
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

January 12, 2012

BEC BOARD: Letter To The Editor

BEC Board will address allegations at next meeting

At its monthly meeting in January the Beartooth Electric Cooperative (BEC) Board of Trustees will address allegations made by resigning trustees John Prinkki and Joe Kern. Former Trustee, Martin Kimmet, repeated several of the allegations in newspapers last week. The meeting will be held January 31 at the Community Foundation Building in Red Lodge. The board invites members to attend.

The board is extremely busy analyzing the budget, implementing the selection process to replace trustees who have resigned, and weighing the financial exposure for BEC resulting from the Southern Montana Electric Cooperative (Southern) bankruptcy. Back-and-forth arguments, especially those involving emotionally charged accusations, often are not productive and can be misleading. Members deserve answers, however, and the BEC January Board Meeting agenda will include a presentation to address fully issues that have been raised.

For now the board would like to make clear that:

1. It took no position for or against the recall of former Trustees Prinkki and Kern. Current BEC bylaws require the board to respond to a verified recall petition by scheduling a member meeting that allows charges to be presented, responses to be made, and a vote to be taken. There is no allowance for mail-in balloting related to a recall.
2. The budget committee recommends, and the board supports, a conservative budget with cuts to avoid retail rate increases and create reserves to address BEC exposure from Southern's bankruptcy. Maintaining quality of service, reliability, and plant integrity are the board's priorities.
3. One of the new board's first actions was to reduce compensation for board member attendance at meetings.

This board values openness and member participation. Three new committees have been created: legal, which recommended the selection of

bankruptcy counsel; due diligence, which is looking at potential power supply options; and finance, which is currently working on the budget. The volunteers on these committees bring extremely valuable experience and expertise.

There will be more committees and other ways to help your co-op. Please contact the board through your district board member or through the Red Lodge office to let us know if you would like to volunteer and what your areas of interest and experience are.

Beartooth Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees
Arleen Boyd, Dan Dutton, Pat Hoffman, Roxie Melton, David Peterson