

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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CEO'S REPORT

by Mike Casper

In May, your board of directors will gather for your co-op's strategic planning session. The outcome will provide me with the destination they determine is in the best interest of the membership. It will be my job to lead the Jo-Carroll Energy team to design the route.

Recent strategic objectives developed for your co-op are growth, enhanced cooperative value and operational excellence. I have discussed these three objectives in past columns.

Today, I would like to share with you the priorities we have been focusing on this year based on the strategic objectives.

Growth: Growing members provides us additional revenue, which helps spread our fixed costs across more members and stabilize rates for all our members.

Fiber is our largest growth area in years. We now have more than 1,500 members enjoying fiber and expect to add 650 new broadband accounts this year. Besides the millions of dollars awarded to Jo-Carroll to build out fiber in rural areas, we continue to apply for additional funding.

Enhance Cooperative Value: Providing value to our members through affordable services, environmental stewardship and community success are key to member satisfaction, as well as providing the highest level of support and member care possible.

Rate options – Affordable rates are a top comment that we receive from you during our member surveys. This year we are completing a review of our new wholesale power supply rate and evaluating existing rates.

Environmentally sustainable options – In addition to the Apple Canyon Lake community solar array that is now fully subscribed, we will be developing a subscription program for the North Mount Carroll community solar array. In addition to our level 2 electric vehicle (EV) charger in our Savanna parking lot, we are installing our area's first EV fast-charging station. Additional information will be published soon. Please refer to CHARGE (charge.coop), a cooperative electric vehicle charging network of which JCE is an integral part.

Operational Excellence: Operating safely, efficiently and effectively are critically important to sustainable operations, reliability, affordable rates and growth, which are essential in providing our members with unmatched services.

Safety and training – Safety is our number one core value for the protection of our members and

▶ Continued on 20C

For your information

Your Board of Directors:

David Senn
Chairman
District 7

Russell Holesinger
Vice Chairman
District 8

Marcia Stanger
Secretary
District 3

Martin Werner
District 1

Joseph Mattingley
District 2

Dan Tindell
District 4

Patricia Smith
District 5

Thomas Lundy
District 6

Larry Carroll
District 9

Robert Kuhns
Treasurer
District 10

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:

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www.jocarroll.com

For emergencies and outages call:

(800) 858-5522

Jo-Carroll Energy board meeting minutes summary

Board Meeting Minutes Summary - February 25, 2021

The regular board meeting of Jo-Carroll Energy, Inc. (NFP) was held via video phone conference on Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 9 a.m.

A Safety Moment was provided by Director Bob Kuhns.

Presentations – A presentation was provided by Mike Genin and Sean McCarthy of the Illinois Public Energy Association (IPEA). They discussed the recent timeline of events affecting Jo-Carroll Energy natural gas prices. Sustained cold temperatures into Texas and Louisiana caused natural gas prices to skyrocket for heating purposes. The cold temperatures caused natural gas and oil production to close production wells, therefore limiting supplies. In summary, this was an unprecedented event, gas supplies were limited while usage volumes increased, resulting in market price increases. IPEA also noted that Jo-Carroll Energy had appropriate purchasing and storage strategies in place to cover 85 percent of normal February usage.

A presentation was also provided by Emily Legel, Director of NW Illinois Economic Development (NWILED). Emily provided an introduction about NWILED's past projects and successes, current initiatives, and future projects. Some achievements NWILED accomplished over the past year were also highlighted, to include connecting over 60 businesses with loans and grants to survive Covid-19.

Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) Report – Chairman Senn discussed the highlights from the AIEC and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) reports. Director Senn and Director Kuhns each provided highlights from the NRECA Power Exchange meeting they recently attended.

American Public Gas Association (APGA) Report – President and CEO Mike Casper discussed the natural gas event and how it will affect our members. The APGA formally requested an immediate investigation into the price of natural gas. Director Carroll thanked Casper for keeping the board informed of the situation.

Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC) – Highlights will be discussed further at the March board meeting.

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

Policy 144 – Policy 144/Code of Ethics was tabled and will be reviewed by the Governance Committee.

CEO Report – President and CEO Casper provided an overview of communication efforts that are being prepared for members regarding the natural gas market price spike event, focusing on education, conservation, and assistance. Casper

noted the various steps that our team has taken to reach out to members including social media and news outlets requesting conservation measures. Casper noted that a letter will be sent prior to bills going out to natural gas members, emphasizing the reasons for the price increase for natural gas and what Jo-Carroll Energy is doing to assist our members.

Financial Operating Report – CFO Woods provided a summary of the financial operating report for January. YTD revenue is approximately \$5.8 million vs. a budgeted amount of \$6 million. Total operations and maintenance expenses were approximately \$290,000 under budget. YTD margins are approximately \$540,000 vs. a budgeted amount of approximately \$440,000. By general consent, the board moved to file the financial operating report with the auditor.

Board Issues and Action Items

Directors will complete the Conflict-of-Interest Statement and submit to Jo-Carroll Energy.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve the Fiber Installation Fee Waiver through 2021 to encourage sign-ups and to be comparable with other offers.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to approve broadband rate polices 805/SP Managed Hot Spot Service, 810/SP Internet Security, 811/SP Network Security and Support, 813/SP Managed IT Services, and 814/Infrastructure as a Service. These new services will provide enhanced value to our members while leveraging our internal operations.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried by a vote of 9-0 to approve the York Peaking Generator Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Dairyland Power. Director Mattingley abstained from voting.

Operations and Regulatory Update

Operations Update – Kyle Buros, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer discussed the Burns Road natural gas event and measures that Jo-Carroll Energy has taken to mitigate future incidents.

Covid Update – Merri Sevey, V.P. of Human Resources, provided an update on Covid statistics in our region and offered information for each county on how to register for the vaccine.

Action Resulting from Executive Session – None.

Other Business – Casper communicated that he will be creating a video message that will be shared with members regarding the natural gas marketing pricing event.

Adjournment

Chairman Senn adjourned the meeting at 12:22 p.m.

Jo-Carroll Energy announces annual meeting date

Jo-Carroll Energy's 2021 Annual Meeting of Members will take place on Tuesday, Aug. 3. The planned location for this year's event is the River Ridge schools, with an in-person meeting if allowable under social distancing rules at that time.

JCE will provide updates on the annual meeting in the Hi-Lines center section of *Illinois Country Living*, its monthly newsletter, on its website and through social media.



Serve on JCE's board

Four seats on the Jo-Carroll Energy Board of Directors are up for election in 2021. Directors to be elected are in districts 5, 7, 8 and 10.

Any JCE member residing in a district up for election may petition for nomination in that district. Petition forms

may be downloaded from jocarroll.com. Petitions must be signed by at least 25 JCE members residing in the district for which the director is to be elected. Petitions must be filed at the cooperative's headquarters no later than June 4.

In order to have their name

on the ballot, nominees must participate in an orientation process provided by the attorney for the cooperative, assuring that nominees fully understand the expectations and responsibilities of directors.

Linda L. Zink

Budget billing accounts recalculate in May

Members with budget billing for their electric and/or natural gas accounts will have the budget amounts recalculated in May.

Because the budget amount is based on an average of the previous 12 months' use and outstanding credits or debits may accrue, the May true-up recalculation may result in an increase or decrease depending on changes in your use patterns.

Be sure to check your May statement to see if your budget amount has changed. A message in blue will appear on your statement to indicate the new budget amount if the recalculation resulted in a change. If you do not see a message on your statement, your budget billing amount remained the same.

If you have more than one billing account on budget, it

is possible that one or both amounts may change.

You begin paying the new budget amount in June.

If you have any questions regarding budget billing, your budget bill account or levelized billing, please contact the Member Services Department at 800-858-5522.

You can find more information on our website at jocarroll.com/budget-billing.

2021 Jo-Carroll priorities

► Continued from 20A

employees. We consistently promote a culture of safety through practice, education, and training. This year additional focus is on education and training.

Core business systems – We

continuously strive to integrate new and improve existing systems to operate more efficiently. This year our focus is on merging business processes and improving the utilization and integration of our

workforce platforms.

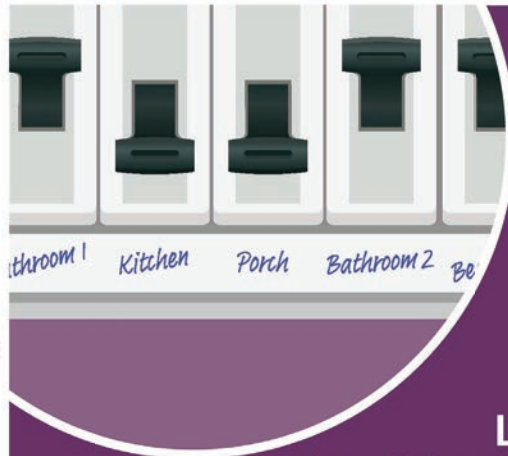
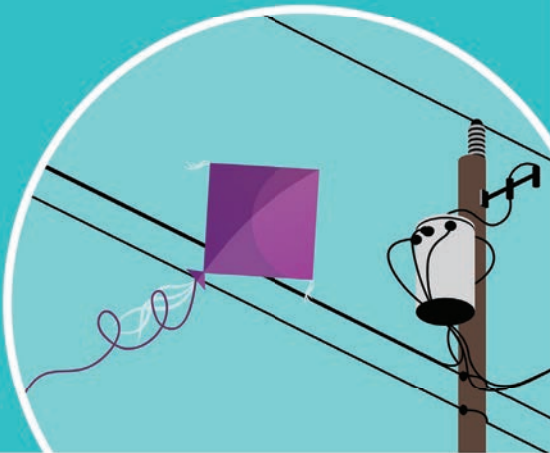
Business continuity and disaster recovery – This year we are finalizing program development and implementation of our business continuity and disaster recovery plan.



Get smart about electrical safety. **May is National Electrical Safety Month.**

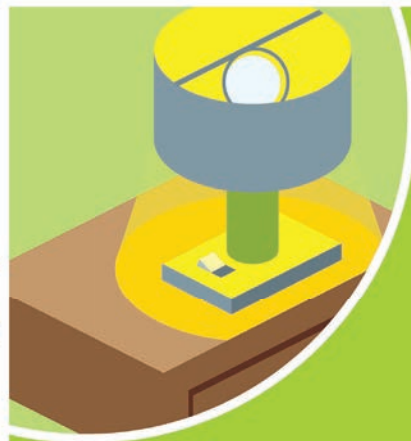


Talk to your children about the importance of practicing electrical safety.



Label circuit breakers to understand the different circuits in your home.

Never plug an extension cord into another extension cord.



Only use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the light fixture.



Why do we trim trees?

Trees add beauty to our landscape and can help conserve energy. When they grow too close to power lines, however, they can cause service disruptions and outages.

We strive to balance the beauty of our surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights of way.

Tree trimming has three main benefits.

- **Safety.** Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. If trees touch powerlines, electricity can arc or jump from the line to a tree or branch and ignite. A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events.
- **Reliability.** Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines

causing power outages. Proactive trimming and pruning keeps lines clear to promote reliability.

- **Affordability.** As a not-for-profit cooperative, Jo-Carroll Energy strives to keep our costs in check. This extends to our approach to vegetation management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management practices keep costs down.

If you notice your trees starting to crowd our main power lines, do not trim them yourself. Contact the co-op to determine the next recommended step.

Cycle cutting over this year will take place out of our East Dubuque, Menominee, Galena and Pilot Knob substations.

Leave that to the professionals...

One DIY project you should never tackle is trimming trees near power lines.

Only trained professionals should trim those trees.

Learn more at:

 Safe
Electricity.org



Jo-Carroll Energy mourns loss of board director

It is with great sadness that the board of directors and management of Jo-Carroll Energy share the news of the death of Martin "Marty" Werner, JCE's District 1 director.

Werner passed away on Thursday, April 1 at the University of Iowa Hospital, Iowa City, Iowa.

A JCE board member since 2007, Werner dedicated 14 years to serving the members of the cooperative. During his years on the board, he had served as board treasurer as well as on the executive, resolutions, audit and governance committees.

"Marty was well-respected in the East Dubuque area and

will be deeply missed," said Mike Casper, JCE president and CEO.

Dedicated to his community, Werner also served as a member of the East Dubuque City Council, had previously served on the Jo Daviess County Board and was a retired member of the East Dubuque Volunteer Fire Department.

He served in the U. S. Army during the Vietnam War from 1966-1968 serving in the Armored Division at Ft. Hood, Texas, and the Missile Unit in Germany. He was employed at the John Deere Dubuque Works from 1971 until 2001 when he retired. He was a member of U.A.W. Local #94.

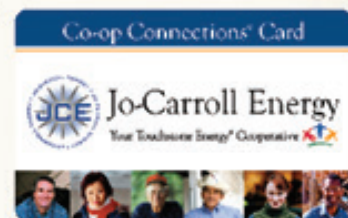


Marty previously worked for John Leibold's gas station, and later operated Marty's Auto Repair for 25 years.

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Reliable generation, prudent planning result in power during cold snap

Jo-Carroll Energy is one of 35 electric cooperatives who are member-owners of Dairyland Power Cooperative and Prairie Power, Inc. Dairyland and Prairie Power are generation and transmission cooperatives (G&Ts), which means they generate or acquire all the power needs of their member cooperatives and send the electricity to our local substations, which is then distributed by Jo-Carroll to your electric meter.

Dairyland and Prairie Power are part of the MISO (Midcontinent Independent System Operator) regional transmission organization (RTO). As members of MISO they utilize a mix of owned assets as well as short- and long-term agreements to meet members' electricity needs. This is done through:

- Owning and operating generation facilities
- Power Purchase Agreements that include wind, solar and hydroelectric

As a member-owner, Jo-Carroll and the other members have tasked Dairyland and Prairie Power with providing affordable and reliable electricity, while minimizing members' exposure to the real-time, up-and-down prices of the MISO market. In

MISO – and other RTOs – the price for electricity changes throughout the day depending on the amount of electricity is available vs. how much electricity is needed by consumers (supply and demand).

Because of the risk involved with an ever-changing power market, Dairyland, Prairie Power and other utilities tell MISO what they anticipate their electricity needs will be the day before it's needed. This is called the day-ahead market. MISO agrees to provide Dairyland and Prairie Power with the electricity needed for a set price based on what they forecast power costs to be the following day. With that data, MISO communicates with generation facilities throughout its territory covering 15 states and Manitoba, Canada, to establish how much electricity is needed from each generation facility. MISO dispatches the lowest-cost units until energy needs are met.

Factored into Dairyland and Prairie Power's day-ahead power needs are power purchase agreements (PPAs). When a generation facility (wind farm, solar array, etc.) is built, a utility can agree to purchase a certain amount of the output from the facility at a pre-determined price. So, no matter what the real-time price is for the power in the

market, Dairyland and Prairie Power will pay the price set in the PPA for the electricity generated from that facility each day. Throughout the year, that can mean they might pay more for electricity at certain times of the day when demand is low. However, these PPAs provide critical protection for Dairyland and Prairie Power and their member cooperatives during times of high demand, such as the week of Feb. 14, when real-time prices at one point peaked more than 18 times higher than the average price per megawatt-hour (MWh) Dairyland and Prairie Power paid in January.

Looking out for members

Both Dairyland and Prairie Power take measured approaches as it builds and diversifies its generation resource mix. The cooperative is willing to miss out on some low prices at certain times of the day if the overall result is reliable and affordable electricity for members.

We are sensitive to members' unique situations especially as the pandemic continues to affect our community and nation. Funds are available to help pay utility bills for those members who qualify. If there are questions regarding your next electric bill, please contact Jo-Carroll at 800-858-5522.

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.



Benefits of Fiber-To-The-Home

Speeds you need to enjoy your online experience at home



Provides more reliability and fewer interruptions

Nothing can alter a fiber optic network connection, except a physical cut to the fiber or the destruction of the building it's in. With fiber, you can expect a consistent, true speed, even between the "rush hours". So, don't worry, no dropped connections while you're binge watching your favorite show.



Gives you the capability to connect multiple devices at once

Households now have an average of 10 devices connected to the internet at once. All of these devices have to share the available bandwidth. The higher your Mbps, the more devices you can have connected at one time. No more asking someone to stop using the connection in order for you to be able to surf or stream.



Gives you the speeds you need

Fiber gives you speeds you need to enhance your online experience whether you are streaming the latest episode of your favorite show, sharing photos or uploading an assignment for an online class. If speeds become 1,000 times faster in 20 years, fiber connections will still be able to support them.



Increases your home's value

Access to fiber internet may increase a home's value by up to 3.1% as stated in a study done by the Fiber to the Home Council in 2015. This is comparable to adding a half bath, fireplace or a quarter of a swimming pool to a home. Investing in fiber internet improves the economic performance of a community as well as its quality of life.


Track Our Progress

Visit connectSP.com/fiber/communities to find your neighborhood and see if service is available in your area.
Get connected or express your interest at:

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And forever in peace may you wave
You're the emblem of
The land I love
The home of the free and the brave***

Be sure to display your American flag this Memorial Day and pay tribute to the brave men and women who gave their lives for our freedom and allow our precious flag to fly.

Brought to you by your Touchstone Energy cooperative.



Jo-Carroll Energy

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Jo-Carroll Energy will be closed Monday, May 31 in honor of Memorial Day.