

From the Manager

Clay Electric is seeing more and more members inquiring about solar generation. Some have even already purchased systems. While we encourage our members to look for renewable energy sources, we also caution them to get informed before making any immediate decisions.

Late in 2016, Illinois enacted the Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA), which aimed to drive growth in renewable energy generation and increase energy efficiency, among other things. As a result of the FEJA, Illinois adopted a Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS). The RPS sets sliding scale goals for renewables to provide 25 percent of eligible retail electricity sales by 2025. And, to incentivize new solar facilities, the governing body for the solar program, the Illinois Power Agency (IPA), has been tasked with creating a market for Solar Renewable Energy Credits, or SRECs.

That's quite a list of acronyms already!

So, what does this mean for someone looking to purchase a new solar generation system at their home or place of business?

It means that SRECs will provide some value toward the generation system installed, based upon the amount of electricity the system generates. The problem is, while the IPA has come up with a timeline for their solar incentive program, they are still in the early stages.

At a recent conference in Springfield, the IPA director spoke regarding the stages necessary to get the program up and operational. Specifically, he laid out the timeline

for each stage. In the end, the IPA's goal is to have the program fully developed and implemented in the last half of 2018.

Please, keep the 2018 number in mind when you consider installing one of these photo-voltaic systems. Of course, the state program isn't the only incentive out there. On the federal level, there is still a 30 percent tax credit available to help offset the cost. Federal legislators have made no secret of the fact the 30 percent tax credit will most likely have a "ramp down" over the coming years. More than likely it will decrease slowly until finally new installations must make financial sense without the aid of subsidies.

One last thing: You may have been approached recently by investors looking for large tracts of land

to lease for large-scale solar installations. Some of these might be legitimate, but please take the time to consult your attorney before agreeing to one of them.

As always, if you want more information, don't hesitate to contact one of us here at Clay Electric. We pride ourselves on being your trusted energy provider, and we would be happy to help you wade through these programs to see if they could be a fit for you.



Ed VanHoose
Manager

**Clay Electric Cooperative's office
will be closed on Tuesday, July 4th, 2017
to celebrate Independence Day. From the
Board of Directors and all employees,
have a safe and**

Happy
FOURTH
of
JULY





SWIMMING POOL SAFETY

Make sure that any lighting equipment in your pool is up to code and regularly examined by a professional. To change or repair a light, ensure the electricity to the pool is first turned off at the circuit breaker.

*If you are in the water and feel electric current, which can cause a tingling sensation, shout to let others know, try to stay upright, tuck your legs up to make yourself smaller, and swim away from anything that could be energized. **Do not use a metal ladder to exit the pool.***

*Remember, water and electricity are a dangerous mix, even outside the pool. **Never touch any electrical appliances or outlets when you are wet or standing in water.***

Learn more at



Pole Attachments



Believe it or not, there are still instances where our linemen must climb poles rather than use a bucket truck. Please consider our linemen's safety the next time you get ready to attach something to our electric poles. We see satellite dishes, metal yard sale and other signs, electric fence insulators, and even live-stock gates. Satellite companies know

that they should not attach dishes or antennas on the poles, but it is easier to do that than set their own pole. If an instance arises where one of our linemen must climb a pole with one of these obstructions in place, they will remove the obstruction without warning. So please, keep the utility poles for utility purposes only. That way, we can all stay safe.

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting

Regular meeting May 1, 2017

The regular February meeting of the Board of Trustees of Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CECI) was held at the principal office of the Cooperative, R.F.D., in Flora, Illinois beginning at 7:00 o'clock p.m. on Monday, May 1, 2017.

Trustees present were: Frank Czyzewski, Frank Herman, Kevin Logan, Bill Croy, Bob Pierson, Neil Gould, Richard Rudolphi, Danny Schnepfer, and Greg Smith. Also present were: Ed VanHoose, Executive V.P. General Manager, Tyra Cycholl, CECI Attorney, and Ginger Williams CECI Bookkeeper. The meeting was opened by Richard Rudolphi, who presided and Greg Smith, Secretary, acted as secretary thereof.

HONORED, retiring Bookkeeper, Ginger Williams. Thereafter Williams left the meeting.

The invocation was given by Bob Pierson.

The following proceedings were had [all action being first duly moved and seconded and all action taken being upon the unanimous vote of the Board or without dissenting vote of abstention unless otherwise stated]:

APPROVED the agenda as presented with the amendment of adding a CRC Report to the Manager's Report.

APPROVED, the minutes of the Regular Board meeting held on March 27, 2017.

REVIEWED, that the Board of Trustees hereby: (a) approve and admit to membership those 23 applicants connected for service since the last such review by the board, and (b) cancel those 17 former members shown on the Manager's Report since the last such review by the Board, said members no longer taking service.

APPROVED, a list of work orders in the amount of \$35,509.61.

APPROVED the checklist for the month of March 2017.

REVIEWED, the NRECA updates including Executive Order and Legislative Conference.

HEARD a report by Trustee Herman on the recent SIPC Committee meeting.

HEARD, a report by Kevin Logan as to the financials for AIEC, as no meeting was held this month.

REVIEWED the status of Illinois House Bill 2603.

INFORMED of employee changes, due to retirements, at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC).

DISCUSSED items for the upcoming AIEC silent auction to benefit the Illinois Electric Cooperatives Scholarship program.

UPDATED on building plans and **INFORMED** that some Board members had recently toured a building project presently in construction.

DISCUSSED plans moving forward for a new office building.

APPROVED moving into Executive Session to discuss Confidential Information.

APPROVED returning into General Session.

HEARD a financial report by Manager VanHoose as to the following:

- a. Form 990 Draft
- b. March 2017 Form 7
- c. March 2017 Cash Flow;
- d. SIPC Power Delivered in March 2017 dated April 7, 2017
- March 2017 Power Factor.

March 2017 Power Cost Adder
HEARD a General Safety Report for March 2017.

REVIEWED Monday morning safety meeting sheet dated April 17, 2017.

REVIEWED the Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange onsite inspection dated April 13, 2017.

HEARD and **APPROVED** a report by Manager VanHoose as to the following:

- a. AIEC Managers meeting
- b. Illinois Solar REC programs
- c. Youth Day to Springfield, IL
- d. IBEW 702 Apprentice school
- e. Aclara server
- f. Rubber goods surcharge
- g. CRC open seat
- h. Upcoming meetings

HEARD an update regarding Illinois Solar REC programs and **REVIEWED** a Wall Street Journal article regarding the same.

DISCUSSED and **APPROVED** the Avian Protection Plan policy as presented.

REVIEWED the bill for Youth Day and the newspaper article

regarding the same.

DISCUSSED a bill from IBEW Local Union 702 **INFORMED** CECI does not participate and there is no contract for the service.

HEARD and **INFORMED** of ACLARA server and reimbursement by Federated Rural Insurance.

REVIEWED a surcharge increase regarding rubber glove testing.

REMINDING and **APPROVED** upcoming meeting times.

APPROVED the legal report as presented.

REVIEWED a thank you card from Madison Healy regarding the Youth Tour.

APPROVED one purchase power agreement in the form as presented.

HEARD and **APPROVED** a report by Manager VanHoose as to requests for retirement of capital credits for the estates of three deceased Members pursuant to Cooperative policy.

REVIEWED 1 Liability Insurance Certificate.

DISCUSSED a policy review regarding co-habitation. Attorney and Manager will review and present to the Board at the next meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared **ADJOURNED**.

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The path to efficiency independence

By Anne Prince

While fireworks and Independence Day parades are synonymous with the Fourth of July, no such fanfare comes to mind when discussing energy efficiency. Perhaps it should. If you think about it, energy efficiency not only benefits individuals and families, but the country as a whole. Energy efficiency combined with energy conservation and advances in technology in the utility industry, ultimately help our country on a path toward greater energy independence. And that's worth celebrating.

Benefits of efficiency

At its essence, greater efficiency means less energy is used for the production of goods and services. For individual consumers, a reduction in energy use usually translates to a tangible financial benefit – more money in your wallet at the end of the month. If your co-op neighbors are also using less energy, collectively, it means the overall cost of providing that electricity could be lower and may result in reduced costs for co-op members. For many, this is reason enough to strive for greater

energy efficiency. On a national level, energy efficiency, sometimes called the “fifth fuel,” has a more profound impact. It can potentially boost the economy by allowing consumers and businesses to invest in other areas. As importantly, greater energy efficiency may slow the rate at which domestic energy is depleted, and therefore reduce or diminish the need for foreign energy.

Strike up the band

There's no need to wait for the first exploding burst of fireworks in the night sky to start your energy efficiency efforts. Every American can take charge of their own energy use, regardless of the date on the calendar. Small steps can lead to a big difference for you and your neighbors, whether across the road or across the country.

Energy efficiency can generally be achieved two ways. The first is with mechanical change, such as replacing an older HVAC unit or less efficient appliance or with a new ENERGY STAR model or upgrading to new, insulated windows. Less expensive actions include improving the seal of your home's

“envelope” by caulking exterior windows and doors and sealing openings where pipes and ductwork meet the outside. Swapping out the last incandescent bulbs (inside and outside) with LEDs also makes a noticeable difference.

Smart control

The second way to realize energy efficiency is through smarter management of your energy use. Leveraging smart thermostat technology is a good place to start. Most smart thermostats contain an app allowing remote control by mobile phone or tablet. Program your thermostat to reflect your family's schedule. Many thermostat programs allow you to view and edit your thermostat schedule and monitor the amount of energy used. Sometimes, however, energy efficiency is simply a matter of changing old habits such as washing clothes in cold water instead of hot or running the dishwasher during off-peak times.

Anne Prince writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

The Clay Electric Cooperative 73rd Annual Meeting of Members

will be held Thursday, August 24th, at Oil Belt Christian Service Camp on the north-west side of Charley Brown Park, on Old Hwy 50 West of Flora.



- Registration and meal begins at 5:15 p.m. And the business meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.
- A pork chop or chicken dinner will be provided.
- Drawing for five \$100.00 Bill credits for five lucky members in attendance along with other prizes
- A \$10.00 bill credit will be given to each member that registers at the meeting
- If you are a current member of Clay Electric Cooperative, please come and participate in your annual meeting.