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THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 2010

## No Voting In Co-op Informational Meeting

*By John Severance*

SOCORRO – The Socorro Electric Cooperative will hold an informational meeting at 1 p.m. March 27 at the Finley Gym. And it will be for informational purposes only. That’s the announcement Co-op trustee president Paul Bustamante made following the executive session portion of a meeting on Feb. 24.

There was some speculation that voting would be allowed at the March 27 meeting, but that will not be the case.

Members will vote on resolutions at the April 17 annual meeting at the same facility. Before the board went into executive session, sparks flew as trustee Donald Wolberg confronted co-op attorney Dennis Francish about his response to member Don Steinnard’s inquiry regarding insurance.

“I wish we could have seen a draft of your response,” Wolberg said.

Francish responded: “My opinion is my opinion and I wrote it as if I was going to court.”

For the second time within a month, Francish said: “I represent the corporation and I

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don't represent the members.”

Wolberg said, “You represent the co-op!”

Trustee Charlie Wagner got into the act, referring to several documents which could be used to raise the question of fraud in regard to the granting of insurance to the trustees

Francish said, “Who committed the fraud?”

Wagner shuffled some papers and after a couple more heated exchanges, the trustees voted to go into executive session.

Earlier, Wolberg unveiled an informal survey regarding the relationship between the co-op and its members.

Some of the highlights include:

- When the question was asked should the SEC trustees have term limits? 241 answered yes, 51 said no and 16 were not sure.
- Should SEC member/owners be able to vote ny mail, electronic, absentee or telephone balloting? 303 said yes, 7 responded no and four were not sure.
- Should the number of SEC trustees be reduced in number? 203 said yes, 95 said no and 17 had no opinion
- Should the SEC trustees receive paid medical insurance for service? 41 said yes, 262 said no and 11 had no opinion.
- Do you have confidence in the SEC Board of Trustees? 31 said yes, 288 responded no and 14 had no opinion.
- Should SEC trustees receive compensation and necessary expenses for service? 258 said yes, 43 said no and 21 had no opinion.

In other business:

- The co-op received a favorable review from the USDA Rural Development. The letter said the co-op's facilities are being adequately operated and maintained and that the cooperative has an effective operations and maintenance program. The only two

(20)

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recommendations were that the co-op should maintain the line equipment and continue to perform inspections and treatments of poles on an annual basis.

- General manager Polo Pineda announced the hiring of Jason Baca of Veguita and J.J. Apachito of Magdalena as linemen.

- The co-op also will install a new computer software system and the cost is \$37,000. Wagner questioned why the co-op did not seek competitive bids.



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