

**BUTLER RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.****BOARD OF TRUSTEES****November 23, 2020**

A special strategic planning meeting of the Board of Trustees of Butler Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. was held at the Cooperative office at 3888 Stillwell Beckett Road, Oxford, Ohio on Monday, November 23, 2020. The meeting was called to order by Thomas McQuiston at 8:38 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Board members present were: Tom McQuiston, Bob Hoelle, Ron Kolb, David Evans, Butch Foster, Jay Hasbrook, Jim Meador, Bob Spaeth and Michael Tilton. Also present were: Thomas Wolfenbarger, General Manager; Julie Abbott, Director of Administration; Doug Miller, Vice President of Statewide Services from OEC. Joining virtually through Zoom: Gregory Phillips, Director of Corporate Services; Judie Persinger, Director of Accounting and Finance; Michael Murray, Director of Operations; Lisa Staggs Herrmann, Director of Member and Community Relations; and Adam Osborn, Manager of Safety and Compliance. Doug Miller, Vice President of Statewide Services from OEC facilitated the meeting.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Doug Miller, Vice President of Statewide Services from OEC facilitated the meeting by leading a discussion on top priorities of the board and staff perspective from the staff retreat and board interviews in September of 2020. The strategic planning process includes strategic thinking, situational analysis, facilitated discussion, goals, action plan/initiatives, and measurement/review.

**SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS**

Doug provided his perspective on the key drivers of ACSI and how Butler Rural is perceived by members surveyed. He provided a comparison of Butler and other cooperatives in the state and nation.

**TOP PRIORITIES OF BOARD AND STAFF****RATES**

Items for discussion on the rates: A Trustee would like to have a one-page paper to be able to have statistics and common talking points to help when asked questions by members. It was suggested to have the person conducting a Cost of Service study make a presentation to the board. It was proposed to revisit the possibility to adjust the process of retiring capital credits vs. rates.

**RELIABILITY**

It was discussed to continue efforts with Duke Energy on transmission reliability.

The aging of the headquarters of the cooperative was addressed. Staff will review options to include large expenditures/capital projects in long-range plan and will come back to board with recommendations.

**MEMBER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Doug Miller said the goal is always to leave members with a good experience. A suggestion was made to share more information on employees or work going on in Ohio Cooperative Living local pages. The need was also identified to survey members after tree trimming is completed in an area.

**WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT/INTERNAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Doug mentioned the number one complaint is always internal communications. He said some cooperatives have a committee that has five or so employees to meet occasionally on what employees want to hear about and ways to serve members, to foster internal communication.

There is a need to make sure the ERP is updated to have new events (pandemic) etc. included.

The goals and objectives of this planning process should be reviewed with employees.

**BOARD GOVERNANCE & TRANSPARENCY**

Tom Wolfenbarger proposed to create a board governance committee to meet every three years possibly before the policy review committee meets to formalize review of governance practices.

**BROADBAND**

There was discussion about the fiber enhancements being made to the cooperative system and for members. Everyone agreed that the cooperative should investigate and pursue opportunities for broadband expansion.

**BENEFICIAL ELECTRIFICATION**

Beneficial electrification is a process that is still being reviewed in-order to be prepared for new technologies and the effects on the members and the cooperative system. First steps will be to implement rate structures that benefit members and allow for cost recovery.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Engagement with community leaders is important to advance the cooperative and assist readiness for area developments.

**RENEWABLE ENERGY**

It is important to expand options for the purchase of renewable energy. The cooperative is reviewing distributed generation policies to align them with Buckeye Power's policies. Rate structure changes may be needed to capture future transmission access and compliance costs.

Doug Miller will send Tom Wolfenbarger a summary report for Buter Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. from the discussion of this meeting for review and approval by the Board of Trustees.

Tom McQuiston declared the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David Evans  
Secretary/Treasurer