

SANGRE DE CRISTO ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

The Outlet

MAY 2022



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Your community electric service provider.



Annual Meeting Notice

SDCEA's annual meeting will be held on June 9, 2022, at The Barn at Howard Creek Farm, Howard.



BOARD ELECTIONS

SDCEA is a member-owned, non-profit, corporate cooperative that provides electric service to 14,000 accounts in five counties in central Colorado. SDCEA is self-regulated and governed by a seven-member board of directors elected by and from our membership. Five board members serving staggered terms are elected from director districts and two are elected at-large.

This year, two board seats are up for election. One board seat from Fremont County is contested. Incumbent Geoff Gerk is running for the seat, challenged by Nick Hellbusch.

The Custer County seat held by Tommy Flower is also contested. He is being challenged for election by Sandra Attebery.

Ballots will be mailed to consumers in May. Deadline for ballots to be returned

and received by Survey & Ballot Systems to be counted is **June 2, 2022**. Written ballots will not be accepted at the Annual Meeting. **DO NOT** drop the ballot off at SDCEA. If your ballot is not returned in the envelope provided by SBS, your vote may not be counted. A voice vote will not be called at the Annual Meeting.

CUSTER COUNTY

Vote for one candidate

- Sandra Attebery
- Tommy Flower (Incumbent)

FREMONT COUNTY

Vote for one candidate

- Geoffrey S. Gerk (Incumbent)
- Nicholas Hellbusch

CUSTER COUNTY BOARD CANDIDATES



SANDRA ATTEBERY

CUSTER COUNTY
DIRECTOR DISTRICT

How long have you been a member of SDCEA?

25 plus years.

What insights do you feel you could bring to the board that would increase their understandings of all members?

As a resident of Custer County for 34 years and a small business owner in Fremont County for 27 years, I will bring useful community and institutional knowledge to the board. As a member of multiple community boards, I do hear and understand the many concerns Custer County residents have in these times of escalating inflation. I will work with the board members from the other counties to address the needs and concerns of every stakeholder of the association.

What are your personal goals for SDCEA, and what steps would you take as a board member to achieve these goals?

I commit to working for all the members in a responsible manner, maintaining fiscal responsibility and integrity on behalf of the members, making sure the appropriate resources are secured for all departments to function appropriately.

What responsibility do board members have to communicate with the membership of the cooperative?

All SDCEA board members have a duty and responsibility to be the communication conduit between the SDCEA administration and the members of the association.

What specifically qualifies you to serve as a corporate fiduciary/utility regulator?

As a business owner of 27 years, I do understand the overall cost to do business. The profit and loss every company endures yearly.

What other education and background experience do you have that specifically apply to governing this electric cooperative?

Although I do not have background experience in an electric cooperative I do have experience on multiple governing boards and as an engineer, I do not make reactive decisions, but study the overall issue and weigh the final outcome.

What are the three most important issues to members that SDCEA should focus on?

1. Reliability of electric service to all the members. 2. Fiscal responsibility and transparency to all of the members of the association. 3. Customer Service.

How do you view the future of energy in central Colorado (i.e., affordability, renewable energy, electric vehicles, battery storage, micro-grids, etc.) and what is SDCEA's primary responsibility moving forward?

The people I know and meet do have economic concerns and struggles. The continuous rise in costs for the average household is un-tethered and have so many people concerned about the future. I do believe there will be a shift for those that can afford to do so, to investing in renewable energy, solar, wind, hybrid and electric vehicles.



TOMMY FLOWER
(INCUMBENT)
CUSTER COUNTY DIRECTOR
DISTRICT

How long have you been a member of SDCEA?

My wife and I have been members of SDCEA since 1997.

What insights do you feel you could bring to the board that would increase their understandings of all members?

I have a broad knowledge of Custer County and have witnessed increased growth in our county as well as the increase demand for reliable electricity.

What are your personal goals for SDCEA, and what steps would you take as a board member to achieve these goals?

One of my main goals as a director is to complete my initial education efforts to become a more informed and educated board member. I have made concerted efforts to attend as many classes as I can to achieve that goal.

What responsibility do board members have to communicate with the membership of the cooperative?

Please add anything else you would like members to consider.

As a member of the association, I am confident I can bring useful experience, community knowledge, personal and negotiation skills and a real passion for the position.

Let me introduce myself. I am Sandra Attebery. My husband Lynn and I have lived and called Custer County, home for 34 years. We are active in the amazing community, focusing on community-led solutions, self sufficiency and neighbors helping neighbors. The people I know and meet do have economic concerns and struggles. The continuous rise in costs for the average household is un-tethered and have many concerned about the future. I do believe there will be a shift for those that can afford to do so, investing in renewable energy.

As a Chemical Engineer and small business owner in Fremont County for 27 years I understand how complex systems work. I will not take the responsibility and commitment the job requires lightly, or for granted knowing our families and businesses are dependent on some of the most expensive energy in Colorado. I value solid business skills and well-managed resources which are both needed to be an effective representative for all the members of the Sangre de Cristo Electric Association. I strongly believe in communication at all levels of leadership and in the need for checks-and-balances to be in place and utilized to ensure accountability. With your support, it will be my honor to represent you the members and stakeholders of this electric association that has serves us well.

I feel the board members need to be available to the membership to communicate any concerns or initiatives that the member-owners may have. As a board, we also rely on our Country Life magazine to keep members informed.

What specifically qualifies you to serve as a corporate fiduciary/utility regulator?

Obviously, I am a member of SDCEA, and the education I have received so far enables me to understand the responsibilities of a self-regulated coop, i.e. a coop that is not regulated by FERC.

What other education and background experience do you have that specifically apply to governing this electric cooperative?

I have served on various boards since moving to Custer County in 1986. While gaining experience in governance, I still rely on the educational opportunities provided by CREA and NRECA to move forward in a leadership role.

What are the three most important issues to members that SDCEA should focus on?

Clearly, the members should be aware of the impacts of moving away from coal-generated power and understand the process of moving toward green energy and the challenges that may arise. The cost of electricity to the home or business is also an issue that members need to understand and appreciate.

How do you view the future of energy in central Colorado (i.e., affordability, renewable energy, electric vehicles, battery storage, micro-grids, etc.) and what is SDCEA's primary responsibility moving forward?

The future of the energy segment is definitely changing. In the immediate future, I see natural gas as a bridge to green energy. Obviously, the cost, effectiveness and reliability of alternate energy sources have

a long way to go to replace all fossil fuel generated electricity. Battery storage and micro-grid build out is technology that may assist in the energy picture, but there is a lot of development that needs to occur before we can rely heavily on these technologies.

Please add anything else you would like members to consider.

FREMONT COUNTY BOARD CANDIDATES



GEOFFREY GERIK
(INCUMBENT)
FREMONT DIRECTOR DISTRICT

How long have you been a member of SDCEA?

I became a member of SDCEA in August of 1982, and attended my first Annual Meeting in the mid 1990's.

What insights do you feel you could bring to the board that would increase their understandings of all members?

I have lived in Howard for almost 40 years. I am a retired teacher and school administrator from the Cotopaxi School District. I believe I know the people throughout the SDCEA service area. I am a person who can listen to all sides of an issue and appreciate another position that may be different from mine. This is the way I learn and change into a better person and better director.

What are your personal goals for SDCEA, and what steps would you take as a board member to achieve these goals?

SDCEA needs to continue to keep our electricity reliable and affordable. We need to continually look at entities who supply services to us and monitor the value they bring. We need to improve communication between SDCEA and its members. In my school career I worked with and gained great insight from Accountability Committees, comprised of parents, students, teachers, and community members. I believe we can benefit from a similar group to help advise and bring differing perspectives for Board consideration. Lastly, we have incredible employees and need to find ways keep them at SDCEA in this competitive market.

What responsibility do board members have to communicate with the membership of the cooperative?

We must have better and more effective ways to communicate to consumer members and ways to engage in listening to their concerns. Newsletters work for some, email for others, and social media for many. We need to help in determining how to get information to members. And conversely, we need to develop better ways for members to engage with SDCEA. I may not always have the answers but will try to find them. I represent all members, not only those in my area.

What specifically qualifies you to serve as a corporate fiduciary/utility regulator?

I have had the privilege of serving as a director since 2017. I have been able to complete 21 courses through the National Rural Cooperative Association and achieved the Director Gold Credential. These courses help build a strong foundation in the understanding of electric cooperative functions. I currently serve as SDCEA's Treasurer.

What other education and background experience do you have that specifically apply to governing this electric cooperative?

I have a BA in English and MA in School Administration with post graduate course work to obtain and maintain my superintendent's license. I was a teacher and coach, and then a school administrator for 24 years and believe my ability to lead, listen, and then build consensus were instrumental in my success. I managed a multi-million dollar budget, over 50 employees, and worked well with not only these employees, but the students, parents, and community members.

What are the three most important issues to members that SDCEA should focus on?

We need to continue to provide reliable and affordable electricity, including as many renewables as possible. And as part of this, we must encourage conservation through educating our members. We must find better ways to communicate with and listen to our members. We need to keep our pledge to end the Fire Mitigation Rider when all lines are cleared.

How do you view the future of energy in central Colorado (i.e., affordability, renewable energy, electric vehicles, battery storage, micro-grids, etc.) and what is SDCEA's primary responsibility moving forward?

The electric industry is rapidly changing. We are transitioning away from fossil fuels to more electricity and need to be ready to provide all that will be needed. We need to look at any and all possible solutions to meet our members' needs.

Please add anything else you would like members to consider.

I have friends and neighbors who want nothing to do with renewable energy. I have friends and neighbors who have solar units and believe we need more. I have talked to others whose main concern is reliability, always knowing that when they flip a switch, lights come on. And others are concerned about inflation and keeping costs in check. I understand and empathize will all and hope to do my best to make decisions with great care and consideration.



NICHOLAS HELLBUSCH
COALDALE DIRECTOR DISTRICT

How long have you been a member of SDCEA?

I moved to Coaldale in November of 2020.

What insights do you feel you could bring to the board that would increase their understandings of all members?

My previous experience as a financial auditor for the City of Colorado Springs included reviewing the electric rate tariffs, making recommendations to City Council Members, CEO and CFO of the electric municipal utility, and also drafting audit reports made available to the public. Additionally, I codeveloped Colorado Springs first community solar garden. We worked directly with the municipal utility and City Council Members to get the local laws changed to allow for net metering and production rates to be directly credited on community solar garden member's electric bill over 20 years.

What are your personal goals for SDCEA, and what steps would you take as a board member to achieve these goals?

To facilitate open communication between the SDCEA and cooperative members and increase transparency in the organization.

What responsibility do board members have to communicate with the membership of the cooperative?

I believe the Board of Directors for SDCEA has the responsibility to make a good faith effort to reach out to the cooperative members. To better inform them on the operations of the cooperative and to keep them up to date on any significant changes proposed by the SDCEA.

What specifically qualifies you to serve as a corporate fiduciary/utility regulator?

As a certified public accountant, licensed in the state of Colorado, I understand what it means to maintain the trust of your clients and it has been the key to my business' growth over the last five years since I started my own practice. Also, my previous job was as a financial/operational auditor for the City of Colorado Springs, which gave me direct experience working with an electric municipal utility with close to 500,000 customers, allowed me the opportunity to work directly with the CEO & CFO of the municipal electric utility.

What other education and background experience do you have that specifically apply to governing this electric cooperative?

My father was a line man and then later ran the control center for my hometown's municipal electric utility. The stress on these workers and their families every time a storm sweeps through in the middle of the night has garnished a great deal of respect

from me for people that work in the electric industry. While this might not be direct experience in governing an electric cooperative, empathy for those individuals who keep the lights on and take on a stressful profession will allow me to better foster an open and productive communication between the SDCEA and the cooperative members than without this experience.

What are the three most important issues to members that SDCEA should focus on?

Paul Erickson, the CEO of the SDCEA, revealed to me that our electric cooperative has some of the highest rates in the state of Colorado. So naturally, I would focus on costs. Second, increasing transparency and accountability through developing channels of communication will be essential to stay up to date with the industry. There are a lot of intelligent, cooperative members with a wealth of information and passion and forming an advisory board to facilitate communications between the BOD and the cooperative members would likely prove integral in developing a more effective and efficient mode of communication within the organization. Third, to focus on the financial sustainability of our cooperative by looking at our long-term liabilities and financing practices as well as when to return dividends to the cooperative members.

How do you view the future of energy in central Colorado (i.e., affordability, renewable energy, electric vehicles, battery storage, micro-grids, etc.) and what is SDCEA's primary responsibility moving forward?

The SDCEA electric rates should decline if we can work to control costs and allow its cooperative members to have more options on how they might produce their own electricity. Distributed solar is proven to be the lowest cost method to deliver these additional kwh's to the grid. I also believe that the SDCEA needs to be open to a changing electric industry and encourage cooperative members to voice their ideas on what responsible energy production looks like moving forward and redefining what it means to maintain and operate a sustainable electric grid with future generations in mind.

Please add anything else you would like members to consider.

I like being part of a small electric cooperative that allows for a unique opportunity for members to have a voice in the future development of how we consume and produce kwh's. I look forward to being an active cooperative member and engaging with our local community. I believe that being on the Board of Directors and having direct experience in the industry would provide me the opportunity to help give back and connect and serve the local community that I enjoy being part of.



OUTAGES

Do you have an outage to report? Don't hesitate to call 719-395-2412 or toll-free 844-395-2412. **DO NOT** email your outage information or post your outage information on social media. SDCEA cannot monitor that information effectively, especially after hours. The only way to be sure we know you have an outage is to phone it in.