

NEWS



Crawford Electric
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Cooperative 

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Strong member participation decides
director election; on-site meeting held**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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BOURBON – Crawford Electric members voted in record numbers again this year, deciding a close three-way race for a District 1 director position and approving a bylaw amendment that will help preserve members' local control of their not-for-profit cooperative.

Election results were announced during the business session of the co-op's 83rd annual meeting of members on Wednesday, Sept. 13. Richard L. "Rick" Adams of Sullivan won a three-way contest with 974 votes to 871 for Dean C. Brandt and 845 for incumbent director Janice Dorson. Adams will serve a three-year term on the co-op's board of directors.

Vote totals came from among 2,604 ballots cast during the monthlong early voting period as well as from among the 145 ballots cast at the meeting. The total of ballots cast (2,749) represents voter participation of just more than 16% of the co-op's eligible members. This strong showing eclipses the 2022 total, which had been the highest vote total in decades.

"We're so thankful to have such supportive members," said Laura Hengstenberg, who organizes and emcees the co-op's annual meeting. "Their interest in voting is fantastic."

The recent trend in increased voter participation can be traced to strong member interest in the early voting period facilitated by industry-leading independent contractor Survey & Ballot Systems (SBS). The early vote ran from Aug. 11 to Sept. 11. SBS conducted a random drawing for electric credits from among all early voters, and member Robert Steelman of Bourbon won the early-vote grand prize of \$500 of free electricity. Most early voters used the secure online options; 215 members used a mail-in ballot.

Online voters had an opportunity to participate in a survey, with almost 93% of responses indicating satisfaction with the process.

"It was easy and quick, and I appreciated the links to candidate bios so I could review those before voting," one member said. "It was easy enough for an 83-year-old who does not use the computer that much," another said.

Members also decided to re-elect unopposed incumbent directors Debbie Willette and Joe Cason, and they approved bylaw Proposition A. The co-op's bylaws will be amended to require that director candidates disclose all sources of funding for their campaigns and to prohibit them from accepting any third-party payments for service on the co-op board.

Of the 357 members and guests who attended the meeting, almost half had already voted in the director election. Nearly perfect weather favored attendees, who enjoyed a breakfast sandwich and blueberry muffin and entertainment by Americana bluegrass quartet As the Crowe Flies. They also participated in random drawings for prizes. Member Pam Stack of Sullivan won the \$300 electric credit grand prize.

In the business session, CEO/General Manager Tony Mallory offered remarks focused on the balance required to keep the co-op reliable, viable and sustainable. He also engaged in an open question-and-answer session with members on topics ranging from concerns about the co-op's margin, debt ratios and power supply, to praise for the Operation Round Up program and outage restoration efforts.

Crawford Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy, a national alliance of locally owned, community-minded electric co-ops with high standards of service. Crawford Electric serves about 20,000 meters along almost 3,000 miles of distribution lines mainly in Crawford, Franklin, Gasconade, Washington and Dent counties.