

Rachel Johnson, Cherryland Electric Cooperative ([00:15](#)):

Welcome back to co-op energy talk. I'm your host, Rachel Johnson. I'm the member relation manager here at cherry land electric cooperative. And you are listening to the board meeting brief for our Monday, April 25th board meeting. Here are seven items of note from that board meeting. And this is a little bit of a long one. So stick with me cuz it's all really good stuff. Uh, the first thing that our board did and that they do every April is the board invites candidates for the upcoming board election to join them. It's just an opportunity for those candidates to ask questions, get to know the board, better understand the work the board does and the time commitment this month, Vicki Olsen and Dean Adams join the board for their meeting. Both Vicki and Dean are running to serve as at large board members. In addition, uh, incumbents, Melinda Latner and Valerie handy will be on the ballot this year.

Rachel Johnson, Cherryland Electric Cooperative ([01:02](#)):

The elections open May 2nd, you can vote online by logging in your smart hub account or by mail in ballot with the ballot you will receive in the may issue of country lines, which you should also receive sometime around May 2nd. Uh, you can check out cherry land electric dot co-op slash elections for details on this election, how to vote and also for candidate bios and information about the bylaw changes are on the ballot this year. In addition to meeting the candidates, the board appointed five cherry land members to our election and credentials committee to oversee the election. Once it opens, if you have questions about that process, that is clearly outlined in our bylaws, but, uh, just a kind of a few things to note these five volunteer cherry land members cannot have any relationship to anyone who's on the ballot. Anyone who's on the bill or any cherry land employees.

Rachel Johnson, Cherryland Electric Cooperative ([01:44](#)):

And they're just there to make sure that our election is overseen with the utmost integrity. The second thing the board did at their meeting this month is approve new construction fees and line extension policies. This is an ongoing project and I updated you all on this last month. We'll have more details regarding the specifics us policy on our website, but just to kind of briefly explain it, the new fees more accurately represent our costs. And as many of you know, I'm sure our costs have changed a lot and have gone up a lot. The new fees are also significantly simpler than our old fee structure, which should make it easier for our members to kind of ballpark estimate their project so they can decide whether it's something they wanna move forward from an engineering perspective. Uh, unlike our old policy, our new policy is built on the assumption that all new service and line extensions will be installed underground.

Rachel Johnson, Cherryland Electric Cooperative ([02:32](#)):

So our old policy used to assume overhead, and then we would charge a premium for underground. But what we found over time is that about 95% of our new line extension projects are underground. Anyway. So we went ahead and just built that into the model. Members will get the first a hundred feet free and then anything over that a hundred feet is a cost of \$6 per foot after. So it's a really simple policy, uh, significant improvement over old policy. And like I said, we'll have more details on that. On our website. Third item on our, in our board meeting this month was the cooperative CFO updated the board on our power supply cost, which will come as no surprise to all of you have been very volatile and over the last few months and maybe a little bit over budget. Um, but what we're seeing is really more stability and that allowed us to decrease our power supply cost recovery mechanism or PSCR last month we went from eight mills to four mills and in his update to our board this month, our CFO indicated that we believe we may be able to offer additional decreases in the near future likely sometime this summer.

Rachel Johnson, Cherryland Electric Cooperative (03:29):

So we'll continue to monitor that and update you as it proceeds. Uh, fourth item of note from the board meeting, I updated our board on our collections processes. We resume our normal disconnect policies and in our winter disconnect moratorium, cherry land does not disconnect members for non-pay between November 1st and April 15th. So we're kind of getting back into our normal processes. Our member services team has been working with members on payment arrangements and energy assistance applications. In addition to that, we recently became a, my half partner, which allows our members to qualify for additional energy assistance through the Northwest Michigan community action agency. Uh, cherry land's normal monthly disconnect policies will be in effect. Now through October the fifth item on our board agenda this month, the board received an update on cyber security issues, which for those of you who are, um, avid podcast listeners, we recently did a podcast on cyber security and our it administrator this month reported that cooperatives across the country are seeing an uptick in ransomware attacks.

Rachel Johnson, Cherryland Electric Cooperative (04:26):

He gave kinda some details about what to look out for, and he noted that our employees have been very diligent in thwarting fishing attacks, but he, you know, just kind of reminded our board and, and will continue to remind our employees to continue to be very vigilant. Uh, sick. As I mentioned last month, the cooperative received a clean audit for 2021. So that at this month's meeting the board formally voted to allocate our 2021 margins to our members. Our total margins were 4 million, \$550,650. So a little over \$4.5 million and members will see their proportionate share those margins on their June electric bill. Just a, a quick reminder, the allocation is a notice, the actual return of capital credits. So kind of a cash credit on your bill happens later in the year. And if you have any questions about the capital credit process, you should check out our capital credit 1 0 1 podcast from last December.

Rachel Johnson, Cherryland Electric Cooperative (05:19):

And the final item of note at this month's board meeting, the board received updates from the recent Wolverine power cooperative and Michigan electric cooperative association board meetings. Wolverine continues to experience record sales corresponding with an increased demand for electricity in the rural areas, served by the cooperatives. And this just seems to be consistent growth in the demand for electricity and rural areas. Uh, and then the Michigan electric cooperative of association has chosen, uh, cherry land director, Gabe Schneider to service their vice chair. And they are also analyzing and preparing for future advocacy opportunities as the Michigan legislature considers the governor's Michigan healthy climate plan, which was, uh, formally announced last week. Um, I'm sure we'll talk in more depth about that particular policy initiative and future podcast. I won't get into the details here, but just, uh, Mecca is monitoring it and that Gabe will be, uh, very involved with that as the vice chair of the maca board. So that was kind of the highlights from our most recent board meeting. Uh, chair lands board of directors will meet again on Monday, May 23rd, just to quick reminder, members are always invited to come in and give input to the board at those meetings. Just let us know in advance. We'll make sure we are ready for you and, uh, be sure to tune in after that meeting for our next co-op energy talk board meeting brief.