

**Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the
Jump River Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Tuesday, March 25, 2025**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Jump River Electric Cooperative, Inc. was held on Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at the Cooperative headquarters building in Ladysmith, Rusk County, Wisconsin.

Thank you cards from Hope Hospice & Palliative Care and Tony Area Event Center were circulated by Vice Chairman Kruk.

1. **Call the Meeting to Order.** Vice Chairman Kruk called the Regular Board Meeting to Order at 9:01 a.m.
2. **Roll Call.** Vice Chairman Kruk stated that the following Board Members were in person at the start of the meeting: Jane Reich, District 1; Christine Beadles, District 2; Joe Lorence, District 3; Jay Waeltz, District 4; Bill Amery, District 6; Mike Gardner, District 7; Walter Kruk, District 8 and Sandy Schara, District 9. Also present in person was General Manager/CEO, Kurt Harris; Finance Manager, Dawn Zahurones; Operations Manager, Jordan Behreandt; and Executive Assistant, Virginia Jacobs. Absent from the meeting was Bill van Doorn, District 5.
3. The **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited.
4. **Acceptance of the Agenda.** A motion was made by Schara and seconded by Amery to accept the agenda. Unanimously approved.
5. **Open Comment Session.** No one in attendance.
6. **Safety Moment.** Amery presented a comparison of concerns for line workers and the elderly, including some similarities like falls.
7. **February Minutes.** A motion was made by Schara and seconded by Beadles to approve the February Board minutes as presented. Unanimously approved.
8. **Check Register.** Discussion held. A motion was made by Reich and seconded by Beadles to approve the February Check Register as presented. Unanimously approved.
9. **Consent Agenda.** Member refunds, membership applications, outages, and director expense reports were posted to Call of Order prior to the meeting for review by the Board. Discussion held. A motion was made by Reich and seconded by Gardner to approve the consent agenda items as presented. Unanimously approved.
10. **Operations Report.** Operations Manager Behreandt reported on the statuses of 3-phase projects, squirrel wrapping, school and community safety demonstrations, brushing status new services inquiries and ongoing permitting process. Discussion held. A motion was made by Schara and seconded by Lorence to approve the Operations Report as presented. Unanimously approved.
11. **Financial Report.** Finance Manager Zahurones reported on the income statement comparison, monthly margins, year-to-date margins, tier/o-tier, year-to-date balance sheet summary, equity, year-to-date highlights, monthly kilowatts sold, year-to-date kilowatts sold, and operating statement, balance sheet, supplemental data for February 2025. Discussion held. A motion was made by Gardner and seconded by Waeltz to approve the financial report as presented. Unanimously approved.
12. **General Manager Report.** General Manager/CEO Harris reported on Monthly updates - proposed 2026 strategic planning dates. Unanimously approved to select May 5 & 6, 2026 for strategic planning date. Harris continued report with updates: PCA charge, continued infrastructure grant freeze, RUS loan finalized, new personnel policies, upcoming Community Cents board meeting, relayed compliments to board from the R&R Committee, this month's GM expenses, and provided strategic plan updates, including

status of equity, number of members signed up for outage alerts, ongoing line maintenance, safety presentations to school and community organizations and reviewed AI policy. Discussion held. A motion was made by Lorence and seconded by Gardener to approve the General Manager Report. Unanimously approved.

13. **Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC).**

- a. **Board Meeting Summary.** Reich reported on new Norris Electric Cooperative joining DPC, JREC employee's attendance and involvement with DPC sponsor events, needed support for ROFR, their booth at PowerXchange, attendance at cooperative's annual meetings and availability for roundtables, MISO, budget status, new scholarships, large load prospects and our shared battery array. Discussion held. A motion was made by Beadles and seconded by Gardner to approve the DPC Director report as presented. Unanimously approved.
- b. **DPC Annual Meeting.** A motion was made by Reich and seconded by Schara to send Reich, Beadles, Lorence, Amery, Schara, and Harris to the DPC Annual Meeting on June 4, 2025. Unanimously approved.
 - i. **Voting Delegate.** A motion was made by Amery and seconded by Lorence to approve Reich as voting delegate at the Annual Meeting. Unanimously approved.

The Board took a break from 10:20 a.m. to 10:28 a.m.

14. **National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).**

- a. **PowerXchange Summary.** Director reports from Director Reich and Director Lorence were posted to Call of Order prior to the meeting for review by the Board. Director Amery presented NRECA conference/education alternatives to PowerXchange. Discussion held. Unanimously approved for Harris to update director education policy to allow directors to attend one (1) national NRECA event during a director's term and present revisions at the next meeting.
- b. **CCD (2620) Course Summary.** Director Waeltz's report on CCD 2620: Board Operations and Process course was posted to Call of Order prior to the meeting for review by the Board. Discussion held.

The Board moved to 16. New Business f. 2024 Audit Report.

CliftonLarsonAllen Auditor, Jim Halverson entered the meeting at 11:03 a.m. and Auditor, Abby Schmidt appeared remotely.

15. **Old Business.**

- a. **Policy Revision.**
 - i. **Director Policy No. 205.** Policy revisions presented include additional guidelines for attending board meetings virtually, verbiage update and annual meeting mileage reimbursement. Discussion held. A motion was made by Reich and seconded by Lorence to approve the revisions as presented. Unanimously approved.

The Board recessed for lunch from 12:01 p.m. to 12:26 p.m.

16. **New Business.**

- a. **RUS Form 675 – Certificate of Authority.** A motion was made by Reich and

seconded by Schara to approve signing RUS Form 675. Unanimously approved.

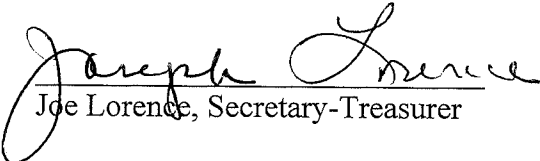
- b. **Resolution for Non-Operating Margins.** A motion was made by Beadles and seconded by Reich to approve the Resolution to Retain Non-Operating Margins. Unanimously approved.
- c. **Policy Revision.**
 - i. **Cooperative Policy No. 114.** Harris presented policy revisions and clarifications for maintaining a safety program, standards and responsibility. A motion was made by Schara and seconded by Gardner to approve revisions of Cooperative Policy No. 114, as presented. Unanimously approved.
- d. **Hayward Chair Nomination.** Discussion held. Kruk was appointed as Hayward Chairperson for the remote Annual Meeting.
- e. **Board Assessment.** Director Amery presented a proposal from DPC for completing a board self-assessment. Discussion held. No action taken.
- f. **2024 Audit Report.** Auditor Jim Halvorson presented the 2024 annual audit report. Discussion held.

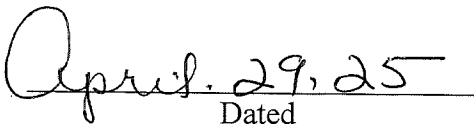
Halvorson and Schmidt left the meeting at 11:41 a.m.

The Board moved back to Item 10. Old Business.

17. **Next Meeting Date.** The April board meeting date was scheduled for April 29, 2025.

A motion was made by Schara and seconded by Beadles to **Adjourn the Meeting at 12:51 p.m.** Unanimously approved.


Joe Lorence, Secretary-Treasurer


Dated

(CORPORATE SEAL)

March 2025 Report
District 1 Director
Jane Reich

After an early morning of 3:30 we landed in Atlanta, Georgia around 1 PM. Of course, our carry-ons had to be checked due to little room so down to the baggage pick up and then we walked the airport and halfway across Georgia and hailed our Uber. They had a cancer walk by our hotel so our driver had to drive around quite a bit before he could finally get in to drop us off. We checked in to our respective rooms and set out for the meet and greet. Again, that was a walk across Georgia, but we got there. We talked with Jennifer from Williston, South Dakota who told us her kWh was .065 and another lady from Montana whose power was cheaper than ours too; they have hydro. Very interesting people. I was very pleased to see DPC Ben Porath and Katie on our plane. They too are at our hotel.

INSPIRED, That was the theme of the annual meeting, and I can say that I truly was and am inspired. At our first general assembly Jim Matheson, CEO, of NRECA spoke to us on the importance of NRECA. The classes, the information, the data, and most importantly the networking. All that is offered to make the electric industry run smoothly. He talked about the history of his family. Being immigrants, being hard working, and having high values. How this brought him forward to where he is today. It was a very INSPIRING story.

We attended many breakout sessions. Another inspiring story was told by an entrepreneur named Daymond John, one of the hosts on Shark Tank, a show on ABC. Basically, he started with nothing but sheer determination and faith in himself. He now runs a multi-million dollar clothing company. INSPIRED again.



One session we attended was on the post-election update focusing on the energy sector. Louis Finkel senior VP, government relations for NRECA spoke about the different challenges and avenues that will be used to move forward with the political changes now. Policies hopefully will be changing to transition to a more streamlined way of doing paperwork for permits required by the electrical industry. This is in the wetland permits and all others that have seemed to have been overlooked and put on the back burner previously stalled in litigation. Focusing on policy change, regulatory shifts, and legislative priorities affecting cooperatives and all the electrical industry.

Another session we attended was Tackling the Energy Demand Challenge by two different speakers. One director of markets and rates from NRECA and the other speaker was Nebraska Public Power, VP of customer service external affairs. They talked about challenges facing us as

increasing load growth on the grid. The strain on the existing infrastructure and the need for resilient grid systems and the integration of renewable energy sources.

One session was on AI Maintaining member trust through board oversight. This was put on by the VP of integrated grid of NRECA and NRECA'S senior director of government education. This was quite informative on the subject. They focused on the board's oversight responsibility associated with the emergence of AI. Talked on data privacy, risk management strategies and ethical implications. THIS IS BECOMING A BIG DEAL. One thing I took out of this is it may not be our cooperatives but a vendor using AI that can cause an issue.

In between these sessions I talked to all kinds of people. I had conversations with many different cooperative people. Members from Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Louisiana, Nebraska, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas and Wyoming to name some. These members had KWH from .09 cents to .14 cents. They ranged from 1.4 members per mile to 11 per mile. The most interesting talk I had was with Wyoming members who told me it was so expensive to live in the Jackson Hole area that the working-class people mainly live in Idaho and travel to work. The reason being out of towners have moved in and have multi-million dollar homes and it has priced real estate's and rentals out of reach of the average working class.

Breakout session of WOMEN IN POWER by Cyndie Siegel, a best-selling author. I was disappointed with this session I must say. I am sure many enjoyed it I did not. It was about women asking with confidence, overcoming fear, and basically being comfortable in your own skin. The session was about breaking free from outdated conditioning and learning to embrace your needs, your power, and your voice with confidence and courage.

The last general session was on The Future of AI in the Energy Industry and was presented by the founder and Chief AI officer of the AI Leadership Institute. He talked about how industries are evolving thru AI implementations and AI technologies. He spoke on how leveraging AI can optimize business and create game-changing solutions and power growth. He, also talked about risks, challenges and ethical considerations. Focusing on implementing to support human ingenuity, rather than replace it.

I listened to the Secretary of Ag, Rollins and was very impressed with her. Sec. Rollins seems extremely focused and has a very energized agenda.

All said and done this was an exhausting conference, but with so much insight gained to me, it was INSPIRING. THANK ALL MY FELLOW DIRECTORS/MEMBERS for this opportunity.



March Director Report
Joe Lorence/ District # 3

On March 9, 10, 11, 12 th I was fortunate to be able to go to Atlanta for the NRECA (National Rural Electric Co-op Association) convention. Jane Reich and myself were the two Directors representing JREC this year. I did communicate with two Directors from Taylor Electric, two from Chippewa Valley Electric, and I believe two or three from Eau Claire Energy. I'm sure there were others there from Wisconsin but those are the ones I remember. I was told there were 5,000 Directors there in attendance. Jane and I were able to get there early enough to get checked into our hotel and find out where to register. After that we were able to attend the Welcome and Happy Hour in one of the ballrooms.

Day 1 was a full packed day starting with a general assembly. Opening statements by Jim Matheson CEO of NRECA. He spoke on many issues effecting the electrical industry and it appears there is a lot of uncertainty right now waiting to see how the new administration is shaping up. Right now many projects that were originally approved and funded are on hold. There is a lot of conversation about what is going on with AI (artificial Intelligence). We are all going to see massive changes in the next few years. My take on everything discussed is that we are going to see most everything electric going to some sort of voice, or facial or other forms of recognition to basically communicate directly to artificial intelligence. In the medical field it could be able to scan your x-rays, labs instantly and advise physicians how to treat your condition. It should speed up diagnosis and eliminate human errors and save time. On the other side of this issue is AI will also be used for not devious uses. You are experiencing some of this already where scammers are getting smarter all the time trying to trick you into getting into your bank accounts and get your personal information. Especially beware of any social media that is contacting you using a voice or picture that you may recognize that will try and trick you into giving up some personal information. Anyway, a very large portion of the workshop sessions over the next couple days dealt in more specific areas of AI.

Key Note Speaker was Daymond John, CEO and founder of FUBU and brand of mostly Hip-Hop clothing. He was one of the original Sharks on the first 13 seasons of Shark Tank. He managed to save \$40.00 when he was a young boy and bought hats and t-shirts and decorated them in his mother's house in New York. He made a nice profit off of them and kept on going. This was in the 1990s. His success was fueled by strong cultural ties and the idea of promoting products designed for and by the urban community. He reached a point where he had an opportunity to expand and his mother took a risk and mortgaged her home for \$100,000. Well it all turned out okay and in the later 1990s and 2000s it turned into a billion dollar brand. FUBU expanded its clothing line to include accessories and foot wear. He was an excellent speaker and was well received by the crowd.

Jane and I had a pretty good box lunch and went on to a few different sessions for the remainder of the day and for the most part trying to address some of the future roadblocks and much more information and discussion on AI. Jane and I did a lot of networking and met directors from all over the country. We talked to many at our hotel also, hearing lots about their issues in different areas. I think we found out that in many parts of the country our rates

are very similar. Some co-ops located closer to large nuclear plants were the cheapest. Jane will probably have more details. There were many different break out sessions going on but this venue was so large it was very difficult getting around meaning lots of walking. We stayed together trying not to lose each other in the crowds. Directors with fit-bit monitors told me they were walking between 3 and 5 miles a day.

Coming out of our last session on Monday coming down a spiral staircase.....I took a dive and missed the last step. Thought I split a lip and bruised a knee and cut my finger. I'm on blood thinners so looked kind of worse than what it was. Freaked out Jane!!! Anyway had to wait for a nurse and get bandaged up and an incident report. Didn't go to the doctor but had to go back and have them change bandages the next two days. I'm fine but it was kind of exciting and a memorable experience in Atlanta.

Found a very good Korean restaurant close by and had a great dinner that night. We also did a lot of networking at the hotel where we stayed. I also talked to quite a few of the Federated Youth that we also staying in our hotel; what a fine bunch of young American youth. They were very polite and well mannered and always play important roles in these conventions.

Day 2 again started with a general session. I do not have cable tv but the guest speakers were the stars of HGTV's Hometown, Erin and Ben Napier. They are known for buying, remodeling, and revitalizing small towns. It was a very interesting presentation. Their favorite phrase--- "make something good today into the stratosphere while impacting the community for generations to come". After that presentation Jane had to go do her duty as a voting delegate and the Expo opened up. I went there to observe some of the latest and greatest equipment until Jane finished. Jane came back a couple hours later and lunch was already over. I think I remember one more session before we went back to the hotel. We were right across the street from The Olympic Centennial Park where the 1996 Summer Olympics were held in Atlanta. It reminded me that there was a terrorist that was putting pipe bombs in garbage cans in the park. We ate at our hotel that evening and then headed back over to the Scotty McCreery concert which we had bought tickets to attend. Scotty was the Season 10 winner of American Idol in 2011. He was 17 years old when he won. Fast forward 14 years and he had finished high school, finished college, married his childhood sweetheart, and they have a 4-year-old little boy. He plays country western music, some new and some old and has an incredible voice. I recommend seeing him if you ever get a chance.

Day 3 it was rumored that the newly appointed Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L Rollins was invited to speak, but there hadn't been any confirmations. Well she made it and spoke for quite a while about the current affairs. She spoke of tariffs and eliminating some of the Biden regulations on clean air and water to reduce permitting time. She's only been on the job a couple weeks, so I don't think she has had much of a chance to get her feet on the ground yet. She said she was from Southern Florida which is a long way from the Agricultural issues in the rest of the country, but we will see. I did read a little of her bio and she is an attorney, but I didn't see anything relating to Agriculture.

The next speaker that morning was Noelle Russell, Founder and Chief AI Officer, AI Leadership Institute. She advises companies and industries on how to integrate emerging technologies including AI, Web 3 and the cloud into their operations and workplace. She led teams at Accenture, NPR, Microsoft, IBM, AWS, and Amazon Alexa and is among the world leading voices on data and AI literacy. In my opinion, she was an amazing woman and is on the cutting edge of all the new technology coming. She predicted we are going to see more advances in technology the next 3 years than we've seen in the last 10-20. I think she was the best speaker we saw. Everything she talked about was pretty much over my head so I suggest if you're interested, she has written books and I believe has videos on YouTube. I don't think we have heard the last of this lady.

Jane and I decided we had had enough and decided to head back to the hotel and get to the airport.

Well worth the effort and I can only imagine how many miles we walked. Met and talked to Directors from all over the country. It was a great experience and grateful I got the opportunity to go. I got a few bruises to heel but all is good.

Joe Lorence / Director
District # 3

Jay Waeltz
District 4 Director Report
March 2025

On March 18-19, 2025, I attended the Board Operations and Processes Course-2620. The instructor was Kevin Sump. It was done by teleconference in the JREC Boardroom.

The course objectives were:

- Board Meetings and Board Officers
- Decision Making and Documentation
- Key Board Processes and Outcomes
- The Board/CEO Relationship
- Board Self-Assessment

This course was a bit more interactive because there were 27 participants in the class. Some of the more interesting conversations were term limits, some ranging from 15 years, 18 years, up to unlimited terms. Another conversation was about how new board members should have extensive on board training. What I found most interesting was to make sure that co-ops have a whistle blower policy, where employees are easily able to report what they perceive as wrong doings by management and upper level staff. In part of that conversation, there was a suggestion that employee surveys be completed and looked over by board members. I can only assume they meant anonymously. One other thing that was mentioned was that employees in many co-op situations do not feel comfortable interacting with board members that they have known their whole life while at church, sporting events, or even the gas station because apparently, some CEO's or general managers give instructions to employees not to converse with board members under any circumstances. It would seem in a relatively small community like JREC serves, that wouldn't or shouldn't become a problem because in our daily lives, we will be running into these people regularly.

I look forward to discussing these topics at this month's meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jay Waeltz', written in a cursive style.

Jay Waeltz