

SOCORRO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Time for Action

After years of wrestling with outdated by-laws, Socorro Electric Cooperative finally has a great opportunity to fix them. That should make everybody happy.

In July 2014, we asked Aaron Christensen, a national expert on co-op matters, to audit SEC and tell us how to improve. Based in North Carolina, Christensen advises rural electric cooperatives around the United States on governance, elections, districting, and policies.

Working completely independently from the Board, Christensen reviewed our by-laws, policies, rates, capital credits, elections, member complaints; relationship with the City of Socorro...the list goes on and includes recent controversies. When Christensen reported his results at our Board of Trustees meeting January 28-29, one finding eclipsed the others: "Your current by-laws are the heart of your problems," he told us. "They pit trustee against trustee, member against member. They're truly bad."

I think every board member already knew that. Over the decades, members and the Board have amended them bit by bit. Because of that patchwork process, our by-laws contradict themselves, confuse everybody, and have become unworkable. Hearing that from a national expert gave the message extra weight.

Fortunately, Christensen didn't just come to criticize: he also drafted proposed new by-laws for us to consider. Because they were written as a whole by an unbiased expert, they're better than even the recent proposed by-laws amendments. They clear up a number of issues that have blocked SEC progress or caused controversy and conflict throughout our Board and membership.

For example, they clear up membership eligibility for a sole proprietor business by allowing just one membership for the individual who owns the business. They straighten out the way the co-op retires capital credits in case of divorce, death, or the closing of a business. They increase the Board to seven Trustees. Each Trustee would represent a district, but all co-op members from every district would vote for each Trustee.

To review the proposed by-laws and Christensen's analysis, go to www.socorroelectric.com and click on Board Governance Report. (You'll also find his review of several specific issues and controversies.)



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Christensen also proposed completely updated Board policies. They fit under the by-laws and cover matters with more specific detail. The Board approves policies, so we plan to review Christensen's recommendations and adopt them in the next month or two.

We also plan to put the proposed new by-laws in front of you, the members, for a vote in late April. Then it's up to you to vote them up or down. These proposed new by-laws are a golden opportunity to overhaul Socorro Electric from the ground up. If you want a better future for your co-op, please vote "Yes."



Anne L. Dorough, District V
President

Click on Board Governance Report button on our website socorroelectric.com to review the proposed new by-laws and an analysis.

**Board
Governance
Report**



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