

# PIONEER



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The Pioneer Newsletter is the official Cooperative publication.  
Meeker Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## MORE THAN A MEETING, IT'S YOUR CO-OP IN ACTION

### Join Us Wednesday, May 20 at Meeker Energy Headquarters

#### Annual Meeting

4:00 p.m.

#### Member Appreciation Event

4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

*Meeker Energy is built on the strength of its members and subscribers, and your participation plays an important role in shaping your Cooperative's future. As a member-owned organization, we are guided by the people we serve, and the Annual Meeting is a key opportunity to share updates, ask questions, and stay connected.*

Our Annual Meeting and Member & Subscriber Appreciation Event is more than just a gathering. It is an opportunity for engagement, community connection, and it's a chance to learn more about the services and programs that support your home, business, and daily life.

We invite you to join us on Wednesday, May 20, at Meeker Energy's Headquarters. The Annual Meeting will begin at 4:00 p.m., followed by the Member & Subscriber Event from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Spend the evening connecting with your Co-op, exploring new technologies, and enjoying great food and family-friendly activities in a welcoming, come-and-go setting.

*Continued on page 2.*

# ANNUAL MEETING CONTINUED...

## Engage and Explore

Throughout the event, you will have the chance to visit informational booths and interactive displays, including:

- **Meet Your Director:** Connect with your Co-op leadership and ask questions
- **VIBRANT Broadband:** Learn about high-speed internet options and services available in your area
- **Energy Management:** Discover ways to maximize efficiency and take advantage of available programs
- **Heartland Security:** Explore security solutions for your home or business
- **Electric Experience:** Get hands-on with electric yard tools, electric bikes, and electric scooters
- **AI and 3D Printing Demonstration:** See emerging technology in action and how innovation is shaping the future

## Food and Refreshments

A great event would not be complete without great food. Enjoy Wattenhofer grilled pork chops along with the fixings



from Any Thyme Catering served from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Whether you stay for the full event or stop by for a quick visit, we invite you to grab a plate and enjoy.

## Fun for Kids and Families

Families are welcome, and there will be plenty to keep kids entertained. Kids will enjoy a bouncy house and petting zoo, and three lucky kids will take home an electric scooter in a special giveaway. It is a great opportunity to bring the whole family and make it an evening out.

And back by popular demand, Bingo returns for another year of fun, prizes, and friendly competition. Join in for a chance to win.

## Join Us

This is your Cooperative, and your participation matters. 02-22-401 Come enjoy an evening of appreciation, learning, and connection while spending time with fellow members, subscribers, and Co-op staff. We look forward to seeing you on May 20 at Meeker Energy.



# ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

## MEEKER ENERGY NOTICE OF 2026 ANNUAL MEETING

Please take notice that the Annual Meeting of the Members of Meeker Energy will be held at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, at Meeker Energy, 1725 US Hwy 12 E, Litchfield, MN 55355 for the following purposes:

1. Reading of, and acting upon, the unapproved minutes of the 2025 Annual Meeting;
2. Receiving and acting upon reports of Officers, Directors and Committees;
3. Electing Directors to fill offices of those whose terms expire on May 20, 2026;
4. Acting upon the proposed changes to the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Meeker Energy;
5. 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 Meeker Energy.

Karen Becker, Secretary

## GET TO KNOW THE CANDIDATES

The following pages provide a summary of answers from the required Application Form that candidates submitted. Nominees in Districts 1, 2, and 6 were unopposed, so they have been declared elected by the Qualifications and Election Committee.

## UPCOMING MEMBER VOTE

Member-owners will soon be asked to vote on proposed updates to Meeker Energy's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. These governing documents help define how your electric cooperative is structured and how decisions are made on behalf of the membership. The proposed changes are intended to modernize language, improve clarity, and ensure alignment with current cooperative practices and state requirements, while continuing to reflect the cooperative principles of local control and member ownership.

**Voting will take place by mail ballot.** Please watch your mail for a ballot the week of April 13. Please follow the instructions on the ballot to mark your vote and return it in the envelope provided to Pemberton Law. Proposed revisions will be included in the mailing with the ballot or may be viewed through your SmartHub account or by coming in to the office. Any specific questions should be directed to [articles-bylaws@meeker.coop](mailto:articles-bylaws@meeker.coop).

# BOARD OF DIRECTOR CANDIDATES 2026



**DISTRICT 1:**  
**Paul Bugbee (Incumbent)**

29659 Queen Bee Lane, Paynesville, MN 56367

Paul Bugbee is a long-time Meeker Energy member from Paynesville Township with more than 26 years of Cooperative membership. He is the owner and operator of Bug-Bee Hive Resort and brings both business experience and a strong understanding of member needs to his candidacy.

Paul has extensive involvement with Meeker Energy, including participation in load management programs, annual meetings, and member engagement opportunities such as Co-op 101 and Cooperative tours. He has previously served three terms on the Meeker Energy Board of Directors, including leadership roles as Treasurer, Secretary, and Vice President.

Beyond the Cooperative, Paul has decades of leadership experience in community organizations. He has served with the Paynesville Area Community Foundation, Koronis Lake Association, and Minnesota Hospitality Association, contributing in both board and officer roles.

Paul believes in increasing awareness of peak energy use, encouraging conservation, and exploring innovative solutions such as battery storage and new technologies to manage costs. He is focused on balancing reliability, affordability, and future energy independence while continuing to grow Cooperative services like broadband and subsidiary offerings.



**DISTRICT 2:**  
**Karen Becker (Incumbent)**

38600 MN Hwy 22 S, Eden Valley, MN 55329

Karen Becker of Eden Valley is a self-employed dairy farmer and a 35-year member of Meeker Energy. She brings a strong history of service, leadership, and community involvement to her candidacy.

Karen has been actively engaged with the Cooperative over the years, attending annual meetings, member appreciation events, and industry-related trainings. She previously served on the Meeker Energy Board of Directors for 15 years, providing her with deep knowledge of Cooperative governance and operations.

Her community involvement includes leadership roles with local organizations such as the Litchfield Area Peanut Butter & Milk Festival, Assumption Church, and Hands of Friendship Quilt Guild, where she has served in chair and vice chair positions.

Karen describes her strengths as being open-minded, forward-thinking, and focused on understanding and representing member needs. She is committed to ensuring reliable service while exploring future energy solutions and maintaining fairness in programs such as net metering. She values practical decision-making that supports both today's members and future generations.



**DISTRICT 6:**  
**Neil Pearson (Incumbent)**

16935 545th Avenue, Grove City, MN 56243

Neil Pearson is a Grove City farmer and a Meeker Energy member for more than 40 years.

Neil has been actively involved with Meeker Energy through annual meetings, member programs, and Cooperative education opportunities. He has also completed required board training and brings prior experience serving on professional and community boards, including leadership roles with agricultural and church organizations.

His background in agriculture and cooperative systems provides a practical, hands-on perspective. Neil emphasizes teamwork, thoughtful decision-making, and a strong commitment to doing what is best for the membership.

Neil's priorities include maintaining reliable, safe, and affordable energy while continuing to invest in infrastructure and grid improvements. He recognizes the importance of balancing traditional and emerging energy sources, managing rising costs, and supporting the expansion of services like broadband in rural areas.

He believes Meeker Energy should continue to evolve to meet member needs while staying grounded in its cooperative mission of service.



Four location numbers are hidden within this Pioneer. If you find your number and claim it by calling Meeker Energy before April 30, you will have \$10 credit to your account. When you call and verify your information is correct in our system, you will also receive an additional bill credit equal to one month's output from a Member Solar Panel.

# \$14,350 AWARDED THROUGH OPERATION ROUND UP®

Meeker Energy members and VIBRANT subscribers are once again making a meaningful impact close to home. Through Operation Round Up®, the Meeker Cooperative Electric Trust Board recently approved \$14,350 in grants to support local organizations working to strengthen our communities.

Operation Round Up® makes giving back simple. 10-21-17 By rounding up their monthly electric or broadband bill to the nearest dollar, participating members and subscribers turn small change into lasting impact. When combined, those contributions provide vital support to area nonprofits, schools, and community programs.

“Every time our members round up, they’re helping local organizations,” said Trust Chair Laura Niece. “It may seem small, but together those contributions make a real difference in our communities.”

As a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative, Meeker Energy is committed to enhancing quality of life across the communities it serves. Operation Round Up® is a powerful example of that commitment in action, turning everyday generosity into meaningful, local support.

The Trust Board meets three times each year to review applications and award funding. The remaining deadlines for 2026 grant applications are July 2 and November 5. For details and application materials, visit [www.meeker.coop](http://www.meeker.coop).

## MARCH 2026 RECIPIENT LIST

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

Cokato Food Shelf .....	\$250
Eden Valley Food Shelf .....	\$750
Eden Valley Valley Daze .....	\$500
Forest City Threshers .....	\$1,400
Habitat for Humanity, West Central MN .....	\$1,000
Kandiyohi County Food Shelf .....	\$400
Kimball Food Shelf .....	\$750
Litchfield Watercade, Inc. ....	\$500
Living at Home/BN Prog., Paynesville - Rose Center .....	\$250
McLeod Emergency Food Shelf .....	\$350
Meeker County Food Shelf .....	\$2,000
Meeker County Health and Human Services .....	\$1,000
Paynesville Community Services .....	\$750
The Link of Northern Kandiyohi County .....	\$250

### EDUCATION AND YOUTH

Litchfield Satellites 4-H Club .....	\$400
Post Prom, ACGC .....	\$500
Post Prom, Eden Valley-Watkins .....	\$500
Post Prom, Litchfield High School .....	\$500
Rise & Roam, Inc. ....	\$1,550
Robotics Team, Hutchinson High School .....	\$750

LEARN MORE ABOUT OPERATION ROUND UP AT:  
[www.meeker.coop/operationroundup](http://www.meeker.coop/operationroundup)



Spring brings big temperature swings, and power lines feel it too. Cold mornings and warm afternoons cause lines to expand and contract throughout the day. This natural movement is normal, but it is one reason crews regularly inspect and maintain equipment to keep your power reliable in changing conditions.

## MEMBER NEWS

### DON'T MISS THE 2026 ENERGY TOUR



There's still time to reserve your seat for Meeker Energy's 2026 Energy Tour, June 10–12. This three-day motor-coach trip offers a behind-the-scenes look at how electricity is generated and delivered to your home.

Travel with fellow members to Beulah, North Dakota, for tours of 11-07-203 Freedom Mine and Antelope Valley Station, owned by Basin Electric Power Cooperative. You'll also enjoy visits to the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, Fort Mandan, and the North Dakota Heritage Center and State Museum.

The \$200 cost includes transportation, lodging, most meals, tours, and a special dinner and presentation.

Space is limited, and the May 20 registration deadline is approaching. Reserve your seat today.



Scan the QR code to register or visit:  
[www.meeker.coop/tour26](http://www.meeker.coop/tour26).





## CONTACT US

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Brad Donnay, President — District 3

Luxemburg, Maine Prairie,  
South Maine Prairie in Stearns;  
Forest Prairie in Meeker

### Paul Bugbee, Vice-President — District 1

Roseville, Irving in Kandiyohi;  
Paynesville in Stearns;  
Union Grove in Meeker

### Randy Bryant, Treasurer — District 7

Collinwood, Cedar Mills in Meeker;  
Stockholm in Wright;  
Acoma, Hutchinson in McLeod

### Karen Becker, Secretary — District 2

Eden Lake in Stearns;  
Harvey, Manannah in Meeker

### Barbara Ann Nelson — District 4

Litchfield, Greenleaf in Meeker

### Ben Beckman— District 5

Fairhaven in Stearns; Cokato, Southside,  
French Lake in Wright; Dassel in Meeker

### Neil Pearson — District 6

Harrison, Kandiyohi, Genessee, Fahlnun,  
Lake Elizabeth, E. Lake Lillian in Kandiyohi;  
Cosmos, Acton, Danielson, Swede Grove  
in Meeker; Brookfield, Boon Lake in Renville

### Jerome Wosmek — District 8

Darwin, Ellsworth in Meeker

### Jesse Turck — District 9

North Kingston, Kingston,  
Forest City in Meeker

### Chad Felstul, Attorney

## MORE NEWS & CLASSIFIEDS ONLINE

Keep up-to-date with your Cooperative in-between issues of the Pioneer and browse our classifieds online at:  
[www.meeker.coop/news](http://www.meeker.coop/news).



## TWINS GAME BUS TRIP

JUNE 3, 2026 | \$75 PER PERSON

We are excited to invite you to join us for a fun-filled day at Target Field to watch the Minnesota Twins play against the Chicago White Sox on Wednesday, June 3! Our bus trip will take you straight to the stadium, without having to worry about traffic, parking, or navigating downtown Minneapolis.

Your ticket includes a comfortable and convenient ride to the game, a ticket to the game, and all-inclusive ballpark fare (including hot dogs, burgers, chicken tenders, popcorn, chips, soda, water, juice, and milk). Plus, you'll have plenty of time to socialize with your fellow fans and get excited for the game!

We'll depart from the Meeker Energy parking lot at 10:00 a.m. and arrive at Target Field in 08-32-104 plenty of time to catch the first pitch at 12:40 p.m. After the game, we'll return to Meeker Energy.

**Questions? Contact us at (320) 693-3231**



Scan the QR code or visit [www.meeker.coop/twingsgame26](http://www.meeker.coop/twingsgame26) to learn more and sign up!

Please send or drop off your payment before May 15.  
Meeker Cooperative, Attn: Michele Boreen  
1725 US HWY 12, STE 100  
Litchfield, MN 55355



## Win Your Way to the Twins Game!

### HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

Sign up for Vibrant Broadband (200 Mbps or higher) or refer a friend and you could win two tickets to the Meeker Energy Twins Game Bus Trip!

- **June 3, 2026 Twins vs. White Sox Game**
- **Includes Bus Ride + Game Ticket**
- **All-Inclusive Ballpark Food and Drinks**
- **\$75 Value Per Ticket**

**ENTER BY APRIL 30, 2026**

[www.vibrantbroadband.com/twings26](http://www.vibrantbroadband.com/twings26)

*\*Promotion ends April 30, 2026.*

**SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE!**

