



**Capital  
Electric**  
COOPERATIVE

**JUNE 2024**

Capital Electric Cooperative invites you to your annual meeting June 11 at the Bismarck Event Center to learn more about your electric cooperative, have some fun and elect your directors.

# Capital Electric Cooperative's 78th annual meeting



**Bismarck Event Center**

June 11

Dinner at 4:30 p.m. and meeting at 6:30 p.m.

## **IN THIS ISSUE**

- Annual meeting June 11
- Meet the board of director candidates
- Wireless meter changeout complete
- Real World Camp brings real life to kids
- Adopt-a-highway program
- Electric vehicle tailgate party
- Board minutes



*Food and conversation with fellow co-op members are a great combination at the annual meeting!*

## Capital Electric members are focus of annual meeting

Capital Electric Cooperative will host your annual meeting for the 78th time on Tuesday, June 11, at the Bismarck Event Center. The annual meeting presents an opportunity for members to hear what's happening at their cooperative and to ask questions.

Throughout the 78 years of meetings, the co-op has appreciated the participation and feedback from you. Our growth has been significant, as we now serve more than 22,000 meters in Burleigh and Sheridan counties.

One of the most popular aspects of the annual meeting is the dinner. The gathering of members over a meal is part of the North Dakota way of life, and Capital Electric's staff and directors are pleased to join the meal to get to know you better.

As the meeting date quickly approaches, we hope you will join us again this year as we move forward into yet another era of energy production and distribution. Your understanding of these changes will be vital, and we have noticed considerably more member involvement with all co-op issues.

This year's festivities will start at 4:30 p.m. with registration, dinner and live entertainment by the Dad Bod Band, a local group of musicians. The business meeting will follow at 6:30 p.m. and will include the

election of three board members, one from each district. You can read about each board member on page C3. The information provided about the candidates will allow you to get to know them better.

As in past years, co-op members will be entered to win a \$1,000 grand prize and we will again be drawing for a \$500 college scholarship to a dependent of a Capital Electric member who is in attendance.

We look forward to seeing you at this year's meeting! ☺



*A vital component of Capital Electric Cooperative's annual meeting is the opportunity for members to vote for director candidates. Members can also vote online or by mail prior to the meeting.*

# Meet your 2024 board candidates



**Dwight Wrangham**  
District 1

## **What makes you a good candidate for Capital Electric Cooperative's board of directors?**

I am asking for your vote in Capital Electric Cooperative's District 1 election. If elected, I will continue to work to follow our mission statement, "Capital Electric Cooperative serves our community and member-owners as their trusted energy provider and partner." My experience in community service, business, the state legislature and the co-op's board has given me a good background to serve you as your director.

## **If elected, what are your priorities?**

My priorities are to support our goal of providing safe, reliable electricity to our members at a reasonable cost. As a distribution cooperative, Capital Electric continues to do an excellent job of accomplishing these goals. However, electric generation and transmission continues to face increasing challenges from government regulation and social activist groups. I will continue to build upon our past solid foundation while recognizing those challenges and plan as change comes.



**Deon Vilhauer**  
District 2

## **What makes you a good candidate for Capital Electric Cooperative's board of directors?**

I am honored to have lived in the Bismarck area for most of my life. The success of Bismarck, Lincoln, Wing, Sterling, Wilton, McClusky and the surrounding areas is a passion of mine, because America will not succeed without rural America being both strong and healthy. I have earned both the Board Leadership Certificate and the Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

## **If elected, what are your priorities?**

Rural electric service is a vital part of our region. Thus, reliability and affordability must be high on my list of priorities. We must be aware of possible improvements to safety equipment, as employee safety should never be taken for granted. We need to stay vigilant regarding potential threats to our electric grid, such as cyberattacks and infrastructure limitations.



**Greg Dehne**  
District 3

## **What makes you a good candidate for Capital Electric Cooperative's board of directors?**

As a retired engineer with more than 37 years of production experience working with a cooperative as our primary customer, I have broad experience in short- and long-term utility power distribution and generation experience. Because I have worked directly with cooperative management, I know some of their high priorities and reasons for them. I can hit the ground running.

## **If elected, what are your priorities?**

My No. 1 goal is the safety of our employees. Next is the continued reliability and cost of our member electricity rate structure. I am committed to hearing our members' concerns and keeping transparent communication with our members to continue the cooperative tradition of providing "safe, reliable and affordable electricity" for our members into the foreseeable future. ☺



Journeyman lineworker **Braden Martin** replaces an existing two-way automatic communication system meter with a new digital wireless meter.

## Capital Electric upgrades to wireless meters

BY WES ENGBRECHT AND GREG OWEN

In recent years, we have seen the introduction of technological advances, which seem to be evolving more quickly. As we reach for our cellphones or fire up our iPads, we take for granted what technology can do for us. Many weren't around in the "old days" to appreciate the conveniences this technology provides.

Digital wireless technology has continued to make our lives easier and more efficient. The days of meter technicians visiting each meter to read the usage are long gone. Through the installation of Verizon-equipped cellular meters across the system, Capital Electric Cooperative is now utilizing this equipment to serve our members better in many ways.

The cellular meter is the latest version of equipment used to measure your power usage and supply data. Our outgoing metering platform, a two-way automatic communication system (TWACS), was almost 20 years old. The TWACS has been useful in many ways, but it has limitations due to communication which uses the power line as the carrier.

"We needed more timely and accurate data for many purposes," explains Engineering Manager Greg Owen. "There are many significant advantages to using the new digital system."

One of the benefits of cellular meters is they utilize an existing communication infrastructure. The TWACS requires equipment in each substation as well as manual programming to communicate with each meter. Utilizing Verizon's existing robust cellular network results in greater efficiencies and reduced meter maintenance.

Improved reliability is another major benefit, as we can identify issues with the system before they result in an outage. An example of this is analyzing meter data to find transformers that are becoming overloaded, then replacing them with larger units. We can read the voltage on the system at any time, which is important to ensure power quality. We can also benefit from the cost-savings made possible by rightsizing equipment based on the actual load.

We now have detailed system usage information, stemming from 15-minute readings. This will translate to member information available at your convenience with a click of the button on your SmartHub account.

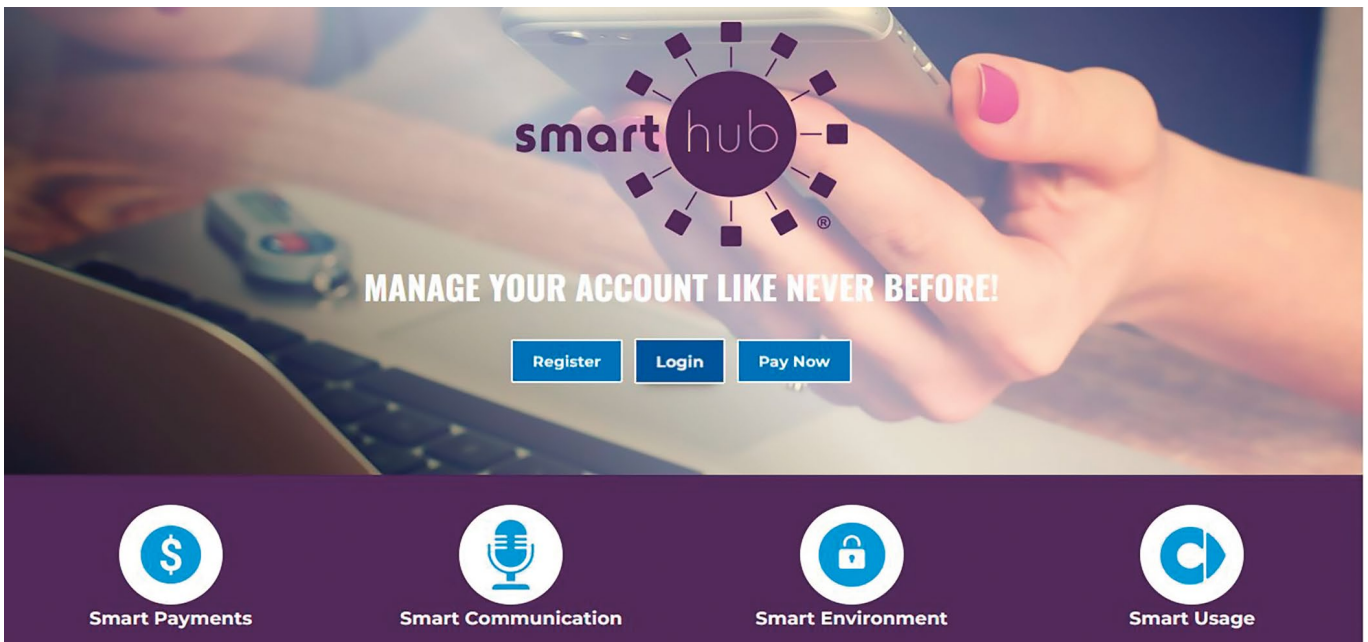
Operations Manager Jeff Holzer points out how we were able to efficiently install about 25,000 meters across the system.

"We recently completed the installation process, a few years earlier than we expected," he says. "We were able to do this with the assistance of our lineworkers. They installed a significant number of meters when they were already in the area, saving time on installation visits. Operationally, individual lineworkers will be able to verify the exact location of an outage, which will result in fewer unnecessary visits."

"We were very pleased with our members' cooperation, which resulted in a smooth operation. We did our best to communicate the need for the upgrade and it appears to have worked," says General

Manager Paul Fitterer. "As we move forward, we anticipate knowing about an outage immediately. This will result in a more exact and efficient response time."

The move to this new generation of meters is another way your cooperative is improving the quality of our system to keep your power flowing. The data we receive and provide to our members is vital to operating that system efficiently and effectively. Thank you for your continued support of your cooperative. €

A promotional graphic for the Smart Hub mobile app. It features a hand holding a smartphone with the 'smart hub' logo on the screen. Below the phone, the text 'MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNT LIKE NEVER BEFORE!' is displayed in white. Underneath this text are three blue buttons labeled 'Register', 'Login', and 'Pay Now'. At the bottom of the graphic is a dark purple bar with four white circular icons: a dollar sign for 'Smart Payments', a microphone for 'Smart Communication', a padlock for 'Smart Environment', and a circular arrow for 'Smart Usage'.

## Meter access is vital for maintenance and safety

**W**orking clearances of approximately 3 feet wide, 3 feet deep and 6 feet tall around a typical meter socket are required for Capital Electric Cooperative's personnel to access the meter socket. For safety purposes, it's also important to provide the necessary space for personnel to quickly move away from the meter in case of a flash or other dangerous event.

Another reason for the clearance is access in the event of an outage. Having to move things to get to a meter will slow our response, and there can be a risk to Capital Electric of a damage claim when moving someone else's property.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter. €





Communications and IT Manager **Wes Engbrecht** explains to kids at the Real World Camp what their electric bills may include at the home or apartment where they live.

## Welcome to the real world!

BY WES ENGBRECHT

Learning to be an adult is one of the most difficult transitions a youngster will face. Mom and Dad take care of the finances and other needs required to run a household, but teaching students about real life gets them started on the right path.

Once again, Capital Electric Cooperative took part in an educational event for fifth- and sixth-graders at the Capitol building. Capital Electric's role at the "Real World Camp" is to provide electricity pricing information to the kids based on the size of their homes or apartments, which is assigned to them in the project's preparation process.

"Real World Camp is a day students get to experience the true cost of living. They are given an

occupation with a salary and make financial decisions for themselves and potentially a family. They get to experience firsthand ebbs and flows of life events that utilize their monthly income. It's a fun way for our future community contributors to see what it takes to make it in everyday life," says Kathryn Spilman, community volunteer and event organizer.

For the past several years, we have thoroughly enjoyed being involved with this educational project. The kids have a great time and are learning in the process. We view our role as an electricity provider to be vital in their understanding of finances in the real world. We will continue to join in the fun in future years. €



# EV TAILGATE PARTY

**THURSDAY, JUNE 20**  
**4-7 P.M.**

NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,  
WEST PARKING LOT

608 East Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck

- Meet local electric vehicle (EV) owners and learn about their cars
- Visit with local car dealerships about the latest EVs
- See the latest in electric yard maintenance and construction equipment
- Learn about high-speed charging options, home charging options and off-peak charging programs
- Enjoy a free burger or hot dog, hot off the grill
- Attendees will receive discounts toward Luigi's Ice Cream, which will be onsite

## Hosted by:



## Thank you to our sponsors:



# Board minute excerpts APRIL 26

The regular meeting of the board of directors of Capital Electric Cooperative was held on Friday, April 26. The meeting was held in person at Capital Electric, 7401 Yukon Drive, Bismarck, pursuant to due notice to all directors. All directors were present at that time.

**Also Present Were:** Manager Paul Fitterer, Business Manager Luke Steen, Operations Manager Jeff Holzer, Engineering Services Manager Greg Owen, Energy Services Manager Josh Schaffner, Manager of Communications and IT Wes Engbrecht and Attorney Zachary Pelham of Pearce Durick PLLC, who acted as recording secretary.

**Financial Review:** Prior to the board meeting, Directors Rex Hollenbeck and Deon Vilhauer reviewed the March check register and expenditures. The financial review was approved as presented.

**Management Reports (Business Department, Operations Department, Engineering Services, Energy Services and Communications/IT):**

**Business Department Report:** Steen presented the March financial and statistical report to the board.

Revenue was behind the budgeted amount for March, as \$134,139 was generated in comparison with the budgeted figure of \$3,686,316 (unfavorable variance of \$134,139 or 3.6%)

Capital Electric's March load factor was behind budget by 7.46%.

The operating margin for March was -\$26,278, behind the budgeted amount of \$10,583. The total margin for March was \$49,587, which was on par with the budgeted \$49,402.

Capital Electric began billing 18 new services in March, bringing our active services to 22,281 versus 22,018 at this time last year, or a net increase of 263 accounts over the last 12 months.

The cash flow statement was reviewed.

**Estate Retirements:** Following review of the financial condition of the cooperative and recommendation by management, total payment of

\$5,086.22 was authorized to four members' estates.

**Quarterly Write-offs:** It was approved to write off \$8,114.47 for the first quarter. The total 12-month write-offs are \$24,010.21.

**Policy IV-01-03 Coincident Peak:** Steen reviewed revisions to the coincident peak policy. Following discussion, the policy change was approved as presented.

**Operations Report:** Holzer reviewed the written report from the operations department. Holzer reported all meters on the system have been changed to Verizon meters, monthly substation inspections were completed and crews have been installing trip savers in the rural system, which is a new style of electronic line breaker that replaces existing oil-filled mechanical reclosures.

**Safety Report:** The safety report was reviewed. There were no lost-time accidents since the last board meeting. Three lineworkers attended a personal protective grounding training on April 18.

**Engineering Services Report:** Owen reviewed the written report from engineering services. Two work orders were completed in March. Owen reported on ongoing and upcoming projects.

**Work Order Inventories:** Following discussion, work order inventories 510, 511/511A and 512/512A were approved

**Energy Services:** Schaffner reviewed the energy services report. Fifty-three service orders were completed in March. Schaffner reported on energy services working to complete videos explaining the 2024 rate changes and the June 20 EV tailgate event.

**Communications and IT:** Engbrecht reviewed the communications and IT report. Engbrecht reported on preparations for the upcoming annual meeting and work related to addressing cybersecurity risks.

**Basin Electric Power Cooperative:** Fitterer reported on Basin Electric matters.

**Central Power Electric Cooperative (CPEC):** Charles reported on CPEC matters, including progress on the Bismarck outpost construction anticipated for 2025.

**Industry Update:** Fitterer reviewed materials related to power markets and general cooperative news.

**North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives:** Vilhauer and Charles reported updates.

**National Rural Electric Cooperative Association:** Fitterer reported on the legislative conference.

**BEK annual meeting:** Fitterer reported on the upcoming annual meeting.

**National Information Solutions Cooperative board meeting:** Fitterer reported on the board meeting held in July. ☺

## CAPITAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

7401 Yukon Drive  
Bismarck, ND 58503

Website: [www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Deon Vilhauer, Pres. .... Bismarck  
Dave Charles, V. Pres. .... Bismarck  
Kyle Tschosik, Sec.-Treas. .... Bismarck  
Lyndon Anderson, Asst. Sec.-Treas. .... Baldwin  
Rex Hollenbeck ..... McClusky  
Dwight Wrangham ..... Lincoln  
Kayla Pulvermacher ..... Lincoln  
Sara Vollmer ..... Wing  
Bret Weiland ..... Bismarck

### OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday : 8 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Office phone: 701-223-1513  
Toll-free: 888-223-1513  
Pay-By-Phone: 1-877-853-5928  
DAY—NIGHT—WEEKEND  
TROUBLE CALL: 223-1513

Capital Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 