



**FREESTATE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE, INC.**

The Outlet

FreeState Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Board of Trustees

Larry Butel
Overbrook

Ralph Phillips
Mayetta

Bill Conley
Delia

Rob Sage
Maple Hill

Karol Lohman
Leavenworth

Matthew Turecek
Valley Falls

Don Montgomery
Burlingame

Mark Wulfkuhle
Lawrence

Jeanine Murphy
Leavenworth

Staff

Christopher Parr
Chief Executive Officer

District Offices

McLouth Office
P.O. Box 70
McLouth, KS 66054-0070

Topeka Office
1100 SW Auburn Rd.
Topeka, KS 66615

Office Hours:
Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Notice to Members

Information about the annual meeting can be found online at WWW.FREESTATE.COOP/ANNUALMEETING. Please note that members attending will receive a \$10 bill credit and gift, while supplies last.

Official Notice of FreeState Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s. Annual Meeting

To the attention of all members of FreeState Electric Cooperative, Inc. organized and existing under and by virtue of Chapter 17, Article 46, of the laws and the State of Kansas.

You and each of you are hereby notified that on the 25th day of April 2023, the annual meeting of said FreeState Electric Cooperative Inc., referred to above, will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the McLouth FreeState Electric

Cooperative offices at 507 N. Union in McLouth, of Jefferson County, to take action on the following matters:

- ▶ The report of officers, trustees and committees.
- ▶ The election of three trustees of the cooperative.
- ▶ All other business which may come before the meeting or any adjournment or adjournments thereof.

LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY
APRIL 10
#ThankALineworker

LINEWORKERS
By the numbers

Tree crew	Topeka	
	McLouth	
Linemen	Topeka	
	McLouth	

92,240
TOTAL HOURS WORKED IN 2022

2023 ANNUAL MEETING

Voting Information

Trustee candidate profiles and how to cast your vote starting April 4

LEARN MORE:
Video bios of each candidate can be viewed at www.freestate.coop/candidate

WEST DISTRICT

LARRY BUTEL (INCUMBENT)

Larry Butel, Overbrook, has been a cooperative member since 1989. He has served on the cooperative board since 2004, serving as treasurer of the FreeState board for the past five years.



Butel is a farmer and rancher, raising cattle, row crops, wheat and hay under Butel Farm, Inc.

He believes representing friends and neighbors in making decisions that guide the direction of the cooperative is important, specifically, to continue to provide reliable electric power, while maintaining safety standards, watching for ways to keep the costs as low as possible and being a good employer and business community member.

"I value the cooperative business model and want to continue to serve our members, helping to manage the co-op for their best interest," he said.

Advocating and educating on behalf of the cooperative, being visible and active in his community, and being available and willing to talk about cooperative topics as they come up is vital to representing members in the boardroom.

Butel is involved in his community as a member of the Overbrook Rotary Club, Cornerstone Family Schools track and field coordinator, Gideons International Osage County Camp member and is a graduate of Osage County Leadership. In the past, he has sponsored the high school youth group and served as Sunday school teacher for Overbrook and Worden United Methodist Church.

He has served in leadership roles for the Kansas State Bank of Overbrook Board of Directors, Cornerstone Family Schools, Wakarusa Watershed Joint No. 35, Gideons International Osage County, Farmer's Cooperative Association, Osage County Farm Service Agency, Osage County Extension Council, Overbrook United Methodist Church, Overbrook Rotary Club, Osage County Livestock Association, Wilshire Investment Club, Kansas Livestock Association and County Director.

WEST DISTRICT

DON MONTGOMERY (INCUMBENT)

Don Montgomery, Burlingame, has been a cooperative member for 33 years. He has served on the board since 2015, serving as secretary of the FreeState board for the past five years.



Montgomery is a retired vocational agriculture teacher, farmer and rancher north of Burlingame.

He has seen many changes in the cooperative and believes we are better and stronger than ever. His goal is to represent all cooperative members and will continue making himself available to members when any questions or concerns arise.

"To educate members, first, you must have the information to answer the questions. Attending board meetings, strategic planning sessions, and director education classes or industry meetings has allowed me to acquire the knowledge to be a source of information," he said. "My priority is the cooperative members and getting them the information they need to answer their questions."

Montgomery is involved in his community serving on the Southeast Kansas State Farm Management Association Board and is a member of the Burlingame Cemetery Board. In the past, he has served the Kansas State Extension State Advisory Board, was president of the Osage County Extension Board and served the Resource Center for Independent Living Board in Osage City. Montgomery has served on the Burlingame volunteer fire department and rescue squad for 12 years, and while in education was a member of the Kansas National Education Association.

His proudest association is with the Burlingame FFA Chapter that he sponsored for 28 years, giving him the opportunity to work with young people and supervise a catering business and the FFA Greenhouse.

He is currently a NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director, holding Director Gold Certification and the Board Leadership Credential.

Voting Guidelines

Members will vote for two trustees in the West District and one trustee in the East District. The candidates who receive the most votes in each district will serve three-year terms as member-elected cooperative trustees. We understand that not every member can attend the annual meeting, but we want to ensure you can participate in the election. Each FreeState member gets only one vote, and every member has three voting options available: vote by mail, vote by proxy or vote at the annual meeting.

Submit Any Co-op Business in Advance

Members with cooperative business to bring to the board of trustees of FreeState Electric Cooperative are asked to fill out an online form found at www.freestate.coop/coopbusiness or call the office to file the business before the 2023 annual meeting. Submissions will be reviewed, and the member will be contacted on how to proceed. The deadline to submit business is Friday, April 21, 2023.

EAST DISTRICT

JEANINE MURPHY (INCUMBENT)



Jeanine Murphy, Leavenworth, is a lifetime cooperative member. She has served on the board for the past 16 years, serving as the FreeState board president for the past five years.

She currently serves as the Director of Curriculum & Instruction for USD No. 449 Easton school district.

Murphy believes active listening and a commitment to learning are critical to serving in the role of trustee and being transparent and accessible to members.

"The electric industry is ever-evolving, and trustees must continue to educate themselves on current research and initiatives," Murphy said. "I take every opportunity to attend classes to keep current as a FreeState trustee."

She has completed the course to become Director Gold Certified by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the education requirements for Credentialed Cooperative Director, and Board Leadership Certification.

Murphy lives in rural Leavenworth, where she is active within her church and lends a helping hand to her grandchildren's school and 4-H activities. Murphy says she is proud of the youth programs FreeState offers because she believes it will pay dividends in the future to help educate our youngest members.

"As a trustee, I represent my family, neighbors, and community to ensure affordable, safe and reliable electricity is available," she said. "Equally important to me is FreeState's concern for communities. As a trustee, I am very proud of what we have done to promote rural Kansas and the organizations that serve the area. I want to continue to support FreeState's efforts in these areas as a trustee."

EAST DISTRICT

JERAL G. COOPER

Jeral Cooper, Tonganoxie, has been a cooperative member for 49 years. He is a self-employed electrician and farmer and served four years in the U.S. Air Force. Cooper has also been a federal government employee serving in various roles as a bank examiner with the F.D.I.C., an IRS revenue agent, and a supervisory auditor with the Department of Energy. Cooper is a certified appraiser, auctioneer, and commercial and real estate property inspector. Cooper also has real estate management, development and building experience and is a professional real estate investor and agent.

Cooper has been involved with the board of directors of the Basehor Historical Society, as treasurer of Basehor PRIDE, treasurer of Community Education, adjutant and quartermaster of Basehor V.F.W., and an elder of Edwardsville Christian Church.

Cooper is the owner-operator of Four J Enterprises, Inc. serving as president and CEO.

"I believe I'd be a definite asset to the co-op as a cooperative board member," Cooper said. "I'll serve members by truthfully answering their questions one-on-one. I've got the time and savvy to work out problems or find the correct solutions to make everyone as happy as possible."

EAST DISTRICT

JACOB THOMAS



Jacob Thomas, Tonganoxie, has been a cooperative member for nine years. Thomas and his wife own and operate JET Produce and Meats, a direct-to-consumer farm located outside Leavenworth.

For the past six years, Thomas has served as president of the USDA County Committee for Jefferson, Leavenworth and Wyandotte counties and vice president of Kansas Specialty Crop Growers Association. He is the treasurer for the Leavenworth Farmers Market and serves as a board member on the State of Kansas Noxious Weed Advisory Committee and the Kansas City Food Hub Cooperative. Thomas previously was treasurer for Leavenworth Extension Council Board.

Owning a small business with high energy demands, Thomas sees firsthand how increasing rates affect a family budget. He wants to serve as a trustee to ensure pricing is fair and accurately charged and see FreeState succeed as a dependable electricity provider. Thomas also understands meeting members where they are in the community and having conversations about the challenges they face.

"Being self-employed gives me the flexibility to meet with my neighbors and fellow members at times convenient to them," said Thomas. "I am always happy to share details about new programs or incentives available to folks in our area."

Thomas is a member of Farm Bureau and, in 2021, was recognized as a "Kansas AG Hero" for service and dedication to the community during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mark Your Calendar for Annual Meeting April 25

The FreeState Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting is **APRIL 25, 2023**, at the McLouth FreeState office (507 N. Union). Members attending will receive a \$10 bill credit and gift (while supplies last) and enjoy a complimentary dinner.

Registration opens and meal service begins at 5:30 p.m. The cooperative business meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. and will be streamed live on the cooperative's website.

At-Large Trustee Election

On Feb. 7, 2023, members of the FreeState nominating committee, appointed by the board of trustees, met to present candidates for election to the FreeState board. The candidates listed will be presented to the membership for consideration at the upcoming meeting and three board members will be elected.

FreeState members will vote by an at-large system. Members can vote for any of the nominees in any district. The candidate receiving the most votes in the East District will be elected to a three-year term. The two candidates receiving the most votes in the West District will both be elected to three-year terms. The 2023 trustee positions up for election are as follows:

West District *(two receiving the most votes will serve as a trustee)*

- ▶ **LARRY BUTEL** (incumbent)
- ▶ **DON MONTGOMERY** (incumbent)

East District *(one receiving the most votes will serve as a trustee)*

- ▶ **JERAL G. COOPER**
- ▶ **JEANINE MURPHY** (incumbent)
- ▶ **JACOB THOMAS**

How Can I Vote?

We understand that not every member can attend the annual meeting, but we want to ensure you can participate in the election. Each FreeState member

gets only one vote per member household or business, and every member has three voting options available. Your name should appear on the account to be eligible to vote.

▶ VOTE BY MAIL

Ballots will be mailed beginning April 4, 2023, and must be returned by April 21 to ensure they are counted. Complete the ballot using the instructions listed and return it as directed in the postage-paid envelope provided. Please return the ballot using the postage-paid envelope. Do not bring ballots to the office.

▶ VOTE AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 25, 2023, at the McLouth FreeState office. Members will be issued a ballot when they register using their service address, if they have not voted by mail before the meeting.

▶ VOTE BY PROXY

If you cannot attend the annual meeting and forget to mail your ballot in time, you can vote by proxy. Complete the proxy form online at www.freestate.coop/annualmeeting and give it to another FreeState member or adult relative in the same home, and they can vote for you.

Candidate biographical information will be included with mailed ballots that arrive in your mailbox. Candidates have also provided a video about themselves and their desire to serve the cooperative. View the candidate videos at www.freestate.coop/candidates.

If I Vote By Mail, Can I Still Attend the Meeting?

Yes. You will not receive another ballot, but you can attend the meeting.

If you have any other questions about the annual meeting, visit WWW.FREESTATE.COOP/ANNUALMEETING or contact our office.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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FreeState Electric Cooperative, Inc., is not subject to the jurisdiction, regulation, supervision and control of the Kansas Corporation Commission, except as specified in K.S.A. 66-104d(f).