

FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE
Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services' 79th Annual Meeting Highlights

Ellsworth, Wis. [March 23, 2016] – More than 200 members and guests attended Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services' 79th annual meeting on March 19, 2016, at the Ellsworth High School. Roger Wiff, Chairman of the Board, presided over the meeting.

The theme was *Focused on the Future*, which resonated throughout the meeting in the director candidates' speeches, the reports and presentations.

Re-elected to the board were incumbent directors Gerald Drier, district 1; Ed Hass, district 2; Brian Berg, district 3. The opposing director candidates included Dennis Wolfe, district 1, and Charles Hager in district 2. District 3 director, Brian Berg, ran unopposed.

Chairman Wiff introduced the 2016 Pierce Pepin Scholarship winners: Jacob Hurajt, Justin Hurajt, and Grace Nielson; all are seniors at River Falls High School.

The crowd was treated to a special presentation by Justin Hurajt, who was elected to the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) Youth Board during the Youth Leadership Congress (YLC) last July. He spoke of his experiences with the YLC and as a member of the WECA Youth Board.

The audit report was presented by Abby Williamson from the accounting firm of Carlson Highland & Co., who were engaged to perform the 2015 audit. The cooperative did not have to assume any additional long-term debt during the year and finished the year with total assets of \$41,431,645.

In his report, president and CEO Larry Dokkestul indicated "the cooperative had a good year, a safe year." He noted that the board and management would continue to focus in the future on the three mainstays--electric service reliability, affordability and responsiveness. Dokkestul commented on the strides Pierce Pepin has made in promoting energy efficiency to its members, noting that in 2015 members received over \$64,000 in Energy Sense rebates and over \$94,000 of incentives through Wisconsin's Focus on Energy program. Lastly, Dokkestul reported, "Rates are stable. There will be no increase this year, but we will continue to focus on keeping our rates fair for all members."

Brian Rude, Vice President, External and Member Relations with Dairyland Power Cooperative, reported on Dairyland's generation resources and the impact the EPA's Clean Power Plan (CPP) could have on coal and other resources. With the CPP currently on hold because of a stay granted by the Supreme Court on Feb. 9, 2016, Governor Walker has ordered progress on a state plan stopped while we await action on lawsuits. Rude emphasized that regardless of the outcome of the CPP, Dairyland will move ahead with its plans to add more renewable resources to its generation mix, maintain its coal plants to use when needed, and build a natural gas plant to have online by 2022-24. In closing, Rude noted, "Regardless of the outcome of the Clean Power Plan, CO2 emissions will continue to decline."

Chairman Roger Wiff, during his report, emphasized the strong commitment that Pierce Pepin has to its communities, now and in the future. He specifically commented on the scholarships that the co-op awards each year to graduating seniors, which are funded with unclaimed capital credits from our members. Educational and charitable moneys are administered through the Federated Youth Foundation, which is a non-profit state fund exempt from federal taxation. More than \$8 million in scholarships have been distributed since the fund was established 27 years ago. Wiff read aloud a note from a past scholarship recipient whose grateful words reiterated the value of the co-op's scholarship program. Wiff thanked the members who participate in the cooperative's Operation Round Up[®] program by rounding up their monthly bills to the nearest dollar. With their help, the board was able to award more than \$40,000 in donations to worthy organizations, including local food pantries who collectively received \$16,000. Chairman Wiff thanked the employees for their contributions to the cooperative's success.

Dr. Gerald Matteson was recognized for his years of service as parliamentarian over the cooperative's annual meetings since 1992. Matteson introduced Dr. Jim Graham, the head of the Agriculture Education Department at the UW-River Falls, who will take over his parliamentarian duties.

The meeting wrapped up with prize drawings totaling \$1,500 in gift cards. Attendees also received coupons for free chicken dinners at the Ellsworth Fire Hall on April 2.

The board reorganized immediately following the annual meeting, with only one change—Ginny Huber will replace Gerald Drier as vice chairman. All other officers remain unchanged—Roger Wiff, chairman, and Lonnie Feuerhelm, secretary/treasurer. Daniel Fischer, Dairyland Power Cooperative Board of Directors.

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About Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services

Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services is an electric cooperative located in Ellsworth, Wisconsin, offering electric utility services to homes and businesses. As a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services is committed to excellence, innovation and integrity, and is dedicated to helping its communities live better. For more information, call 1-800-924-2133 or visit www.piercepepin.com.