

November 1 - Commentary on District 5 election –

District 5 Voting Results:

Anne Dorough - 18 by mail + 42 in person = 60 votes

Buster Green - 10 by mail + 38 in person = 48 votes

54 required for a quorum, 56 showed up.

Saturday's District 5 election and members' meeting was a triumph in many ways. Anne Dorough of Pie Town will serve as the District 5 Trustee to the SEC's Board of Trustees but there were no real winners or losers in the election. Both Anne and Buster Green of Quemado were excellent candidates and conducted themselves honorably and well. District 5 would have won in any outcome or as Chairman of the Meeting, Bill Green stated, "We are going to congratulate one candidate and announce the other candidate as trustee." More members should have voted and more should have attended the meeting but enough people did vote and attend to get the job done.

The district meeting was an example of how a democracy is supposed to work. Several dedicated members worked with Charlie Wagner, the former District 5 Trustee, in an effort to draft amendments to the SEC Bylaws to return control of the co-op to the members. The subject matter of these amendments is as follows:

ARTICLE III. Meetings of the Members.

1. Requiring a parliamentarian to preside over the meeting.
2. Holding annual district meetings.
3. Making district meetings able to be called by 2 instead of 3 trustees or 6% rather than 10% of district members.
4. Vote by mail to be part of the quorum count. Quorum vote to hold for entire meeting. Oversight by third party administrator.
5. Automatic movement of amendments passed at district meeting to next annual meeting for vote by entire SEC membership.

ARTICLE V. Trustees.

1. Board of Trustee proposed amendments to go a district meeting for approval or disapproval by district members. If approved, the amendment goes to annual meeting for ratification. (This places amendments before members for discussion instead of an automatic pass to the Annual Meeting ballot without discussion or chance to amend.)
2. Declared candidates for trustee may receive list of district voting members and addresses for the proper purpose of campaigning.
3. Vote by mail: Ballot return time of 30 days, information on and pictures of candidates with ballot. Envelope with instructions, ballot, etc.
4. Trustees to submit receipts for expenses on funds advanced or otherwise paid.
5. Redistricting for ongoing equitable districts.

ARTICLE VI. Meetings of Trustees.

1. Monthly meetings to rotate among the 5 districts rather than all meetings taking place in Socorro.

## ARTICLE VII. Officers.

1. Yearly rotation of officers among trustees.
2. Yearly rotation of Tri-State delegate and New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NMRECA) delegate. Tri-State pays its delegates very well with expenses and per diems. Funds for expenses and per diems in connection with NMRECA to be paid by SEC and not paid from trustee's annual \$10,000.
3. Duties and expectations for officers.
4. ATTORNEY: Appointment by Board of Trustees for one year term subject to vote of members for renewal of appointment at Annual Members Meeting.  
Sets duties of attorney.

## ARTICLE VIII. Section 8. Donations

1. Restores the sentence deleted from Trustee Jack Bruton's proposed amendment at the 2008 District 5 meeting. "There shall be no donations for any reason except for donations for student scholarships through the Socorro Electric Cooperative Foundation." (Donations have over the years been used almost as bribes and in a manner of unequal distribution. Non-profit entities by definition should never give donations. (Such activities as hanging of bunting and flags for community events can be handled with a nominal billing.)

## RESOLUTION FIXING COMPENSATION FOR TRUSTEES.

Clarifies and corrects wording of Resolution fixing compensation for trustees already in bylaws.

The legal wording of these amendments and resolution are mandated for forwarding to the 2013 Annual Members Meeting for ratification by the full membership. As soon as the floor changes to the District 5 proposed amendments are inserted, the entire amendments will be posted here so that members can read and become familiar with them. Other amendments can be raised from the floor of the Annual Meeting.

It was a pleasure to watch the presentation and debate on these amendments at this District 5 meeting. Chairman Bill Green kept things rolling along. The presenters were knowledgeable answering questions from the audience. And the members were engaged in the issues raising matters for discussion and reaching agreement. Several proposed amendments were amended from the floor; only one was voted down. The tone was serious but friendly without the animosity seen at other district meetings. The Business meeting spanned almost three hours but as Bill Green stated, "We need to finish this." And they did!

One discordant note during this process came from David Wade, District 4 trustee, who rose in opposition to several of the amendments claiming undue expense would result if they passed. His figures are suspect, his reasoning illogical and ill received by District 5 members.

There seems to be a trustee and management movement to do away with Voting by Mail on the basis on little use, big cost. This action should enrage every SEC member. A state law was altered to enable voting by mail for this large co-op. Thank you Rep. Don Tripp for all your help. Without vote by mail, many members are disenfranchised due to health, distance, absence from home and religion. A Quemado resident, Carol Auffrey, made this point eloquently. The

present low use is due partly to the newness of the method but mainly to the shortness of time to return ballots under the present system of having to request ballots instead of just mailing ballots with instructions and return envelopes in the first place. The cost is minor compared to other co-op expenses . Members should beware of figures tossed out without verification. Costs could be reduced further by following the procedure of the balloting companies rather than imposing self defeating SEC restrictions. We should have a system of voting by computer as do many co-ops nationwide . Most co-ops vote in person, by mail and by computer. These are common practices to ensure member participation. And as District 5 made very clear Saturday, the members own the co-op and have no trouble with telling elected trustees and hired management how to run it the co-op in member's best interests. Congratulations to them all.