



POWERFUL DECISION-MAKERS: The Pivotal Role of Directors at Slope Electric

As stewards of rural electrification, electric cooperative directors play a pivotal role in ensuring reliable service in the heart of rural America. Directors of Slope Electric Cooperative embody a profound dedication to reliability and affordability, weaving a tapestry that harmonizes the needs of the present with the promise of a resilient and empowered future for the members they represent.

Some were encouraged to serve by previous directors and others felt compelled to serve. However a director came into the position on the Slope Electric board, one factor is consistent: Each feels a responsibility to serve the members to the best of his or her abilities.

When approached about becoming a director, Lauren Klewin, director representing Slope County says he received some wisdom that aided in his decision.

“My mom reminded me of the importance of electricity to my family and that urged me to represent people like my family, who knew what it was like before rural electricity,” Klewin says.

Informed decision-making for effective governance

Being on a board means informing yourself to make the best decisions on behalf of the membership and to be a valuable part of discussions. Although not everyone on the board may

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Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.

OUTLOOK

116 E. 12th St. • New England, ND 58647 | 701-579-4191 • www.slopeelectric.coop

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always agree, everyone has the opportunity to make their best argument during discussion and in the end support the decision of the board.

"I have a responsibility to educate myself, so I can contribute to healthy discussions in the boardroom and make informed decisions on behalf of the members I represent," says Director Anthony Larson, who represents Adams County.

One of the seven principles of electric cooperatives is education, training and information. Directors have the opportunity to complete educational courses through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Through these courses, directors gain knowledge to better serve members.

"We all as individuals have our own thoughts, ideas and philosophy, if you will, shaped by our own life experience. As individuals democratically elected to represent the membership, we use this in addition to the education we receive to be an effective board member," says Slope Electric Chair Steven Wegner, who represents Adams County.

"The educational opportunities you receive as a director are impactful," Klewin says. "From the conversations with other directors to attending courses provided by the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives or NRECA, it is all very impactful and has helped me make the best decisions I can on behalf of the members I represent."

Commitment to cooperative

The Slope Electric board meets once a month for a board meeting, with the hours dedicated to the board varying based on the time of year and the level of involvement you choose.

"The time commitment of a director is directly related to the level of involvement that a person chooses to have," Larson says.

Not everyone sees themselves as a director, but they don't regret the experience and exposure the position offers after accepting the opportunity.

"When this responsibility is taken on or given, it may not be viewed as a gift at the time, but you are given encouragement for self-confidence and examples to follow for competence. Later, you will look back and see that it was a gift," Wegner says.

Seeking two directors to represent Slope County

Slope Electric is looking for two directors to represent Slope County starting in June. As a director, your responsibilities would include participation at monthly board meetings and representing your county on behalf of the cooperative.

"We need dedicated leaders throughout our communities to make decisions and effect change for the betterment of our lives by serving on boards. Slope Electric provides an essential service for our lives that none of us would choose to do without. You can be a part of the leadership that will work hard to fulfill the mission of providing safe, affordable, reliable electricity," Larson says.

If you see yourself or know of someone who would be a qualified candidate to represent Slope Electric from Slope County, reach out to a current director, the Nominating Committee or call the Slope Electric office. Help shape the future of Slope Electric and be part of the longstanding betterment of your rural community. ■

You're Invited **MEMBER APPRECIATION OPEN HOUSE**



At Slope Electric, we believe in the power of membership and this event is a way for us to say **"Thank you"** for being part of ours. Come enjoy food and visit with our board directors, CEOs, staff as well as other members. Members will also receive a **FREE** gift.



5 - 7 P.M. ON FEB 15



SENIOR CENTER, REGENT



SAFETY STARTS WITH ME:

Stay away from downed power lines

North Dakota winds can be mighty and coupled with winter storms, they can damage Slope Electric Cooperative's infrastructure, including power lines. Slope Electric is continuously working through snow or shine to ensure safe, reliable electricity for our members, but sometimes environmental factors cause a bump in the road.

Slope Electric wants to remind members to stay clear of downed power lines.

"Downed power lines can look relatively harmless, but don't be fooled. They likely carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or possibly death," says Dusty Hoff, a foreman at Slope Electric.

Hoff shares some safety tips to serve as reminders around downed lines:

- If you see a downed power line, move away from the line and anything touching it. The proper way to move away from the line is to shuffle with small steps, always keeping your feet together and on the ground.
- If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with the downed line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 instead.
- Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything in contact with the line by using another object such as a broom or stick. Even normally nonconductive materials like wood or cloth, if slightly wet, can conduct electricity and electrocute you.
- Be careful not to put your feet near water where a downed power line is located.
- Do not drive over downed lines. If you are in a vehicle in contact with a downed line, stay in the vehicle. Honk your horn for help and tell others to stay away from your vehicle. If you must leave your vehicle because it's on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both



feet together and avoid making contact with the energized vehicle and the ground at the same time. This way you avoid being the path of electricity from the vehicle to the earth.

Help us help you. For Slope Electric to ensure safe, reliable electricity, our team needs to be able to assess and plan power restoration without any added obstacles. We work to make sure electric infrastructure is secure to mitigate these incidents, but in the case of downed power lines, remember these tips. ■

Slope Electric makes saving money easy!

Slope Electric Cooperative is now making it even easier to save on your electric bill with SmartHub! All members who receive paperless statements only will receive a \$1 credit for each month enrolled. In addition, members who sign up for an automatic withdrawal

through their bank account will also receive a \$1 credit for each month enrolled. The savings will show up once a year on your bill. To learn more about the benefits of SmartHub, visit www.slopeelectric.coop/ways-pay. ■

MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Beginner's guide to the electric grid



Jason Bentz

Electricity plays an essential role in everyday life. It powers our homes, farms, hospitals and schools. We depend on it to keep us warm in the winter and cool in the summer, charge our phones and binge watch our favorite TV shows. If the power goes out, even briefly, our lives can be disrupted.

The system delivering your electricity is often described as the most complex machine in the

world, and it's known as the electric grid. We would like to take this opportunity to give our members a "beginner's guide" to the electric grid.

What makes it so complex?

We all use different amounts of electricity throughout the day, so the supply and demand for electricity is constantly changing. For example, we typically use more electricity in the mornings, when we're starting our day, and in the evenings, when we're cooking dinner and using appliances. Severe weather and other factors also impact how much electricity we need.

The challenge for electric providers is to plan for, produce and purchase enough electricity, so it's available exactly when we need it. Too much or too little electricity in one place can cause problems. To make sure the whole system stays balanced, the electric grid must adjust in real time to changes and unforeseen events.

At its core, the electric grid is a network of power lines, transformers, substations and other infrastructure spanning the entire country. But it's not just a singular system. It's divided into three major interconnected grids: the Eastern Interconnection, the Western Interconnection and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. These grids operate independently, but are linked to allow electricity to be transferred between regions when backup support is required.

Within the three regions, seven balancing authorities, known as independent system operators (ISOs) or regional transmission organizations (RTOs), monitor the grid, signaling to power plants when more electricity is needed to maintain a balanced electrical flow. ISOs and RTOs are like traffic controllers for electricity.

The journey begins at power plants

Power plants are like factories making electricity by using various energy sources, like coal, natural gas, solar, wind and nuclear energy. Across the United States, more than 11,000 power plants deliver electricity to the grid.

Slope Electric Cooperative receives power from our generation and transmission (G&T) cooperatives, Upper Missouri Power Cooperative (Upper Missouri), Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin Electric) and Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). We work closely with Upper Missouri, Basin Electric and WAPA to provide electricity at the lowest cost possible. Being part of a G&T benefits members like you by placing ownership and control in the hands of your cooperative, prioritizing affordability and reliability, supporting local economic development and fostering a sense of community.

To get the electricity from power plants to you, we need a transportation system. High-voltage transmission lines act as the highways for electricity, transporting power over long distances. These lines are supported by massive towers and travel through vast landscapes, connecting power plants to electric substations.

Substations are like pitstops along the highway, where the voltage of electricity is adjusted. They play a crucial role in managing power flow and ensuring electricity is safe for use in homes and businesses.

Once the electricity is reduced to the proper voltage, it travels through distribution power lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road. Distribution lines carry electricity from substations to homes, schools and businesses. Distribution transformers, which look like metal buckets on the tops of power poles or large green boxes on the ground, further reduce the voltage to levels suitable for household appliances and electronic devices.

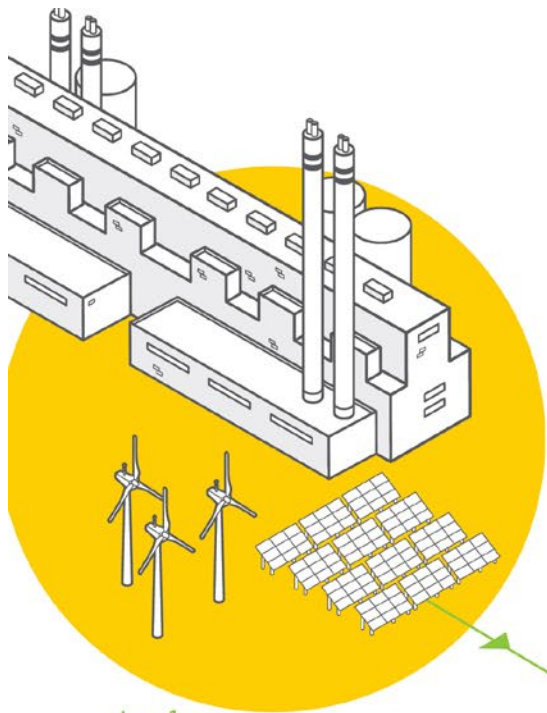
After traveling through transformers, electricity reaches you to power everyday life.

We're proud to be your local, trusted electric service provider. From the time it's created to the time it's used, electricity travels great distances to be available at the flip of a switch. That's what makes the electric grid our nation's most complex machine – and one of our nation's greatest achievements. ■

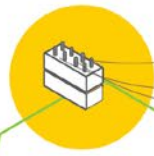


CRITICAL CONNECTIONS: HOW ELECTRICITY GETS TO YOU

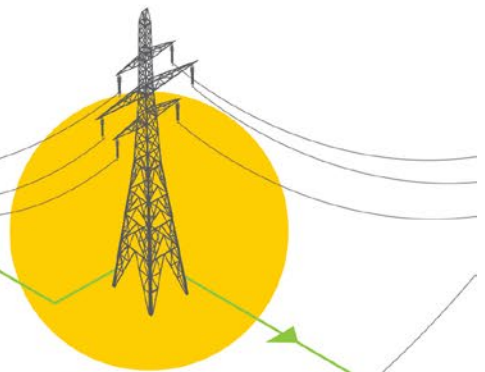
The electric grid is considered one of the most complex machines in the world, delivering the electricity we need for everyday life.



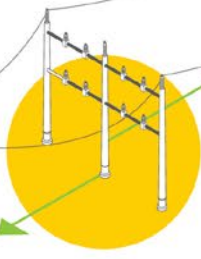
step 1
GENERATION
Power plants generate electricity using a variety of energy sources, like solar, natural gas, nuclear and wind energy.



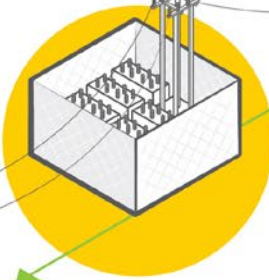
step 2
STEP-UP TRANSFORMER
A step-up transformer increases the voltage to push the electricity over long distances.



step 3
TRANSMISSION LINES
High-voltage electricity travels over long distances through these lines.

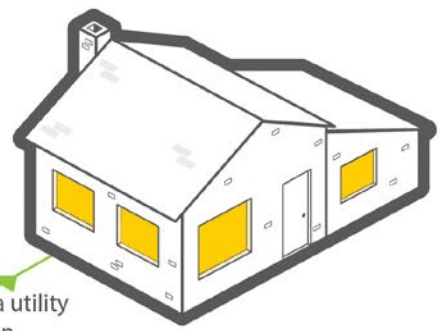


step 4
TRANSMISSION SUBSTATION
Voltage is lowered at a transmission substation so electricity can travel across the local distribution system.



step 5
DISTRIBUTION SUBSTATION
These substations lower the voltage again so the electricity is ready to travel on distribution lines.

step 6
DISTRIBUTION LINES
Lower-voltage electricity travels through distribution lines, like the ones you typically see on the side of the road.



step 7
FINAL STOP
A transformer located on the ground or a utility pole reduces the voltage a final time, then electricity is sent inside your home, school or business.



SAVE THE DATE 2024 Annual Meeting

June 6 | New England

Slope Electric Cooperative annual meeting scheduled June 6

Slope Electric Cooperative's 79th annual meeting will be held Thursday, June 6, in New England. The upcoming 2024 annual meeting will feature the election of two board seats, specifically for directors representing Slope County.

The bylaws of Slope Electric Cooperative state in Article IV, Section 4, directors can be nominated one of two ways:

1. By Nominating Committee: The committee's first meeting was held Jan. 16 to review procedures, responsibilities and qualifications for directorship. The second meeting will be held Feb. 29 to nominate candidates and to approve resolutions.

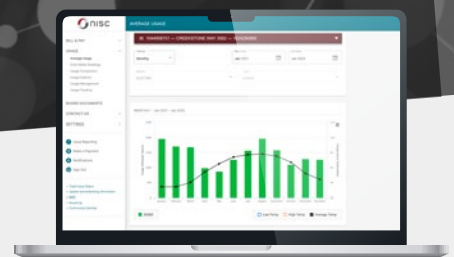
2. By filing a petition: Members can also be nominated by filing a petition with 15 signatures. Filing must be done 90 days prior to the annual meeting on

June 6 and posted at the office of Slope Electric.

Please reach out to a current director, the Nominating/Resolution Committee or the Slope Electric office with any questions. ■

Nominating/Resolution Committee

Brad Derschan, Lemmon, 701-928-0795
Jaxson Fischer, Rhame, 701-440-1150
Shelby Hewson, Amidon, 701-590-0868
Randy Holden, Hettinger, 701-928-1670
Lynn Homelvig, Amidon, 701-579-6385
Lenny Kaufman, Regent, 701-290-5969
Shannon Minerich, Marmarth, 218-929-1190
Brad Steiner, Mott, 701-824-2108
Gary Symanowski, Scranton, 701-523-2286



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Slope Electric wants to hear from you!

Slope Electric Cooperative will be conducting a member engagement survey from February through March. This member engagement survey aims to gather feedback and insights from members of Slope Electric regarding their experiences, satisfaction levels and suggestions for improvement.

There are multiple ways to participate:

- Watch for the printed survey enclosed with your February bill.
- Access the survey online via our social media channels or website.
- Opt for a phone survey, scheduled for March.

Rest assured, your privacy is our priority. Your responses will remain confidential, anonymized and aggregated for analysis purposes only. Your valuable input will help us improve without compromising your privacy. No information will be shared externally.

As a gesture of appreciation for your valuable input, participants who choose to provide their contact information will also be entered into a giveaway for a chance to win a set of high-quality jumper cables. ■

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Your voice, your impact!
Participate in our member satisfaction survey and play a vital role in shaping the future of our services.

Scan the QR code with your phone for more information and to complete the survey.



Statement of nondiscrimination

Slope Electric Cooperative is a recipient of federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In accordance with federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible

agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD3027, found online at www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form.

To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: 1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410; 2) fax: 202-690-7442; or 3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. Slope Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider. ■



LOOK

Slope Electric board meeting highlights: Nov. 16, 2023

The November meeting of the board of directors of Slope Electric Cooperative was held on Nov. 16, 2023, at the cooperative's headquarters in New England. President Steven Wegner called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Slope Electric's Legal Counsel Jennifer Grosz was designated as the meeting recorder. A board quorum was met. Also, present were Slope Electric Co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar, Operations Manager Dean Volk, Manager of Member Relations Brooke Waltner and Executive Assistant and Board Liaison Connie Hill. The meeting commenced with a review of the mission statement, followed by an invocation.

Consent agenda: An addition was proposed to the consent agenda. The consent agenda was approved as amended.

Strategic/action: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates from the Western Area Power Administration, Rural Utilities Service, Converge Strategies funding, a North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives storm debriefing meeting and a standing committee meeting. A West Dakota Utility Services, 3C Construction and Basin Electric Power Cooperative CEO report

were also provided for the board to review.

Department reports: Volk provided a report, with details on substation and line maintenance, new service requests and getting equipment ready for the winter season. Waltner presented a report, which included Slope Electric's delinquent report and uncollected accounts. She also presented donation requests to the board. Dunbar provided a report and discussed updates being worked on with the board. Grosz gave a legal counsel report, which included projects she is working on for the cooperative.

Action items: Craigmile reviewed the proposed 2024 budget with the board. The board appointed voting delegates for the Innovative Energy Alliance annual meeting and directors for expiring terms in the Innovative Energy Alliance/Maintenance Solutions Cooperative board.

Discussion/general information: The board was reminded to bring Nominating Committee names to the December board meeting.

The meeting concluded with the adjournment and Secretary Angela Carlson certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting date is set for Dec. 21, 2023, at the cooperative's headquarters in New England. ■



116 E. 12th St. - PO Box 338
New England, ND 58647-0338

Phone: 701-579-4191
or 800-559-4191
Fax: 701-579-4193

Email us:
comments@slopeelectric.coop
UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES
800-795-0555 or 811

SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Steven Wegner, President
Anthony Larson, Vice President
Angela Carlson, Secretary
Henry "Chip" Fischer, Treasurer
Jerome Caron, Director
Dale Hande, Director
Lauren Klewin, Director
Charlotte Meier, Director

MANAGEMENT

Jason Bentz
CO-GM/CEO

Travis Kupper
CO-GM/CEO

www.slopeelectric.coop



Become a fan of Slope Electric Cooperative to learn timely co-op news!

*Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.
is an equal opportunity provider.*

Heads up!

The 2023 capital credit retirement checks from Slope Electric have been mailed. Be sure to cash them before March 31. Time's ticking!