



**Central Wisconsin
Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

THANKS FOR ATTENDING



By Mike Wade,
President & CEO

Thank you to everyone who attended our 83rd annual meeting on April 27, 2021. The meeting was held virtually this year and was similar to the

style of meeting we conducted in August of 2020. The decision to hold a virtual meeting instead of an in-person meeting was not an easy one. As a not-for-profit cooperative, we want to meet with our consumer-members in person to discuss the issues that matter to you. However, in the interest of the health and safety of our members and employees, we decided to hold this year's meeting virtually.

At the annual meeting, we discussed some of the measures the cooperative took to manage the COVID-19 crisis, but we also discussed the many successes of our cooperative to increase the reliability of our system and enhance the lives of the communities we serve. Our financials are strong and we returned \$415,838 to our members in retired capital credits. Although the year presented challenges, we are pleased with the prog-

ress we made on behalf of our members. Thank you again for your attendance at our meeting, and I hope to be able to see you in person in 2022.

Congratulations to Kyle Groshek for being the recipient of our Electric Utility Worker Scholarship this year. This scholarship is specific to those students interested in pursuing a career at an electric utility. We feel this is an important scholarship to help our young people attend school to learn the skills necessary to work in our industry, and we hope that Kyle's career path may lead him to an electric cooperative someday. Congratulations Kyle, and best wishes for the future.

June is Dairy Month and we want to thank the dairy farmers in central Wisconsin and those served by our cooperative. You have been a part of the cooperative since our creation 83 year ago and we appreciate the value that you bring to our community and our state. I encourage our members to pay tribute to our dairy farmers and support them by purchasing dairy products found at our local merchants.

I would like to welcome Ron Onesti and Lou Oppor to our Board of

Directors. As many of you know, Tony Buss and Leonard Oppor have retired from our board with a combined service of 32 years. We thank Tony and Leonard for their service and we welcome the new directors to our board. Ron has previously served on our board for nine years and Lou has served on our Member Advisory Group. We appreciate their interest in our cooperative and willingness to serve our members.

Summer is here and I hope you have made plans to get outdoors and enjoy the time with friends and family. Stay healthy. Be safe.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause your air conditioner to run longer than necessary.



Source: www.energy.gov

MY CO-OP

BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative was held in-person on March 25, 2021 at 7:57 a.m. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The agenda, minutes of the February 25, 2021 meeting, new and terminated memberships, monthly safety and compliance report, and estate capital credit retirements were approved.

Action Items

- Monthly Financial Statements and Reports were approved. Finance Committee reviewed checks written and the board and CEO expenses.
- The Governance Committee approved changes to Policy 101-Qualifications for Eligibility to Serve on the Board of Directors and the Addendum, Policy 102-Development of Board Policies, and Policy 603-Member Advisory Group as recommended by the Governance Committee.
- The board reviewed Policy 103-Code of Ethics/Conflict of Interest and made no changes.
- Dee Fox, compliance safety and training coordinator, gave a presentation to the board on CWEC's Annual Safety Report.
- The board approved new meter pedestal pricing as recom-

mended due to increased material costs.

- The board approved the Resolution of the Board of Directors of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative to Adopt COVID-19 Emergency Bylaws.
- The board recognized the retirements of Director Buss and Director Oppor and approved the Resolution of Appreciation for each of them.

Operations and Engineering – Mr. Kurtzweil reported crews are continuing to work on the hazard recognition inspections throughout our system. Distractive Driving/Cooperative Vehicle Accident Training has been completed with all employees. Outages for the month of January were very low.

Accounting and Finance – Financial reports were reviewed. Ms. Shower, VP of accounting and finance, reported a check was sent to Federated Youth Foundation for forfeited capital credits.

Member Services – Ms. Mazemke, manager of member relations, reported that plans are moving forward with CWEC's Annual Meeting and director election.

President and CEO – Mike Wade, CEO, reported on his submitted report.

Meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.



ALMOST 200 MEMBERS ATTEND VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative held its 2021 Annual Meeting virtually on April 27, with just under 200 members logging in and participating in the meeting.

CWEC had hoped it would be able to return to its traditional in-person annual meeting in 2021, but due to the continued presence of COVID-19, the CWEC Board of Directors chose to hold a virtual annual meeting. The decision was made for the safety of CWEC members and employees.

The virtual meeting lasted around 30 minutes. After the meeting was called to order by CWEC Board Chairman Anthony Buss Jr., the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and an invocation was done.

Director Buss and Director Leonard Oppor, who both decided to retire from the CWEC Board of Directors and didn't run for reelection, were recognized and thanked for their time of service to CWEC. Buss served on the board for 20 years, while Oppor served for 12 years.

Key statistics for 2020, the statement of operations, and the balance sheet for

the co-op were presented by Lila Shower, vice-president of accounting & finance at CWEC. Buss presented the Chairman Report and Mike Wade, president & CEO at CWEC, presented the CEO Report.

Ronald Onesti was announced the winner of the District 1 Director election. He ran unopposed and received 154 votes. He will replace Buss Jr. on the board.

Louis (Lou) Oppor was announced the winner of the District 2 Director election. He received 204 votes, while Gregory Loeser received 170 votes. Louis Oppor will replace Leonard Oppor on the board.

Door prize winners

After the meeting, the following members who attended the virtual meeting were randomly selected for the following door prizes: \$100 bill credit – Gary Johnson; \$50 bill credit – Charles Filtz, Roger Napiwocki, and John Kieliszewski;

\$25 bill credit – David Paulson, John Mesyk, Guy Russ, Kyle Brown, Georgia Link, Donald Sorenson, Sheila Krosenberg, Jeanne Opperman, Shelly Ostrowski, and Ronald Balke.

Board elects new officers

When the CWEC Board of Directors met on April 29 it elected new officers.

Director Tom Smith was elected as chairman, while Director Mike Schultz was elected vice-chairman and Director Lee Lehrer was elected secretary/treasurer.



LOU OPPOR ELECTED TO CWEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

When Lou Oppor was announced as the winner of the District 2 election during Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting April 27, he said he was thrilled.

"I hadn't been living up here that long, so I wasn't sure how many people knew me," Oppor said. "The fact that they had enough confidence in me to vote me in, I was just thrilled that that happened."

Originally from the area, Oppor has a long history in health services. He spent around six years as a certified alcohol and other drug abuse counselor in Waupaca County before becoming a contract administrator for human services in Calumet County for six years. He then moved to the Madison area and worked for the state of Wisconsin in health services and was the section chief of the substance abuse services section in the health services department. In that position, Oppor was responsible for managing around \$75 million a year in alcohol and other drug abuse and health services around the state.

After retiring in 2015, Oppor moved to Scandinavia, where he currently resides.

Oppor's past work experience is what he said prompted him to seek becoming a director on the CWEC Board of Directors.



"I had been a part of their (CWEC) Member Advisory Group for about three years and I found the co-op to be very interesting in terms of how they operate," Oppor said. "Plus, I felt that my experience as an administrator at the state level could benefit the co-op in terms of being a director and using some of those administrative skills to be a part of the leadership of the co-op."

After participating in his first CWEC board meeting on April 29, Oppor said there is a lot to learn.

"It's going to be a learning curve for a bit," Oppor said. "I'm excited to work for the board. It's a great bunch of board members. They're helping me along. They've been great in terms of welcoming me."

He said he plans to take advantage of every opportunity available to him to learn about the co-op.

"It seems as though I'm in communication with either staff at the co-op or other directors fairly regularly outside of board meetings," Oppor said.

He added that he is looking forward to the challenge, and is excited to be part of the CWEC board.

"I used to manage a lot of budgets, so I'll be interested to take a look at the budgets for the operation, and whether there are ways to do streamlining or improvements. I'm looking forward to some of the fiscal management part," Oppor said.

DENNIS MAGEE REACHES 30-YEAR SERVICE MILESTONE

This year marks Dennis Magee's 30th year with Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (CWEC). Magee started at CWEC as an apprentice lineman and currently holds the title of line manager.

Prior to joining CWEC, Magee did industrial painting at a shipyard in Sturgeon Bay, and was a journeyman shipfitter, building minesweeper ships for the Navy.

After speaking with friends who had gone through an Electrical Distribution Program, Magee decided on a career change.

"It (electrical distribution) sounded interesting because I like to work outdoors and you were not doing the same thing every day," Magee said.

Magee took part in the Power Distribution Program at NWTTC, which eventually led him to CWEC.

"CWEC came to the pole yard where we practiced our climbing and other job-related tasks, and they did onsite interviews," Magee recalled. "I was called for an interview and offered a job a few days later."

Magee said one of his most memorable moments at CWEC was traveling to Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 to help restore electricity there.

"It was one of those once in a lifetime experiences to help out other people," Magee said.

When asked what his favorite thing about his job is, Magee said, "The people I work with and talking to our members when I'm out in the field."

He added, "I'm glad I chose this career. It has lots of challenges and satisfaction when you accomplish goals, knowing you played a part in helping reach that goal."

Thank you, Dennis, for your dedication and service!



RON ONESTI RETURNS TO CWEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It was less than a year ago that Ron Onesti's third term on the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative's (CWEC) Board of Directors as the Director at Large came to an end. He couldn't run again because the Director at Large has a limit of three terms.

At the time, Onesti didn't realize his time off the board would last only a few months. He was reelected to the board at the April 27 Annual Meeting. He was the only person on the ballot for the seat vacated by Anthony Buss, Jr., who retired from the board and did not seek reelection.

Onesti said he initially ran to become a CWEC director 10 years ago because he had served on several other boards, and wanted to get involved.

If there wouldn't have been a limit on the number of terms the Director at Large could serve, Onesti said he would have run again last year. So, when the opportunity presented itself for Onesti to return to the CWEC board, he didn't hesitate to pursue that opportunity.

"It's been a good and educational job over the years," Onesti said. "I've met a lot of nice people through all the different co-ops."

One thing Onesti said he is looking forward to upon returning to the board is continuing to work with CWEC's partial ownership of the West Riverside Center.

"We made a big investment there three to four years ago. It was a scary investment, but it's starting to pay off," he said.

After attending his first CWEC board meeting in several months, Onesti said it was good to see the other directors again. He added that it shouldn't take him long to get up to speed since he was recently on the board, and he has already attended classes designated for new directors.

Welcome back to the board, Ron.



KYLE GROSHEK RECEIVES CWEC UTILITY WORKER SCHOLARSHIP

Kyle Groshek, a 2017 graduate of Rosholt High School, has been named the recipient of the 2020 Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative's (CWEC) \$1,000 Electric Utility Worker Scholarship.

CWEC established the scholarship to help address a forecasted shortage of electric utility employees and to encourage students to consider a career in an electric utility.

Groshek's path to pursuing an electric utility worker career had a slight detour. Groshek recently received a bachelor's degree for health science pre-physical therapy from UW-Stevens Point. While attending UW-Stevens Point, though,

Groshek decided that wasn't the right career path for him.

Groshek said he chose to pursue a career as an electric utility worker after conversations with some friends from high school who are currently in the field. He added that he has worked with electronics since middle school.

"Anything electric I'd take apart," Groshek said.

Groshek, who currently works in the construction field with his dad, who is a general contractor, said he enjoys working with his hands and working outdoors.

"I like the building aspect with power distribution, being able to get power to

different places," Groshek said. "And during storm damage, actually being able to make a difference and get power back to people."

The scholarship was established to assist a student pursuing a post-secondary education in an electric utility program.

Groshek is currently enrolled in the 2022 Electrical Distribution Program at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, but is on the waiting list for the 2021 class if a spot opens up.

After graduation, Groshek said he would like to secure an electrical utility worker position in central Wisconsin.





KEYS FOR FARM ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Farming is among the more dangerous occupations for several reasons, including potential for encounters with electrical hazards. Before taking to the fields, the Safe Electricity program urges farm workers to be aware of overhead power lines and to keep equipment and extensions far away from them.

Following the information below will help keep farm families and workers safe from electrical accidents.

- Start each morning by planning your day’s work. Know what jobs will happen near power lines and have a plan to keep the assigned workers safe.
- Keep yourself and equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines in all directions, at all times. Use a spotter when moving tall equipment and loads.
- Use care when raising augers or the bed of a grain truck. It can be difficult to estimate distance, and sometimes, a power line is closer than it looks. Use a spotter to make certain you stay far away from power lines.
- Always lower equipment extensions, portable augers, or elevators to their lowest possible level, under 14 feet, before moving or transporting them. Wind, uneven ground, shifting weight, or other conditions can cause you to lose control of equipment and make contact with power lines.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path. If power lines near your property have sagged over time, call your utility to repair them.
- Don’t use metal poles when breaking up bridged grain inside and around bins.
- As in any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment, such as ladders, poles, or rods, into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials, such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes, and hay, will conduct electricity, depending on dampness and dust and dirt contamination.
- If you are on equipment that contacts a power line, do not exit the equipment. When you step off the equipment, you become the electricity’s path to ground and receive a potentially fatal shock. Wait until utility workers have de-energized the line and confirmed it is safe for you to exit the vehicle. If the vehicle is on fire and you must exit, jump clear of the vehicle with both feet together. Hop as far from the vehicle as you can with your feet together. Keep your feet together to prevent current flow through your body, which could be deadly.



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Our Mission

We are your trusted energy partner and provider of valued community support.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES AVAILABLE

Did you know your cooperative offers rebates for energy efficiency upgrades? If not, we're pleased to inform you we offer rebates for all sorts of upgrades including Energy Star appliance purchases, insulation, new windows, heat pumps, alternative water heaters, LED lighting and much more. For a detailed listing please visit www.cwecoop.com or give us a call.



INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative will be closed on Monday, July 5, 2021, in recognition of the Independence Day holiday. From everyone at CWEC, we wish you a safe and enjoyable Fourth of July holiday.