




Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections

NEWS

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2019

Manager's Message

Dear Members: _____ *by Marlene Morss*



Thank you for attending the 21 High Plains Power Annual meeting on March 16th. It was a beautiful spring day with plenty of sunshine and warmer temperatures.

Here are a few comments that I addressed to the membership in attendance.

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

“We were successful in meeting all our financial goals set by our financial board policy. Some of those goals include, meeting debt ratios set by our lending institutions, attaining equity ratios, having enough cash on hand to pay accounts payables and other financial obligations and retiring capital credits. An example of one of the goals is that in December, your board of directors approved capital credit retirements (returns) in the amount of about \$1.7 million for patronage during the years 2002-2003. One of our goals is to distribute capital credits on a yearly basis if the retirement does not adversely impact the cooper-

ative's financial condition. I am proud to say we have been able to accomplish this since the inception of High Plains Power in 1998.

No rate increase for 2018. Thank you Tri-State. This is important as about 85 cents of every dollar we brought in went to Tri-State and we operated on the other 15 cents.

In June we refinanced all our Rural Utilities Service (RUS) debt with National Rural Electric Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). Believe me the board and staff did some in depth analysis before making this decision. With this refinance we were able to pay down some debt and will see a positive \$2.1 million in cash flow over the life of the loan. As you know RUS is a government entity and with government comes regulations and forms - and everyone knows regulations cost money. Another benefit is matching the loan terms with the life of an asset that we are purchasing. RUS has 2 terms - a 15-year or 30-year

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Remember....

- April 18**
Lineman Appreciation Day
- April 21**
Easter
- April 24**
Administrative Professionals Day
- May 12**
Mother's Day



loan. Many of us know that some assets don't last 15 or 30 years, and it seems senseless to be paying on something that is obsolete or we no longer have in our possession. Another big factor - CFC is also a cooperative and they understand and follow the principles that High Plains Power follows.

I am excited to share with you the accomplishments of the advanced metering infrastructure that we have been installing. This is a 3 year project and it will be fully deployed in 2020. The old automated meter reading system that we are using is obsolete and failing - it has been utilized since 2007. We can no longer get customer support and can no longer get replacement parts for the equipment.

BENEFITS:

Automated meter readings - no longer will have to go out and read your meter each month

High bills - we can help you analyze hourly and daily meter readings to help you understand your usage.

Faster restoration - we will be able to pinpoint areas affected by outages, so we can respond more quickly.

Remotely connect and disconnect service - requests can be accomplished in hours instead of days.

Power theft - the system detects meter tampering and reduces the potential for costly and dangerous power theft

MAIN BENEFIT - COST SAVINGS TO OUR MEMBERS

Cooperatives in the country are in the state of change - and this includes High Plains Power. When I look at the change we are facing in our industry I'm not overwhelmed by change itself. Change can be good, change can be exciting, change can make life better for us and our members. What sometimes feels daunting to me is the uncertainty and number of moving parts. Of not knowing what is the new normal - what will be the next greatest thing - how to keep up.

I then reel it in and think about the hard work our forefathers did to bring electricity to rural America.

The challenges we face today are significant, but they are modest compared to those faced by our founders back in the 1930's - when no else had the courage, desire or toughness to bring modern technology and a better quality of life to our communities, they were the ones who stepped up and made it happen. Rather than feel overwhelmed, let's take a page from our forefathers and imagine the legacy we can leave for our kids, our cooperative and our communities.

Ladies and gentlemen - we have much to be thankful for - whether it's the cooperative pioneers who extended the first lines to family farms over 80 years ago, or our employees who still provide us with dedicated

service. Our success is built on the employees' efforts. We are fortunate to have many resources at your cooperative, but the number one resource are the ladies and gentlemen who work for High Plains Power.

Also, be thankful for the dedicated board of directors who bring their passion and knowledge to your cooperative. Thank you directors for your support and hard work in helping to make High Plains Power a successful cooperative.

Most importantly, thank you members of High Plains Power - what we do, we do for you."

I would like to congratulate Jesse Hankins for his 47 dedicated years of serving on the Board. He retired in March and his son Jesse B. was elected to fill the position of representing district 7. Thank you Jesse...you are a man of honor and integrity.

April 8th is Lineman Appreciation Day and April 24th is Administrative Professional Day so I would like to take the time to honor these dedicated men and women who serve your cooperative.

I am so proud and privileged to work with the High Plains Power employees. The success of our cooperative is because of them - our cooperative would not exist without these dedicated men and women. Please take the time to tell our employees **THANK YOU!**



Member/Owners enjoying great BBQ prior to the 21ST Annual Meeting.

2019 Annual Meeting

Power the Robot gets a High-Five from Board Director Beckie Darnell.

Vice President Bret Gardner congratulates Board Director Jesse Hankins on 47 years of dedicated service.



2019 Annual Meeting Highlights

We would like to thank all the member/owners that attended the 21st Annual Meeting in March, and also those that sent in their proxies. We had 140 member/owners register in person and 287 proxy votes for a total of 427 votes cast. The 2019 Annual Meeting was held at the Thermopolis Middle School in Thermopolis on March 16th. There were four Districts up for election this year. They were:

District 1: Beckie Darnell

District 3: Matt Frericks

District 6: Gary Gordon

District 7: Lyle Alexander

Jesse B. Hankins

The three incumbents were running unopposed and were re-elected to serve another term and Jesse B. Hankins won the election in District 7. Jesse's father, Jesse Hankins Sr. was the director of District 7 and retired from the

Board after 47 years of service.

Wyoming Smokehouse from Riverton catered a wonderful lunch to approximately 300 people. The meeting began with the invocation by Board Director Hearley Dockham, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Board Director Robert Cooper and was followed up by the National Anthem performed by staking technician, Josh McFarland.

Vice-President Bret Gardner presided over the meeting in President Mark Park's absence. The President's report was read by Manager Marlene Morss and included topics such as community commitment, scholarship recipients, and Operation RoundUp. Treasurer Jim Miller presented his report which included a review of 2018 revenue resources, expenses and mar-

gins. General Manager, Marlene Morss reported on 2018 highlights for High Plains Power. Some of these topics were the proposed amended By-Laws, the new AMI metering infrastructure, and capital credit distributions. CFO, Jon Mayes gave a brief demonstration of the new AMI system showing the member/owners the benefits of the system including such information as outages and usage.

Other speakers included Tri-State CEO, Mike McInnes, WREA CEO Shawn Taylor, and Energy Youth Camp attendee, Aspen Thomas.

Many lucky members walked away with door prizes such as tool sets, energy credits, cash, a 50" tv and a class by Draper Knives. All members that registered received a \$10 credit to their electric bill.

Just a reminder that sign up for Budget Billing is in April and May. Applications can be found on our website at HighPlainsPower.org or you can pick one up from our Riverton office. For more information or if you have any questions please call the Riverton office at 307-856-9426 or 1-800-445-0613.

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This is a monthly publication made available by High Plains Power, Inc., with the Wyoming Rural Electric News. Ideas, questions and comments are welcome.

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