



Linn County
Rural Electric
Cooperative

ElectricConnection

A monthly publication for our members



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AUGUST 2023

Connect With Us At The Annual Meeting

Join us online for the annual meeting on Thursday, September 21st. The Zoom meeting will begin at 9:00 am. Instructions for online participation are coming in next month's newsletter and on our website.

Our annual meeting is an opportunity for you to exercise one of the greatest benefits of being a member of an electric co-op ~ voting for the board of directors. This year, members will vote on two changes to our articles of incorporation and elect three board members. The proposed changes are to Article IX, Directors; Section 3. The board has recommended a wording change to clarify board eligibility. The other is Article IX, Nominations; Section 5. The board has recommended increasing the number of days to appoint the nominating committee from 120 to 180 days.

The proposed amendments will be placed on this year's ballot. **Please note that a member voting for directors but not voting on the Article changes counts as a NO vote for the Article changes.** You can review the proposed article changes as they will appear on the ballot at www.linncountyrec.com.

Learn more about this year's candidates by reading their biographies inside or online at www.linncountyrec.com. The annual report with meeting agenda will be in your September bill.

Survey and Ballot Systems (SBS) will administer our voting and ballot validation process. Members can vote online, through our SmartHub app, or by mail ballot. Voting will be available from August 18th at 8:00 am through September 18th at midnight. All members may vote regardless of the district in which they reside. Members who vote online or by mail ballot are entered into a drawing for a bill credit. Learn more about our voting options below.

-- Vote Online or By Mail --



SMARTHUB

Vote online through SmartHub! Simply log in to your account and click the "vote now" button. Online voting is available from August 18th at 8:00 am through September 18th. Don't have SmartHub? Create an account on our website.



ONLINE

Vote online via the official 2023 Linn County REC Election website. Log in to directvote.net/LCRECIA. In the top left corner are your member number and election passcode. Use both of these to log in. Online voting is available from August 18th at 8:00 am through September 18th at midnight.



MAIL BALLOT

Survey & Ballot Systems will mail out our ballots August 18th. Mail completed ballots back to SBS in the postage paid return envelope provided. Mail ballots must be received by SBS no later than September 18th in order to be valid.



SmartHub Voting Instructions



Invitation to Vote

Members receive instructions to access the DirectVote® election website via SmartHub Web by mail or email.



SmartHub Web Log In

Members will log in with their SmartHub email address and password.



"Vote Now" Button

Members will log in with their SmartHub email address and password.



Account Selection

Choose account to cast a ballot, then click "Submit".



DirectVote® Election Website

After successful validation, members are directed to the DirectVote® welcome page.



Cast Your Ballot

Vote for your candidate(s).



District 2: Nick Dykstra

Member since: 2016

Occupation: Banker, MidWestOne Bank

Activities/Organizations:

- Global Ties Iowa, Member

What strengths would you bring to our board if elected? “I never stop learning and am always striving to improve myself, my career, my community, and my life. As a part of this core outlook, I have gained over 9 years of experience in the renewable fuels industry, 7 years in financial institutions, 5 years in Ag services, 3 years in technology services, and earned degrees in Global Economic Development, International Studies, International Business, and Computer Science. I’m fully confident in my ability to utilize the knowledge gained through these experiences and combine it with my fervent work ethic to help the board reach positive outcomes concerning any complication it might face.”

Short term/Long term goals: “In the long and short term, I am eager to work toward delivering Linn County REC members the most reliable and environmentally friendly energy, at the lowest possible cost. If elected, I would hope to quickly get up to speed with the other board members to better understand the most pressing issues facing Linn County REC today. In the long-term, I would hope to utilize the knowledge gained by working on the board to advocate for more reliable, responsible, and cost friendly power solutions at the state and national level.”

What do you feel is the biggest issue facing the co-op today? “There are many key challenges that electric co-ops are facing today, including the retirement of many from the utility workforce, increased energy needs, the push for more renewable energy due to climate change, and the more stringent expectations from customers who have less tolerance for interruption to the modern digital life. However, the potential for cyber-attacks is likely the biggest issue as cyber-criminals have proven their capability to hold energy companies and their members/users hostage.”



District 2: Kirk Hiland

Member since: 1988

Occupation: Retired, Former Real Estate Broker/Certified General Real Estate Appraiser and Adjunct Instructor-Uof I College of Business

Activities/Organizations:

- Linn County REC Board of Directors
- CIPCO Board of Directors
- Ducks Unlimited

What strengths would you bring to our board if re-elected?

“Knowledge of Federal, State, and MISO regulations and laws, and the utility grid, especially, as it pertains to Eastern Iowa.

Active involvement with economic development, along with being a life-long resident of the area with understanding of the history and growth of Eastern Iowa.”

Short term/Long term goals: “To assist in making decisions that will maximize productivity and minimize expenses given the current regulatory and rate structure system in the state and the Country. To be proactive in controlling electricity costs, implementing use of alternative forms of energy (wind, solar and landfill gas) and costs associated with delivery in order to give the members the best rates and service possible in a constantly changing environment of Federal, State and Local regulation. Ultimately, I would like to see that rates to Linn County REC members remain among the lowest while still providing the consistent quality service we deserve. Given this we have to plan not only for today but also for resource (power) adequacy 25+ years from now.”

What do you feel is the biggest issue facing the co-op today? “The biggest issue facing Linn County REC or any utility is providing the best service and delivery at the lowest price. This is what customers want and deserve. Baseload, dispatchable energy to meet the needs of our members must be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in an amount to provide safe, reliable power. To do this requires constant vigilance of policies, procedures and providers with no room for complacency.”



District 3: Ray Buck

Member since: 2018

Occupation: Claims Supervisor, United Fire Group - Complex Claims/Litigation

Activities/Organizations:

- Cedar Rapids Claims Assoc., Member
- Cedar Valley CPCU Society

What strengths would you bring to our board if elected? “As a prior city council member, I have a good understanding of the processes and procedures involving meeting protocol. I have strong analytical skills, and an understanding of construction practices and procedures. I am a believer in research, understanding and collaboration is necessary to achieve goals of any organization.”

Short term/Long term goals: “Short-term goals would be to gain a full understanding of the REC’s business plan. Where we are to date and how progress is measured and evaluated and what steps have been taken to pivot to attain our goals. Long-term goals would be to identify areas where my expertise and experience can be used to benefit and move forward the Cooperative to be successful and ensure its longevity in servicing the membership.”

What do you feel is the biggest issue facing the co-op today? “The cost of energy and the ever-changing landscape of green energy demands along with legislative changes that may have an adverse impact on the Cooperative.”





District 3: Kurt Falkenstein

Member since: 2011

Occupation: US Air Force Security Police Captain, Retiring

Retired from local government: Management Analyst/Asst. Chief Admin. Officer (Athens, GA)

City Manager (Cedartown, GA), Town Manager (Windsor, VA)

Activities/Organizations:

- Vice President/Grounds Maintenance Director, Stoney Point Heights Owners Assoc.
- President/Vice President, CR Quiet Flyers Electric Model Airplane Club
- VFW and American Legion, member

What strengths would you bring to our board if elected? “My experience as a manager for two municipalities, developing and managing budgets for both a general fund and water/sewer funds, has made me intimately familiar with operations, challenges, and opportunities faced by a board that provides public service and a public utility. My Masters of Public Administration (MPA) and MS in Guidance and Counseling Degrees provide an educational background for both understanding the functions of Public Services and dynamics of working with groups and individuals. My BA in Criminal Justice and experience as a Security Police officer provide a background in resources protection and information security that will be valuable to any organization. My experience in working with groups to identify and prioritize goals and objectives will help me to quickly adapt to the purpose and functions of the Board.”

Short term/Long term goals: “My short-term goals will be to get to know my fellow REC Board members and the REC manager. I will also endeavor to become certified as a Board member as quickly as possible. My long-term goals will be to gain the trust and confidence of my fellow REC Board members, to work in concert with them and the manager to insure the REC provides efficient and effective services at the lowest cost to our members.”

What do you feel is the biggest issue facing the co-op today? “Next to natural disasters, disruptive technology is one of the biggest threats facing electric co-ops today. Providing cyber security to member information and automated systems, as well as providing physical security of REC resources, should become a greater priority today than at any other time. During recent years more cyber attacks have been launched against both public and private entities. Through ever changing technology, private information has become more vulnerable to attacks by individuals with nefarious intent. Terrorism against public utilities has also become a greater threat from those who wish to disrupt services to people and critical resources.”



District 3: Gary Schlotterbeck

Member since: 2003

Occupation: Retired, HVAC contractor, Owner/Operator Heating Service company

Activities/Organizations:

- Stone Bridge Church, Deacon of Facilities
- Alliant Energy PowerHouse, Guest Presenter

What strengths would you bring to our board if elected? “I am focused and goal-oriented. I have strong analytical skills and work with others to identify and implement solutions. I am a leader who listens and have the ability to manage and motivate people while maintaining a congenial, professional relationship. I am a team player and work collaboratively with others, while keeping strategic goals in mind.”

Short term/Long term goals: “My initial goals are to gain knowledge and insight into the operation of the REC and identify and understand current needs and challenges. Ultimately, I want to contribute to plans to mitigate those needs and challenges, prevent risks, and help position the REC for a strong future.”

What do you feel is the biggest issue facing the co-op today?

“The most significant issues facing the co-op are climate change which forces us to focus on the resiliency of our electric grid and infrastructure, the need for renewable energy, meeting the demand for talented, hard-working employees, and diversification of resources to enable adaptation in ever-changing times.”



District 3: Pat Woods

Member since: 2020

Occupation: Retired, Collins Aerospace

Activities/Organizations:

- Cedar Rapids Public Library, Volunteer

What strengths would you bring to our board if elected? “Available to assist with research for future REC initiatives. I also ask good questions.”

Short term/Long term goals: “A short-term goal is to support REC’s use of smart technologies to reduce cost to consumers. A long-term goal is to look at replacing REC’s fleet with EV vehicles.”

What do you feel is the biggest issue facing the co-op today? “People transitioning to EV vehicles to support government initiatives to reduce carbon emissions will lead to an increased demand for energy. As REC partners with energy providers, they should look to those investing in renewable energies like solar and wind. This will help support emissions guidelines by reducing fossil-fuel consumption. Other green technologies should include reducing the use of energy through smart technologies. This will maximize the utilization of energy. REC is currently providing information to their consumers to achieve these goals. They should be encouraged to continue this initiative as new products emerge.”



District 7: Ron O'Neil

Member since: 1976

Occupation: Retired, General Manager -VJ Engineering

Activities/Organizations:

- Linn County REC board of directors (CCD, BLC, Director Gold)
- IAEC Statewide Healthcare Board
- Johnson Co., Cedar Township Trustee
- Johnson Co. I-Club Board of Directors (member, past President)
- Solon School Board (past member)

What strengths would you bring to our board if re-elected? "I have a variety of management experiences, including nine years as a member of the Linn County REC Board of Directors. This includes strategic planning, budgeting, personnel management and project management. I have a strong work ethic and have devoted the time needed to be an effective Board member. I have completed over 25 NRECA classes and training to improve my knowledge of cooperatives. I have my Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate (CCD), my Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) and my Director Gold Credential. I have used this education to try to

continually improve as a Board member."

Short term/Long term goals: "The Board updated our strategic plan for Linn County REC in 2020 and will need to review and update the plan in the near future. This will outline the general direction for our cooperative for the next 3 to 4 years. We continue to have significant growth in the North Liberty area and the Board continues to address those needs. Cyber security is an ongoing and increasing issue for Linn County REC. Long term, we need to continue to provide safe, reliable, affordable, modern and secure energy for our members. Linn County REC has the largest number of members of all the electrical cooperatives in Iowa, with almost 33,000 members. We are steadily growing. We have a stable and sound financial portfolio. Linn County REC has very good management and staff. It is the Board's responsibility to oversee our CEO to make sure we continue with that effective management. We are continually striving to make improvements."

What do you feel is the biggest issue facing the co-op today? "There are two issues that the Board discusses on a regular basis. These issues are cyber security and the issues that develop because of our continual growth. The recent negotiation of a wholesale power contract should assist in stabilizing our power supply for the next few decades. This is dependent on our power supplier, CIPCO, in maintaining a balanced power portfolio."



SLOPPY JOE COWBOY BEANS

- 1 lb ground beef
- 2 Tbsp minced onion flakes
- 1 (1.31-oz) packet sloppy joe seasoning
- 1 (15-oz) can tomato sauce
- ½ tsp white vinegar
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup chopped cooked bacon, (about ½ a pound cooked)
- 3 (15-oz) cans pork & beans in tomato sauce, undrained

In a large skillet cook ground beef until no longer pink. Drain fat. Add remaining ingredients. Stir well. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes.



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