Join us at our 85th Annual Meeting April 6

Please join us for Meeker Cooperative’s 85th Annual Meeting April 6, at the Cooperative headquarters in Litchfield! This year’s theme is: “Powering the Past; Empowering the Future.”

While it may seem like a different world, but there are people alive today who remember what it was like not to have electricity to read by, to cook a meal with, to keep food cold and better handle farm chores. When the Cooperative formed in 1935, it brought hope and excitement for a better, easier life in the rural households of our region. What was new then is often taken for granted today because we can’t imagine life without it.

Eighty-five years later we celebrate another first: VIBRANT Broadband. Members are just as excited about this fast, reliable internet service as members were 85 years ago about electricity. VIBRANT is making life better and easier for nearly 700 subscribers and counting. People have been able to ditch expensive cable subscriptions and are actually saving money. But even more, VIBRANT has opened up possibilities that didn’t exist before: working from home; online schooling; and streaming only the movies and shows they want to watch.

Welcome to VIBRANT U! Along with exceptional internet service, VIBRANT U offers education about all things internet. Want to learn more about VIBRANT Broadband? Are you “dreaming of streaming” but don’t know where to begin? You can get all your questions answered at a VIBRANT U session. Go from “install” to “know it all” through VIBRANT U!

A VIBRANT U session will be held during the Annual Meeting in the Community/Training Room from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Be sure to attend and bring your questions and your neighbors!

Look at the Annual Meeting Schedule below for the evening’s events and make plans to come celebrate our 85th Anniversary and all things VIBRANT!

See you there!

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**Announcement of Annual Meeting**

Please take notice that the Annual Meeting of the members of Meeker Cooperative Light and Power Association will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 6, 2020, at Meeker Cooperative, 1725 U.S. Hwy. 12 E., Suite 100, Litchfield, Minnesota, for the following purposes:

1. Reading of, and acting upon, the unapproved minutes of the 2019 annual meeting;
2. Receiving and acting upon reports of officers, directors and committees;
3. Electing directors of the Cooperative to fill offices of those whose terms expire on April 6, 2020;
4. Considering any unfinished business and taking up such new business as shall properly come before the meeting and acting on such matters as necessary for the best interest of the Association.

Brad Donnay, Secretary

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**Annual Meeting Agenda**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>5:00 to 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<td>5:00 to 7:00 pm</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
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<td>5:30 to 7:15 pm</td>
<td>Bingo/Face Painting</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 to 7:00 pm</td>
<td>VIBRANT Presentation and Q &amp; A Session. Bring your questions and learn more!</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>Business Meeting</td>
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<td>General Manager’s Report</td>
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<td>Financial Manager’s Report</td>
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<td>Election Results, &amp; More!</td>
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Meeker Cooperative’s 85th Annual Meeting
Get to Know the Director Candidates

Pursuant to Bylaw Article III, Sections 8 and 9, candidates for the board of directors must submit an Application for Director Form at least 120 days prior to the meeting. The Board of Directors will appoint a Qualifications and Election (Q & E) Committee for the purpose of qualifying the candidates for the Board of Directors. The Q & E Committee will “have the authority to place qualified candidates on the ballot for election, and for any district in which there is only one candidate, waive the ballot process and declare the candidate elected.” For this election, only one candidate filed in District 1, District 2 and in District 6. These candidates were deemed eligible and declared elected and their bios were in the February Pioneer. Below are the candidates that filed for the District 5 seat. Members in District 5 will receive a mail ballot to cast their vote for one of these two candidates.

District 5: Fairhaven in Stearns; Southside, French Lake, Cokato in Wright; Dassel in Meeker.

Thomas G. Petschl
1013 Sunrise Circle
Dassel, MN  55325

Thomas G. Petschl has recently moved to the Meeker Cooperative service territory and has been a Co-op member for six months. He is currently retired from a career in the electrical construction industry after 43 years of involvement in all aspects. He currently holds a State of Minnesota Class A Master Electrician’s license.”

Strengths he believes he could bring to the Board include knowledge of the production and distribution of electricity, the time availability to research issues and the willingness to serve on boards for the betterment of others.

Leadership experience Thomas has includes serving on the HRA Board of Park Rapids as a Board member and Chairperson; serving as a Board member on the Library Board and Park Board of Park Rapids; and as a Commissioner on the Planning Commission of Park Rapids and Elk River.

Thomas believes the primary short-term goal of the Cooperative should be finding ways to bring down the cost of power to its members, whether through more efficient use of resources or through innovation. The long-term goal of the Cooperative should be to provide members with the most economical and environmentally-friendly means to generate and transmit power.

Thomas sees that wind and solar power generation are the wave of the future but that they still need refinement to become more economically viable. While Thomas doesn’t believe in too much government control of the energy sector, he does believe that the environment needs to be safeguarded and that we should encourage members to self-generate power.

Stephen Plaisance
26740 733rd Ave.
Dassel, MN  55325

Stephen Plaisance has been a Cooperative member for 10 years and a Meeker Co-op Board member since being appointed in May 2019. He is recently retired from hospital administration.

Strengths Stephen believes he brings to the Board include his willingness and ability to look for long-term solutions and to listen to member concerns.

Leadership positions Stephen has held include the Chamber of Commerce as a Board member and President; Meeker Memorial Hospital as CFO and the MMH Foundation as CFO.

Stephen believes that short-term goals should be identified and viewed with long-term impact in mind.

Long-term goals of the Co-op should include providing stable power and stable pricing.

With regard to environmental regulation and climate change, Stephen believes we should be vigilant to make sure power companies are not contributing to the change and that any governmental regulation brought by the EPA must be followed.

At the same time, Stephen sees that the biggest concern facing the Cooperative at this time is the impact of renewable energy, such as wind and solar, on the future power sources and cost.

Karen Becker, President — District 2
Eden Lake in Stearns; Harvey, Manannah in Meeker

Kevin Issendorf, Vice President — District 4
Litchfield, Greenleaf in Meeker

Brad Donnay, Secretary — District 3
Luxembourg, Maine Prairie, South Maine Prairie in Stearns; Forest Prairie in Meeker

Karl Lundin, Treasurer — District 9
North Kingston, Kingston, Forest City in Meeker

Paul Bugbee — District 1
Roseville, Irving in Kandiyohi; Paynesville in Stearns; Union Grove in Meeker

Stephen Plaisance — District 5
Fairhaven in Stearns; Cokato, Southside, French Lake in Wright; Dassel in Meeker

Mark Larson — District 6
Harrison, Kandiyohi; Gennesee, Fallun, Lake Elizabeth, E. Lake Lillian in Kandiyohi; Cosomos, Acton, Danielson, Swede Grove in Meeker; Brookfield, Boon Lake in Renville

K. Bruce Krueger — District 7
Collinwood, Cedar Mills in Meeker; Stockholm in Wright; Acoma, Hutchinson in McLeod

Larry Huhn — District 8
Dawain, Ellsworth in Meeker

Chad Felstul — Attorney

Meeker Cooperative’s Mission Statement
“To enhance the quality of life of the Cooperative’s Members and Customers by providing safe, reliable, competitively priced energy and other value-added services, while practicing environmental stewardship.”
VIBRANT Broadband saves money and gives better service

“We were struggling with satellite internet that cost us $109 per month. It was slow and if heavy clouds or a storm passed by, we would lose signal, which was very frustrating.

“But with VIBRANT Broadband, we have the lowest speed package of 25 mpbs which costs us $59.95. We're saving a lot of money and it's fast and reliable. It works so well. I called my sister and talked to her about it and now she is getting VIBRANT installed.

“I can't get over the economic benefits VIBRANT will bring to our community and area. It's huge!”

Hugh Wagner
Watkins

Why Choose VIBRANT?

- VIBRANT Broadband is owned by Meeker Coop
- Competitive pricing and fair billing
- Rip Snortin' FAST speeds with two ways to connect
- No data caps, no Hotspot, reliable connection
- We are YOUR neighbors and part of YOUR community

Our members chose high-speed internet as a service they need. Meeker Cooperative built the infrastructure and is now installing high-speed internet service throughout our service area.

Ready to get the most reliable internet connection available? Then call us and schedule today!

Hugh Wagner
Watkins

Tired of slow internet service?

VIBRANT Broadband

Packages starting at:

- Essential Package: Up to 25 Mbps download speed $59.95/mo.
- Streaming Package: Up to 50 Mbps download speed $69.95/mo.
- Ultra Package: Up to 75 Mbps download speed $79.95/mo.
- Extreme Package: Up to 100 Mbps download speed $89.95/mo.

Do you live in the VIBRANT zone?

I want to know more about VIBRANT Broadband high-speed internet for my home or business.

Name ____________________________

Address __________________________

City __________________________

Phone number __________________________

Best Way To Contact Me: [ ] Phone [ ] Text [ ] Email

Best Time to Call: [ ] Weekday AM [ ] Weekday PM/Evening [ ] Weekend [ ] Other

Mail to: Meeker Cooperative • 1725 US Hwy 12 E, Suite 100 • Litchfield, MN 55355
Marathon Water Heaters

Your Cooperative has been selling super-efficient Marathon® water heaters for many years. That’s because they can be the lifelong choice for you and your family!

They offer a Lifetime Tank Warranty because of its no-leak poly construction!

• Eliminates call backs due to durability issues
• Eliminates the need to install a new water heater every 10 years (national average)
• FREE warranty upgrade from 10 years to Lifetime if you register online
• Proven design since 1989
• Unmatched strength, toughness and durability

A full 2-1/2 inches of polyurethane foam insulation minimizes heat loss; there’s only a 5 degree loss over 24 hours! Water stays hotter so you can use less. You save energy and money.

PLUS, if you put your Marathon water heater on Energy Management, you can heat your water with an electric rate nearly half of the regular rate. That saves even more!

Our REBATE of up to $800 on a Marathon makes owning the industry standard much easier!

Is there any reason why NOT to own a Marathon?

Air Source Heat Pumps cut energy costs as much as 72%

Heat pumps represent the best of both worlds: One air source heat pump can provide both cooling and supplemental heating while using 72% less electricity than conventional air conditioners and furnaces.

What’s more, heat pumps that are put on Meeker Cooperative’s Energy Management (or load control) program earn the nearly half-price electric rate. Using less energy PLUS paying less for the energy you use can add up to significant savings to your pocketbook each and every year!

Now add to that a REBATE for putting your heat pump on Energy Management, and you’ve made one of the smartest decisions for your home and family.

You qualify to use less energy, spend less on your electricity and earn a rebate up to $630 if you:

1. Install an air source heat pump through a Qualified Installer ($300 rebate if not QI installation)

2. Have (or install) an automatic back-up system such as a fossil fuel furnace or storage heating unit that provides heat during periods of control

3. Put your ASHP on Energy Management and allow it to be controlled during periods of peak usage

SPECIAL PROMOTION! From April 1 to October 31, 2020, you can earn up to $1,200 REBATE when you install an ASHP and put it on Energy Management!

Want to use heat pump technology but don’t have ductwork in your home? A ductless ASHP is for you. These units use 60% less energy than standard home electric resistance-based heating systems because they:

• transfer instead of generate heat.
• Use sophisticated compressors and fans that can adjust speeds to save energy.

You can also cut cooling costs by 30% compared to conventional room air conditioners.

Call for more information on a traditional or ductless Air Source Heat Pump today at 320-693-3231.

If you want efficient heat with an air source heat pump but don’t have ductwork, this ductless heat pump is perfect for you and also qualifies for a rebate!
Expanding bird habitat in the Twin Cities

Anoka County is growing rapidly, and that increased population has propelled development into areas that were once undisturbed natural wildlife habitat.

Fortunately, several local landowners have stepped up to protect important natural areas that provide needed shelter and food for a range of wild species. Recently the Minnesota Land Trust worked with one of these generous landowners, Great River Energy, to protect a beautiful 80-acre property adjacent to Carlos Avery Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

In an area of outstanding biodiversity and great importance to local wildlife, the property has maintained its natural character despite its proximity to the Twin Cities metro. Next to Carlos Avery WMA, which is public land managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the land helps buffer the WMA from development, which can hamper natural resource management and public hunting opportunities. The land also helps extend protected bird habitat in this Audubon-identified Important Bird Area.

Numerous bird species rely on the WMA, including red-shouldered hawk, sandhill crane, and red-headed woodpecker.

“We’ve had this property since the 1980s, and we were looking for opportunities to ensure the property remains in its natural condition while providing excellent wildlife habitat for future generations to appreciate,” says Rick Heuring, senior field representative at Great River Energy. “When Minnesota Land Trust approached us, we concluded that placing the land into a conservation easement was an ideal solution. As an electric cooperative that serves 28 member-owner electric cooperatives across the state of Minnesota, the triple bottom line – rates, electric reliability, and environmental stewardship – is important to us. This land helps us meet that goal.”

~Minnesota Land Trust

Industry News

Landscape for energy efficiency

The decisions you make about your home’s landscaping can help you stay cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. With spring just around the corner, now is the time to plan your landscaping to save energy and money.

Direct sunlight hitting windows is a major contributor to overheating your home during summer months. By planting trees that block sunlight, you can improve comfort and reduce your air conditioning energy use. If the trees eventually grow tall enough to shield your roof, that’s even better. The most important windows to shade are the ones facing west, followed by windows that face east. Morning and evening sunlight hits the home more directly than mid-day sunlight.

Because of our cold winters, planting deciduous trees that lose their leaves in fall will shield your windows in summer and allow sunlight in during winter to help warm your home. A simple approach that can deliver some shade the first year is to plant a “living wall” of vines grown on a trellis next to your home.

A solid wind break can cut harsh winter winds. The best solution for this is a solid row of trees (preferably evergreen) on the windward side of the home, with shrubs underneath the trees to keep the wind from sneaking through. Planting a row of shrubs a foot from your home can provide efficiency. By stopping air movement, it can form a dead air space around the home that acts as “bonus” insulation. While you’re at it, you could add some foundation insulation if you have a home with a basement or if it’s built on a slab. Because of our humid summers, however, leave several feet of space between landscaping and the home as air flow is necessary to avoid moisture-related home damage.

These are just a few ideas to help you get started. I should also note that as with any landscaping projects that require digging, remember to dial 8-1-1 to ensure all underground utility lines are properly marked and flagged before you start the work. Happy planting!

Adapted from article by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on creating an energy efficiency upgrade checklist, please visit: www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

Deciduous trees can help keep your home cool in summer by blocking the sun, and help warm it by allowing sunlight in during the winter. Photo credit: Marcela Gara, Energy Efficiency Database.

This is an example of a landscaping plan that can reduce energy use for summer cooling and for winter heating.

A row of low landscaping along the house can create a dead air space that provides an extra layer of insulation. Photo Source: Lynn Gallagher.

PLANT FOR EFFICIENCY

This is a simple approach that can deliver some shade the first year to plant a “living wall” of vines grown on a trellis next to your home.

A row of low landscaping along the house can create a dead air space that provides an extra layer of insulation. Photo Source: Lynn Gallagher.
Put yourself in control with SmartHub

Have a high bill than usual? Use SmartHub to check your usage.

Keep a handle on your energy use with Smart Hub to see where your dollars are going!

Check your energy use history to see where spikes in energy use may have led to an increase in your bill.

Have you:
1. Plugged in an electric space heater?
2. Added a heated pet or livestock water heater?
3. Entertained more guests than usual?
4. Noticed colder than normal temperatures?
5. Used a garage heater to work on your car or keep pets warm?

Sign up for Smart Hub and keep tabs on your energy use.

Go to www.meeker.coop. Click on the Smart Hub icon on the lower left of the home page. Put in your Account number, email and you will get a temporary password you can use to log in. From there, change your password and begin to experience greater control!

My Usage

This My Usage section provides several tools for you to analyze your past and current usage, as well as plan and conserve in the future. Compare your use and costs, set markers to monitor changes in your usage over periods of time, and get energy saving tips. Click the tabs below to learn more about these tools.

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Usage Explorer

Usage Explorer gives you a detailed look at your past and current usage, all in one place.

View your usage and weather trends by month, or if available by day or hour.

Use the Usage Explorer tool

Usage Comparison

Usage Comparison lets you compare two bills worth of usage history side by side.

View the differences between this month last year, or other combinations to see how your bill varies each month.

Use the Usage Comparison tool

Average Usage

Average Usage show you what your typical or average usage is for your selected time period.

For example, see your average usage on each day of the week (such as Tuesdays), or over the course of a year. Or see your typical usage in each hour of the day over the course of 2 weeks. Discover when you can save the most on your utility bill.

Use the Average Usage tool
Barb Hagemeier of Eden Valley submitted this month’s winning recipe for Club Cracker Cookies (Favorite Cookie Recipe). She will have $10 credited to her account.

**Club Cracker Cookies**

- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 stick butter

Cover a cookie sheet (with sides) with Club crackers, single layer (the darker the pan the better). Sprinkle pecans over crackers. Melt butter, margarine and add sugar. Bring to a boil and boil one minute, stirring constantly. Pour over the crackers and pecans. Bake at 350 degrees for 8 minutes or until golden brown. Let sit no longer than 1 minute. Remove with a fork onto a rack covered with waxed paper. Cool. Keep in covered container. Note: I made these with all butter, too, and they are great!

**Energy Tour Reservation**

Please reserve ______ places for the Energy Tour on July 15-17, 2020.

Name(s):

____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

Account Number:

Phone:

Number of Reservations at $175 each Total $  

DEADLINE JUNE 19

Return to: Meeker Cooperative, 1725 US Hwy. 12, Suite 100, Litchfield, MN 55355, ATTN: Becky Sorenson. Persons listed above will share a room.

Enjoy an action-packed day at the ballpark and leave the driving to us! See the Minnesota Twins battle the Baltimore Orioles. Game time is 12:10 p.m. We’ll leave the Meeker Co-op parking lot at 9:30 a.m. to enjoy time to shop for souvenirs and grab some food before the first pitch.

**Meeker Cooperative Bus Trip: Twins vs. Baltimore Orioles at Target Field! — 12:10 p.m., Wednesday, May 20, 2020.**

Bus departs from Meeker Co-op at 9:30 a.m.

Name(s): _______________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________

Acct #: ___________________________ Phone: ________________________

# of reservations: _______ @ $45 = $ ___________  Deadline: April 22

Make checks payable to Meeker Cooperative. Clip and send this form to: Meeker Cooperative, 1725 US Hwy. 12, Suite 100, Litchfield, MN 55355

ATTN: Becky Sorenson

**Club Cracker Cookies**

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**For April, submit your favorite Cake Recipe to:**

Meeker Cooperative, ATTN: Becky Sorenson, 1725 US Hwy 12, Suite 100, Litchfield, MN 55355
Pioneer Ads — Free want ad service for members. Please limit your ad to nine words, one word per line. One phone number please. Use the coupon below or pick one up in our office. Ads will be printed for one month only. Submit again for addtl. months. Three ads per member per month limit. Include your name/address, which will be used for identification purposes. Ads received by March 27 will be included in the April issue.

Please run this ad in the next Pioneer

Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
Telephone number: ____________________________

Remember to limit your ad to nine words!

1 _______ 2 _______ 3 _______
4 _______ 5 _______ 6 _______
7 _______ 8 _______ 9 _______

For Sale - Miscellaneous

- Antique triple wood and iron barn pulley lift. $69. 922-239-9945.
- Carhart insulated bibs, worn once $30; London Fog parka $15. 320-275-0120.
- Baffin Snogoose felt-lined ladies snow boots, sz. 10. 320-626-3148.
- RCA VCR/Magnavox 19” color TV. 320-626-3148.
- Sun-Mar Excel composting toilet, elec., used 3 seasons. $200. 612-968-3283.
- Antique “Sew Gem” sewing machine/cabt. Works. 29” H x 17” D x 33” W. 320-275-2529.
- Wurlitzer home organ w/bench. 35” H x 44” W x 23” D. Works. 320-275-2529.
- Pool table slate (3 pieces), abt. 52”x44”x1” each. Make offer. 320-905-6597.
- Estate 825 snow blower, 2-stage, elec. start, tire chain, cab, Gd. cond. $200/o. 320-453-8963.
- Productive land; 2 parcels, 74 acres total. 320-296-6829.

For Sale - Agricultural

- Antique fireplace log holder. Best offer. 952-938-8269.
- NordiCrack ski machine, great cond. $100. 320-493-5080.
- Electric motors (used) 10 hp Baldor, 5 hp Ballor, 5 hp Leeson. 320-979-6313.
- 5.5 cubic foot chest freezer. 320-380-4884.
- Sport trading cards, 1000+ ’90s. 320-339-5014.
- Siphon-feed paint spray gun, new in box. $30. 320-339-5014.
- HB microwave 900 watt, exc. cond. $30 320-693-8136.
- Sisco fold/roll cafeteria table, 60”. $150. 320-275-2529.
- LTD. Edition print “Memories” by Rose Edin; 1900s print of Dassel elevator, $75. 320-275-2529.
- Buzz saw blade, 28” diameter. $30. 320-857-2099.
- 1936 Twin City MM tractor, strong runner, nice. $2,150. 320-276-8575.
- Spike tooth harrow. 320-293-1395.
- Six-man dome tent. 320-310-6998.
- Wood bunk beds or single beds with good mattresses. 320-275-2529.
- 5 or 10 acre plot to build a storage shed. 320-221-0337.
- Ice fishing spears, old or new. 651-323-8337.
- Collecting Lake Superior Agates. 320-493-7555.
- 2 goats: 1 female Boer, 1 male cross, both to same home. 320-980-1759.
- Interior painting, wall paper removal. Insurance, references. 320-583-6210.
- A & F Painting, restoration. We do it all-interior/exterior. Insured. 763-200-3970.

For Sale - Wanted

- 2 goats: 1 female Boer, 1 male cross, both to same home. 320-980-1759.

For Sale - Give Away

- 2 goats: 1 female Boer, 1 male cross, both to same home. 320-980-1759.

For Sale - Service

- 2 goats: 1 female Boer, 1 male cross, both to same home. 320-980-1759.

For Sale - Rent

- 5 or 10 acre plot to build a storage shed. 320-221-0337.
- Ice fishing spears, old or new. 651-323-8337.
- Collecting Lake Superior Agates. 320-493-7555.