

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
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MVEC remains grounded amidst industry changes

JORDAN, MN – While the energy sector is facing many changes in the coming years, Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative’s focus will always remain on putting members first and the unique needs of the co-op’s service area in 2024.

Addressing these industry challenges head on was the theme of MVEC’s 87th Annual Meeting, held April 9 at Jordan High School. Observing his first full year as CEO, Marvin Denzer spoke of the decisions made on the state and federal level that will affect electric cooperatives for years to come.

This includes state legislation to move Minnesota to 100 percent carbon-free energy by the year 2040, with a mid-goal to hit 80 percent by 2030. And at the federal level, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed a 2023 rule to eliminate carbon dioxide from the power sector by 2035.

“Though we are not opposed to clean energy, and our energy mix already includes renewables, there must be a balance,” said Denzer who is guiding a co-op that pushed total services to more than 47,000 in 2023.

Looking into the future, the co-op is positioned well and will maintain a balanced approach by continuing to invest in safety and reliability, while ensuring rates stay competitive. MVEC will also focus on working with its statewide power advocate, Minnesota Rural Electric Association, to educate state and federal legislators on the current state of the energy sector at a local level.

“I want to assure you, our member-owners, we are looking out for you,” said Denzer. “We will work hard to ensure our wholesale power contracts and our portfolio mix, maximize your cooperative’s dollars.”

Denzer’s presentation and accompanying all-department video lined up with the cooperative’s values of Safety, Innovative, Accountability and Connected.

Two incumbents re-elected; two appointees elected to MVEC Board

More than 200 people, representing 112 registered member households and businesses attended the meeting, which was hosted by Board President Deb Erickson and included Board of Director races in all three districts.

District I featured four candidates seeking two open positions. Mike Lins of Savage won with 590 votes. Lins will serve a three-year term after completing one year as a board appointee in 2023. Incumbent Tom Wolf of

Savage earned 525 votes and will return to the board to serve a two-year term vacated by Brent Lawrence. Andrew Zirbel of Savage and Prior Lake's Kirt Briggs finished with 359 and 328 votes, respectively.

Lawrence (Prior Lake), who moved within districts in 2023 and was appointed to fill the empty seat of retired director Bill Heinlein, was elected to now represent District II. Lawrence secured 711 votes to edge Chanhassen's Greg Boe with 576 votes.

In District III, incumbent Kevin Gibbs of Le Center held off Montgomery's Julie Bifano by a margin of 1,019 to 756.

Following the business meeting, board directors convened for a reorganization session. Erickson retains her spot as Board President, Wolf will serve as Vice President, and Montgomery's Liz Krocak is the new Secretary-Treasurer.

Erdman highlights a positive 2023 for co-op financials

Giving his first Annual Meeting Financial Report since joining MVEC in 2023, Vice President of Finance Randy Erdman highlighted the cooperative's Balance Sheet and Income Statement.

Erdman reported member equity grew by 4.9 percent in 2023, which raises the membership's total equity to more than \$85 million. In addition, MVEC's yearly expenses decreased by 3 percent, which helps with rate stabilization. Lastly, the co-op paid out \$1.39 million in Capital Credits last year.

Eighteen \$1,500 scholarships were handed out at the meeting, an increase from the \$1,000 scholarships awarded in previous years. Five scholarships were awarded to area high school seniors in each of MVEC's three districts, drawn before the meeting. Three at-large scholarships were new this year and selected through a drawing among high school seniors in attendance. MVEC's wholesale power provider, Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, awards a \$1,000 scholarship, though the winner has not been announced yet. MVEC's scholarships are funded by the cooperative's unclaimed Capital Credits. This is money that would otherwise be claimed by the state of Minnesota.

Ava Joos, a junior at Chanhassen High School, was announced as MVEC's representative for the 2024 Youth Tour, a national leadership trip to Washington, D.C., sponsored by America's rural electric cooperatives. Caitlyn Bahe of Chanhassen High School was chosen as the runner-up.

New this year was a drawing for five \$100 bill credits. The lucky winners were Charles Strehl (Eden Prairie), James Hunnicut (Victoria), James Laumann (Prior Lake), Steve Berger (New Prague) and Steve Hlavac (New Prague).

Follow-up materials, including a video presentation, election results and scholarship winners, are available at mvec.net/annualmeeting.