

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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Send us your best work!

Co-op leaders discuss priorities at NRECA Legislative Conference



CEO'S REPORT

by Mike Casper

Each year more than 2,000 representatives from electric co-ops across the nation ascend Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., to meet with federal representatives and advocate for priorities important to rural America.

I was especially proud of Jo-Carroll Energy's team and the other Illinois electric cooperative employees who joined forces in April to discuss the priorities that directly affect you, our member-consumers.

Our focus was on three topics:

1. *Expand rural broadband access.*

Congress must continue to fund rural broadband programs that meet the unique challenges of serving hard-to-reach areas.

Why? A reliable broadband connection is vital for rural America

and creates new ways to live, learn and earn in rural America. Jo-Carroll and more than 200 electric cooperatives across the nation are working to expand rural broadband access in unserved and underserved areas of the country, in addition to integrating smart-grid technologies to their energy networks that can improve efficiencies and our carbon footprint.

2. *Alleviate supply chain challenges.*

Congress must help address labor shortages, invest in longterm manufacturing growth and incentivize increased domestic steel production.

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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

March 29, 2023

The regular board meeting of Jo-Carroll Energy, Inc. (NFP) was held on Wednesday, March 29, 2023.

Safety Moment – A Safety Moment was provided by Director Tom Lundy emphasizing the importance of reading safety manuals before operating equipment.

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

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

Presentation One – Mark Prouhet, Managing Director of FORVIS Accounting, provided a summary of audit results for 2022 and presented the board with a clean, unmodified opinion, noting that accounting policies, management's judgement, and accounting estimates were appropriate.

Presentation Two – A Safety Video on Cooperative Vehicle Safety was shown. An in-person demonstration of Jo-Carroll Energy vehicles was performed by Becky Brown, Manager of Administrative Operations, followed.

Governance Topics and Board Policy Review

Governance Talk Video – None.

Board Policy Review – None.

CEO/Financial Operating Report

CEO Report – President and CEO Mike Casper discussed proposed Senate Bill 319. He also provided a reminder of the rate increase that will be reflected on the April billing statements.

Financial Operating Report – Chuck Woods, Chief Financial Officer, provided a summary of the financial operating report for February. Revenue year-to-date (YTD) is approximately \$12.3 million. Total operations and maintenance expenses are approximately \$9.6 million, which is approximately (\$926,808) under budget of \$10.6 million. Margins are approximately \$1.2 million versus

a budgeted amount of approximately (\$458,747) and amounts to \$1.65 million over budget. 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 provided an update on the recent storms that affected the service territory and the preparations that were taken in advance. In addition, Buros provided an update on the Burns Road rebuild project and shared that JCE will be conducting a town hall meeting March 29 in Scales Mound to discuss fiber buildout plans and easements.

Member Services Update – V.P. of Member Services Jennifer Meyer discussed the brand refresh survey that will be shared with the board and employees for their input.

External Affairs/Legislative Update – Terry Kurt, Outside General Counsel, had nothing to add outside of the staff report.

Human Resources – Chuck Woods, CFO, provided an update on new hires and open positions at the cooperative.

Executive Assistant – Amy Johnston, Executive Assistant, had nothing to add outside of her written staff report.

Board Issues and Action Items

Discussion of 2024 Strategic Planning – Strategic Planning dates were discussed and finalized.

Into Executive Session – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to go into executive session at 11:25 a.m.

Out of Executive Session – A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to come out of Executive

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2023 JCE Scholarship Recipients

Jo-Carroll Energy has awarded scholarships in 2023 to six high school seniors who live in the cooperative's service area. Scholarships are based on the applicant's scholastic achievements, school and community involvement and personal essay. The students are receiving \$1,000 JCE Scholarships. JCE presents scholarships annually as part of its commitment to community, one of the seven cooperative principles.



Victoria Moshure
Mount Carroll

High school: West Carroll
College: Sauk Valley Community College

Planned course of study:
majoring in radiology with plans
to become further certified in
either MRI or ultrasound



Abbey Skiles
Savanna

High school: West Carroll
College: Highland Community College

Planned course of study:
Majoring in nursing, with future
goal to pick up a specialty



Samuel Eaton
Galena

High school: Galena
College: Grinnell College

Planned course of study:
Major in economics with a
concentration in statistics



Joselyn Reisner
Geneseo

High school: Geneseo
College: Carroll College
Planned course of study:
majoring in civil engineering



Bryce Jepson
Fenton

High school: Erie
College: Western Illinois University-Moline
Planned course of study:
majoring in engineering



Chase Dittmar
Galena

High school: Galena
College: Coe College
Planned course of study:
Double majoring in biology and
environmental science

Preparing to serve you better

Providing reliable power to you is and will always be a top priority for Jo-Carroll Energy. These days, power reliability seems to be making news more than ever.

As the energy industry continues to transition and more segments of the economy are becoming electrified, such as vehicles, machinery and even lawn equipment, additional pressures are being placed on our nation's electric grid.

receiving the reliable power they depend on and deserve.

Let us be the first to say we love trees and the charm they add to the communities. While trees provide shade and add beauty to our area, you may be surprised to learn that overgrown vegetation accounts for about half of all power outages.

That is why we strive to keep the co-op's power lines clear in right-of-way (ROW) areas. A ROW area is the land a co-op

other obstructions that could hinder distribution power lines. The overall goal of our vegetation management strategy is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining our area's beauty.

Modernizing vegetation management

Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keep lines clear to improve power reliability. However, traditional vegetation management is costly and time-consuming. It entails on-the-ground, labor-intensive efforts involving dozens of workers assessing vegetation and overseeing the quality and completion of contractor work. Although this approach has worked for decades, advances and improvements in technology have allowed us to reduce our costs and improve efficiency. Michelle Zasada

Planned outages improve reliability

Although it may seem counterintuitive, we also maintain power reliability through planned, controlled outages. By carefully cutting power to one part of our local area for a few hours, JCE can perform system repairs and upgrades, which ultimately improves electric service. Planned outages can also be used to balance energy demand, but only in rare circumstances. Rest assured, we will always notify you in advance of a planned outage, so make sure we have your correct contact information on file

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With summer storm season upon us, it is a good time to talk about a few measures Jo-Carroll is taking to ensure our members continue

uses to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. This ROW enables Jo-Carroll to provide clearance of trees and

to receive the latest emails or mailings.

Vegetation management is an essential tool in ensuring power reliability and minimizing the risk of outages. As advancements become more accessible and costs drop, we anticipate using additional technologies to ensure a consistent energy supply while managing the environment.

Follow Jo-Carroll Energy on social media to stay up to date on the latest co-op updates.

ROW service work is scheduled in your area

Jo-Carroll Energy's Right-of-way (ROW) clearing and trimming will start soon and continue throughout the year.

Zielies Tree Service will be performing this work on behalf of JCE.

Areas included are in the Galena and Hanover areas that are served by the Pilot Knob substation.

This ROW clearing work may or may not affect your specific property. The work can include mowing, hand-cutting and side trimming, up to and including removal as needed.

ROW clearing improves system reliability. The ROW program is a multi-year, ongoing activity.

ROW clearing is done with the goal of removing problem trees and vegetation for seven or eight years until the next clearing cycle.

Furlong awarded IEC memorial scholarship

Jacob Furlong of Galena is one of 15 winners of this year's Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship.

The \$2,000 awards are given each year to 15 children of electric co-op members, employees or directors. A 15th scholarship is reserved for a student interested in line-worker's school and will be announced at a later date.

Furlong competed for the scholarship with 292 other students from across the state and will be recognized during the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives' annual meeting on Aug. 2, 2023, in Springfield.

Furlong plans to attend the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, majoring in finance and PGA golf management.



Why? Ongoing supply chain constraints are impeding the ability of Jo-Carroll and other co-ops to access key components and materials, which creates safety, cost and reliability concerns. It also impedes growth of businesses and new housing, which are essential to our area's economic growth.

3. Modernize the federal permitting process.

Congress must pass legislation to create a more streamlined permitting process.

Why? As we build for the future (e.g., new pipelines, facilities, fiber), the process for conducting federal environmental reviews must be more efficient and streamlined to reduce costs and provide more certainty to Jo-Carroll, as well as electric co-ops across the nation, to maintain affordable, reliable energy services and help bridge the digital divide.

Our involvement and advocacy on behalf of our members is vital as we work together to advance the priorities of cooperatives and our communities and improve the quality of life for members.

I look forward to seeing you and responding to your questions at the Jo-Carroll Energy annual meeting on the evening of Monday, June 5. Working together toward tomorrow will benefit all of us.

Minutes continued from page 18B

Session at 11:40 a.m.

Action Resulting from Executive Session – None

Reports/Updates

Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) Report –

Director Senn noted that CEO Mike Casper shared JCE's strategic objectives and primary initiatives during the AIEC board meeting. In addition, he shared highlights from the National Rural Electric Cooperative (NRECA) Power Exchange Meeting.

American Public Gas Association (APGA) Report –

Director Carroll shared information on various new and proposed regulations affecting the natural gas (NG) industry. Casper commented that he recently had a call with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Chair stressing the importance of natural gas pipeline expansion and Section 5 reform.

Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC)

– Director Mattingley discussed the Dairyland board highlights and noted that the DPC RockGen generating facility will be set up as a regulatory asset for 20 years and was approved by the RUS.

Prairie Power Incorporated (PPI)

Report – Director Kuhns commented that the PPI Annual Meeting will be held on June 14.

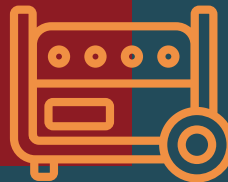
Other Business – None.

Adjournment – Chairman Senn adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m.

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.

What to do before using a PORTABLE GENERATOR



Prepare

Install battery operated carbon monoxide (CO) alarms throughout your home; ensure they are working properly.

Position

Place a portable generator at least 20 feet from windows and doors; do not use one in a garage or carport.



Read

Carefully review and then follow all manufacturer's instructions.

Protect

If it is wet outside, keep it dry by placing it on a tarp. Position it under a portable canopy (not a carport).



Refuel Safely

Turn off your portable generator and let it cool down before refueling.

Inspect and Maintain

Inspect a portable generator before each use and make sure it is properly maintained.



 **Safe
Electricity.org®**

PHOTO CONTEST

Send us your best shots!

Jo-Carroll Energy members are invited to submit their best photos for our 2023 photo contest.

The subject of the photo can be landscapes, power line equipment or anything that depicts life in northwest Illinois.

Entries must be submitted by June 30.

Entrants must be JCE members; spouses and children of members may submit photos also. All photos must be the work of the entrant and be taken within the JCE service area.

We will choose 12 photos to appear on the pages of our 2024 photo calendar along with front and back calendar pages. Several other photos may be selected as honorable mention.

For complete rules and entry information, please visit jocarroll.com/photo-contest. We do ask that members limit their entries to five each.



ANNUAL COLORING CONTEST

SHOWCASE YOUR CHILD'S ARTISTIC TALENT

Looking for something for your children to do? Have them enter Jo-Carroll Energy's Summer Coloring Contest.

We'll select a winner in each of three age categories - ages 5-6, 7-8 and 9-10.

The winners will receive a set of school supplies for the fall school year and other fun prizes. In addition, to the child's prize, we donate five energy related children's books to the child's community library.

Coloring sheets, along with the entry form and rules, can be downloaded at jocarroll.com. Only one entry per child is allowed, and each entry will be placed into one of the three age groups.

Artwork will be judged based on creativity, originality and use of color. All artwork will not be returned except upon request and will be displayed in our Elizabeth, Savanna and Geneseo offices.

Mail or deliver completed forms and artwork to:

Jo-Carroll Energy
Attn: Sara Lechowicz
P.O. Box 390
Elizabeth, IL 61028

OR

By email to
slechowicz@jocarroll.com
Entries must be received by
the contest deadline of
July 21, 2023.



Our Internet Speeds Are *Off the Charts*



Lightning-Fast Fiber Internet
Greater Reliability
Local Service



Sign-up or express your interest at
connectSP.com/iwantfiber