



**fairfield.coop**

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Outages are handled by an automated outage reporting system. Please follow instructions. The system will automatically report the outage and a crew will be dispatched.

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## The need for new power generation

**I'M THE KIND OF GUY** who doesn't like to see the needle anywhere near the E on my gas gauge when I'm driving.

I want to fill up way before the warning light comes on. I wish it were as easy to refuel our supply of electricity to meet our state's increasing demand for power.

Hundreds of thousands of South Carolinians likely felt stranded on the side of the road Christmas Eve of 2022. That's when several days of freezing temperatures drove the demand for electricity to record highs. As a result, many utilities implemented the kind of temporary, planned power outages we aren't used to seeing in South Carolina rolling blackouts.

Fortunately, co-op members in our state didn't have their power cut off. But I can tell you that the needle was as close to E as it could go that weekend. And the risk of running empty still remains. The North America Electric Reliability Corporation recently warned about an elevated risk of "insufficient operating reserves" when demand spikes across the grid. National Rural Electric Cooperative Association CEO Jim Matheson called these threats to reliability unacceptable and said that "America's ability to keep the lights on has been jeopardized." I agree.

How have we reached this point? Demand for electricity is growing by leaps and bounds due to South Carolina's rapid population growth and the state's success in recruiting new industry. Unfortunately, South Carolina hasn't succeeded in building new, large-scale power plants to keep up. The issues that led to the abandonment of the new units at the V.C. Summer nuclear power plant have left us even further behind. And proposed environmental regulations from the EPA are pushing utilities to permanently shutter coal- and natural gas-fired power plants before they can build adequate replacement generation.

What can we do to solve this problem? We need to upgrade our power grid by

### Scholarships available for high school seniors

**FAIRFIELD ELECTRIC** is offering eight \$1,000 Touchstone Energy Scholarships to high school seniors in the cooperative's service area.

Visit [fairfield.coop/scholarships](https://fairfield.coop/scholarships) for details and to apply. The application deadline is Friday, March 8.

building new power plants, pipelines and transmission lines. We must streamline burdensome permitting processes that hold these projects hostage for years and years. We have to untangle supply chain bottlenecks that threaten our ability to accommodate new development.

So what actions are we taking? We are raising the alarm about the need for more power generation. We are reaching out to lawmakers and providing them with the information they need to push this issue forward. We are piloting energy efficiency and demand-reduction programs to help save every watt of electricity when we face power shortages.

Finally, we are informing you—our members. It's important that you understand these challenges in case we ever need to ask you to conserve energy on a frigid winter morning. We hope you will join us in creating awareness of this issue, both in conversations with your neighbors and with your elected officials.

We cannot sit back with the needle on E and hope we come across a gas station. We must act soon to upgrade our power grid. Otherwise, jobs and industry will flee South Carolina, and blackouts may become a routine part of our lives. That is a future we cannot accept. We must be proactive and speak up about the urgent need for new power generation now.

**BRUCE G. BACON**  
Chief Executive Officer

## A reminder of his 'why'

BY JOSH P. CROTZER

WHEN MICHAEL ROBINSON is working on a power line, he doesn't need to pull out his smartphone to see photos of the people he loves. He can just look at the canvas bag that holds his rubber gloves.

Robinson, a line technician for Fairfield Electric Cooperative, was recently selected as the winner of the co-op's My Why contest. South Carolina's electric cooperatives partnered with their materials and equipment provider Cooperative Electric Energy Utility Supply (CEEUS) to sponsor the My Why contest. Cooperative lineworkers across the state received bags donated by CEEUS to decorate with messages and art to inspire a focus on safety. Lineworkers wear rubber gloves when they are working on or near energized conductors.

Robinson's bag features images of his wife Hayley from a wedding photo, his son Caleb in his baseball uniform and the logo of the Atlanta Braves, whom the family sees play every year. Robinson also illustrated a silhouetted scene of a lineman on a power pole during a storm.

"It's a reminder that I have things that I need to go home for," says Robinson. "I need to make it back for them because I don't want to miss anything."

The contest reinforces a message that safety manager Chris Glenn stresses to his colleagues at Fairfield Electric—safe practices must begin long before you put the gloves on and last beyond taking them off.

"Safety starts as soon as you kiss



PROVIDED BY MICHAEL ROBINSON

Being a part of his son Caleb's baseball games with his wife, Haley, is one of Robinson's most important "whys."

everybody goodbye," says Glenn. "Let's do everything we can to get you home the same way you left. That's our culture."

## Ready for an experience you won't forget?

Your co-op has two amazing trips planned this summer. Juniors: Apply for the Washington Youth Tour. Sophomores: Apply for the Cooperative Youth Summit.

**Juniors:** Experience Washington, D.C., with hundreds of students from across South Carolina and the country, meeting lawmakers and touring all the sights. Your electric co-op will cover your round-trip plane ticket, tours and meals. In other words, it's all free!

**Sophomores:** Experience South Carolina's capital like never before. Tour the Statehouse, meet lawmakers and see how co-ops are preparing for our state's energy future. Plus, there's plenty of fun with visits to popular Columbia attractions like Riverbanks Zoo & Garden. Your electric co-op will cover all your expenses.

We've made it easy to apply for either FREE trip. Apply today!



Washington Youth Tour: June 15-20, 2024



Cooperative Youth Summit: July 15-18, 2024



Applications available: [fairfield.coop/youthsummit](https://fairfield.coop/youthsummit) and [fairfield.coop/youthtour](https://fairfield.coop/youthtour)  
Application Deadline: February 16, 2024



# Fairfield Electric Cooperative Summary of Bylaws

## Pertaining to Membership, Annual Meeting, Board Representation and Election Procedure

### Section 3.01. Annual Meeting

For the purpose of electing Trustees, hearing and passing upon reports covering the previous fiscal year, and transacting such other business as may properly come before the meeting, the annual meeting of the members shall be held during May, June, July, or August of each year at such place in one of the counties, in South Carolina within which the Cooperative serves on such date and beginning at such hour as the Board shall from year to year fix.

The annual meeting may be conducted with members present or electronically without members present as the board may determine appropriate. In the event the meeting is conducted electronically, the Board must make arrangements to enable members to observe the proceedings by means of generally available technology.

It shall be the responsibility of the Board to make adequate plans and preparations for and to encourage member attendance at the annual meeting. Failure to hold the annual meeting at the designated time and place shall not constitute a forfeiture or dissolution of the Cooperative.

### Section 3.07. Order of Business for Member Meetings

The President, or such other person as the members of the Board may designate, who presides at any meeting of members shall first declare such meeting be open and in session at the place, day, and hour established for such meeting, as stated in the notice of the meeting delivered to the members.

After opening the meeting, the order of Business at any annual meeting of the members and, so far as possible, at all other meetings of the members, shall be:

- (1) Registration of members
- (2) Voting to elect the Board members
- (3) Receive report from the Secretary on the number of members present and registered to determine the existence of a quorum.
- (4) Reading of the notice of the meeting and proof of due publication or mailing thereof, or the waiver of notice of the meeting, as the case may be.
- (5) Reading of unapproved minutes of previous meetings of the members and taking necessary action thereon.
- (6) Presentation and consideration of information and reports by officers, trustees, and committees.
- (7) Unfinished Business
- (8) New Business
- (9) Adjournment

The Board may from time-to-time establish a different order of business.

### Section 4.03. Election

In respect of each of the nine single-member voting districts, one (1) trustee shall be elected in each district by the voting members residing therein. At each annual meeting of the members or in voting conducted in advance of the annual meeting, trustees shall be elected by secret ballot by the members residing in that trustee's voting district. The two District At Large trustees shall be elected by secret ballot by all of the members.

At each annual meeting of the members or in voting conducted in advance of the annual meeting, Trustees shall be elected by the members from among natural members and the designees of organizational members; provided, that, when there is no contest for the representation of a particular trustee position, secret balloting may be dispensed with.

If only one individual is nominated to run for election for a Trustee position scheduled for election by Members, then the individual presiding at the Member Meeting may announce that the nominated individual is elected by acclamation and no vote is required.

### Section 4.04. Tenure

The persons named as Board members, at previous meetings of the members, shall compose the Board until their successors have been elected and shall have qualified and shall be classified as Class "A", "B" and "C".

Beginning with the Annual Meeting in 2022, Class "A" Board members, shall be elected by members of their district and shall serve a term of three (3) years or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The Class "A" Board members shall consist of four (4) members:

- ▶ one to be a resident of District 1; one to be a resident of District 2;
- ▶ one to be a resident of District 3; and one to be a District at Large member.

At the Annual Meeting in 2023, Class "B" Board members shall be elected by members of their district and shall serve a term of three (3) years or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The Class "B" Board members shall consist of four (4) members:

- ▶ one to be a resident of District 4; one to be a resident of District 5;
- ▶ one to be a resident of District 6; and one to be a District at Large member

At the Annual Meeting in 2024, Class "C" Board members shall be elected by members of their district and shall serve a term of three (3) years or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The Class "C" Board members shall consist of three (3) members:

- ▶ one to be a resident of District 7; one to be a resident of District 8; and one to be a resident of District 9



Thereafter, at each annual meeting of the members, Directors shall be elected for three (3) year terms with respect to the directorships, which are expiring, and therefore will need to be filled at such meeting. If for any reason an election of Trustees shall not be held at an annual meeting of the members duly fixed and called pursuant to these Bylaws, such election may be held at an adjournment of such meeting or at a subsequently held special or regular meeting of the members. Failure of an election for a given year shall allow the incumbents whose directorships would have been voted on to hold over only until the next member meeting at which a quorum is present.

#### Section 4.05. Trustee Districts

The entire territory served by the Cooperative shall be divided by the Board of Trustees into nine (9) Trustee Districts to be implemented and used for trustee elections at the annual meeting of members beginning in 2022 known as: District 1, District 2, District 3, District 4, District 5, District 6, District 7, District 8, and District 9. The Districts at Large consists of the entire area served by the Cooperative.

Each district will consist of the area served and designated on the map of the service area served by the Cooperative;

For specific reference as to the description and boundaries of each of the nine (9) districts, reference is made to the map which bears the signed approval of the Board and filed in the office of the Chief Executive Officer of the Cooperative.

Trustee District descriptions, at every six (6) year intervals, the Board not less than one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the earliest date on which the annual member meeting may be scheduled by these Bylaws to be held, shall review and alter as necessary the Districts to adjust substantial inequitable factors regarding the residence of the members, the geographic locations, or other equitable considerations and shall change and re-describe one or more Districts accordingly, in which event, the map describing the boundaries of each of the Districts as re-described and bears the signed approval of the Board may be examined by any member in the office of the Chief Executive Officer of the Cooperative.

After such redefinition of the Districts, these Bylaws shall have been effectively amended accordingly, except that the areas embraced within such Districts may be changed by amendment of these Bylaws by the members from time-to-time in order to establish the most equitable and geographical representation of the Board; provided that any change so made by action of the Board shall be in full force and effect until at least the completion of the election of directors at the annual meeting of the members first held in accordance with such changes effectuated by the Board; provided further that no such change, may take effect so as to compel the vacancy of any director's office prior to the time that director's term would normally expire.

#### Section 4.06. Nominations for Trustees

Nominations for Trustees to be elected shall be as follows:

##### 1. Nomination by Committee on Nominations

- (a) The Board must name a Committee on Nominations not less

than ninety (90) or more than one hundred twenty (120) days before the date of the meeting of the members at which trustees are to be elected.

- (b) The Committee on Nominations must have eleven (11) members of the Cooperative, none of whom may be an existing Cooperative employee, agent, officer, trustee or known candidate for trustee.
- (c) An incumbent Trustee seeking re-election may not influence in any way or by any action the nomination process. An incumbent Trustee seeking re-election must be recused from participation in appointing the Committee. Members from the district of an incumbent trustee seeking re-election must be selected without the input or participation of the incumbent trustee. No Trustee may appoint, direct, or cause a family member to become a member of the Committee. As used in these Bylaws, "family member" or "close relative" means a member of a person's household, or one related by blood, marriage, legal relationship, or custom.
- (d) Nominating Committee members must be appointed so that each of the Cooperative's nine (9) Single Member Trustee Districts shall have at least one (1) and the District At Large shall have at least two (2) members on the Committee. The Committee shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative at least sixty (60) days before the meeting of the members or for the same period in advance of the time established for early voting a list of nominations for trustees to be elected, listing separately the nominee or nominees with respect to each district from which a trustee is to be elected and listing any nominee or nominees for Trustee-at-Large to be elected.
- (e) The Committee on Nominations may nominate more candidates than there are trustees to be elected, with the nomination specifying in which district or at-large seat the nomination is made.

##### 2. Nomination by Petition of Members

- (a) Members of the Cooperative, acting not less than sixty (60) days prior to the meeting of the members, or the commencement of early voting may make by petition additional nominations.
  - (i) A nominating petition must be signed by not fewer than one percent (1%) of the members of the Cooperative as determined by a census of members on the first business day of the calendar year in which the election is to be held.
  - (ii) The petition in addition to containing the signatures of the required number of members shall also contain the printed or typed name of the member and the address at which the member receives electrical service from the Cooperative.
- (b) Upon verification that the petition contains the requisite number of valid signatures of the members of the Cooperative and verification that the candidate is qualified as provided in Section 4.02 by the Chairman of the Board, or his designee, the candidate nominated by petition shall be added and listed as a nominee.
- (c) The Chairman of the Board, or his designee, shall add and list a candidate nominated by petition upon:
  - (i) Verification that the petition contains the requisite number of

valid signatures one percent (1%) or more of the members of the Cooperative and

- (ii) Verification that the candidate meets the qualifications provided in Section 4.02.
- (iii) The Board of Trustees shall by policy, adopt a process allowing petition signatures to be collected electronically.
- (iv) A nominating petition must designate what trustee district the nomination is made for or if the nomination is for an "at large" district nomination. The petition must contain a statement indicating that the member signing the petition is in support of the nomination.
- (v) Any person signing on behalf of an organizational member must demonstrate the authority as the person to sign on behalf of the organizational member.

### 3. Information for Background Check and Potential Conflicts of Interest

A person seeking nomination for a trustee position must submit to the Board, not less than ten (10) days of the meeting of the Nominating Committee, whether through the Nominations Committee or by petition information sufficient to enable a background check to be conducted and any information relating to the person's eligibility to serve as a Trustee.

### 4. Notification of Members of Nominee or Nominees

The Chief Executive Officer of the Cooperative shall mail to the members with the notice of the member meeting, or separately, but at least ten (10) days before the date of the member meeting or the commencement of early voting for the meeting, a statement listing the name and address of each nominee.

- (a) The statement must identify those candidates nominated by the Committee on Nominations and those nominated by petition, if any.
- (b) The statement must identify the seat, whether district or at-large, for which the nomination is made.

## Section 4.07. Election of Board Members

The Secretary shall be responsible for providing ballots which may include electronic balloting to be used in the election of the Board members at each annual meeting of the members. The ballots shall list only the names of those candidates who were duly nominated either by the Nominating Committee or nominated by Petition.

Each member of the Cooperative who registers at an annual meeting of the members within a minimum of four (4) hours after the opening of the meeting or appears at an early voting site during the hours of operation of the early voting site shall be entitled to vote for one candidate from the member's voting district and District At Large (when applicable), at the meeting. Each member shall cast his votes by marking his ballot. At any annual meeting of the members at which the total number of members registering at such meeting or voting at an early voting site should equal or exceed the number of members required for a quorum, as defined by these Bylaws, then the election of Board members held at that meeting shall be valid and the candidate from each district, or District at Large, receiving the highest

number of votes shall be duly elected to the Board. If the total number of members who register at an annual meeting of the members within four (4) hours after the opening of such meeting or cast a ballot at an early voting site should be fewer than the number of members required for a quorum as defined by these Bylaws, then all votes cast at such meeting shall be void and no members shall be elected at the meeting. No Board members shall be elected at any meeting of the members unless the number of members sufficient to constitute a quorum, as defined by these Bylaws, shall be registered at such meeting or shall have cast a ballot at an early voting site.

## NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

**FAIRFIELD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, Inc.** is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) 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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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The FEC Mobile app from Fairfield Electric Cooperative is free and gives you quick access to your account whenever you need it!

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- ◆ check account balance
- ◆ check on monthly energy usage
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