCECOOP.COM/FIBER)

 *Sign up now  
to receive*

**FREE INSTALLATION!**

## YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### David Senn

*Chairman*  
District 7

### Jerry Meyer

*Vice Chairman*  
District 1

### Robert Kuhns

*Treasurer*  
District 10

### Dan Tindell

*Secretary*  
District 4

### Joseph Mattingley

District 2

### Allen Hendren

District 3

### Vacant

District 5

### Thomas Lundy

District 6

### Ted James

District 8

### 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.

### Genesee

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  
jcecoop.com

### For emergencies and outages call:

(800) 858-5522

# Resume of Minutes

**September 30, 2025**

## Board Meeting Minutes Summary

The regular board meeting of Jo-Carroll Energy, Inc. (NFP) was held on Tuesday, September 30, 2025.

**Safety Moment** – Director Jerry Meyer emphasized the importance of “controlling the controllable” — focusing on what can be managed within a situation. This means identifying potential issues, recognizing hazards, and taking proactive steps to prevent accidents or disasters before they occur.

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

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

**Presentation** – Dan Caywood, Vice President Portfolio Mgmt. and Brian Stagen, Regional Vice President, Member Services provided an update on the cooperative's financial metrics and covenants.

**Governance Topics and Board Policy Review** – None.

## CEO| Financial Operating Report

**CEO Report** – President and CEO Mike Casper expressed his appreciation to the board and the members that they represent during the transition to the new NISC platform and advanced metering system. By modernizing our billing and metering systems, we're ensuring that members have the tools they need to manage energy use, make payments, and communicate with us on their terms—whether online, through an app, or by phone.

**Financial Operating Report** – Chuck Woods, Chief Financial Officer noted that August Revenue is approximately \$50.1 million. Total operations and maintenance expenses are \$39.5 million, which is \$1,002,036 over the budget of \$38,521,943 million. Margins are approximately \$1,856,750. By general consent, the board moved to file the financial operating report with the auditor.

Emily Doland, Controller, provided a presentation detailing how JCE Co-op follows specific regulatory guidelines from

Rural Utility Service (RUS) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to ensure proper accounting and compliance when receiving contributions in aid of construction. These contributions are typically used to finance the construction or expansion of infrastructure needed to provide utility services, such as power line extensions.

## Operations and Regulatory/ Legislative Update

**Operations Update** – Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Kyle Buros provided an update on the new substation in Mt. Carroll, noting that construction is expected to be completed by December. Once finished, the new substation will enhance service reliability and help minimize the brief interruptions members have been experiencing. In addition, we should have our 9,000-fiber subscriber by mid-December.

**Cooperative Services Update** – Jennifer Meyer, Vice President of Cooperative Services, provided an update on the transition to the new NISC software. She shared that in-house training sessions were recently conducted to prepare employees for the program's full launch in November. Jennifer also highlighted the valuable contributions of Dan Marcure, Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, whose expertise has been instrumental throughout the transition process.

## Human Resources Update| Marketing

– EVP of Human Resources, Merri Sevey provided an update on a future communication plan for sharing important information with members by way of email, text messaging, social media, and post-cards; all of which would be timed accordingly to coincide with their utility bill.

**IT Technology Report** – Dan Marcure, Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, provided an update on the IT Department, noting that three new team members have recently joined his group. Their primary

## Resume of minutes *(Continued)*

focus is delivering the highest quality IT service possible to support our fiber members.

**Board Issues and Action Items** – None.

### Executive Session

**Into Executive Session** – A motion was made by Director Hendren to go into Executive Session at 11:20 AM., which was seconded by Director James and carried unanimously.

**Out of Executive Session** – A motion was made by Director Tindell to come out of Executive Session at 11:32 AM., which was seconded by Director Mattingley and carried unanimously.

**Action Resulting from Executive Session** – None.

### Reports/Updates

**NRECA Region 5 & 6 Meeting Roundtable** – Directors discussed the recent Region 5 & 6 meeting, sharing key takeaways and insights gained from the event. They also discussed the meeting's format and location, expressing satisfaction with both and appreciation for the valuable information presented.

**AIEC Report** – None.

American Public Gas Association (APGA) – Director Carroll shared that, the APGA submitted comments on the EPA's proposed rules under Subpart W of the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program. They supported the option for utilities to use site-specific emissions measurements rather than default factors, aiming to improve accuracy and flexibility.

**Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC) Report** – Director Tindell provided a summary and highlights from the Dairyland Board Meeting.

**Prairie Power Inc. (PPI) Report** – Director Kuhns reported on the PPI board meeting highlights and generation numbers.

**Other Business** – None.

**Adjournment** – Chairman Senn adjourned the meeting at 11:39 AM.



Each month we print the name of a JCE Co-op 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 JCE Co-op.

# HOLIDAY Schedule



### CHRISTMAS

December 24 & 25: Offices closed

### NEW YEAR

January 1: Offices closed

### SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Starting at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday 12/31/25, the online SmartHub Member Portal, the JCE Mobile app and all forms of payment and account management will be disabled for year-end maintenance. Services should be restored by noon on 1/1/26.

Donald Ernst

## Give the gift of ENERGY!



**Holiday energy credits**  
**Limited time: December 3-24**

A wonderful gift for any JCE Co-op member. Certificates are available in any amount and are applied to the member's energy bill for the amount purchased. Call 800-858-5522 for more info.



**JCE CO-OP**  
Electric • Gas • Fiber