

# MEAN Executive Committee approves fiscal year-end credit

*Lump sum payments were issued to participants in June*

The Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN) Executive Committee, at its meeting in May, approved a \$2.9 million credit to MEAN long-term and limited-term wholesale electric participants, based on MEAN's overall positive preliminary financial results for fiscal year 2019-20.

The credit includes \$2 million related to MEAN's fixed cost recovery charge and \$900,000 related to

MEAN energy usage (kilowatt-hour) charge. These two components are the primary ways MEAN collects revenue. The allocated credits will be issued in June in a lump sum payment to participants.

The energy charge credit is allocated based on each participants' proportionate share of total MEAN energy (kilowatt-hour) purchased during the 2019-20 fiscal year. The fixed cost recovery charge credit is allocated

to participants based on each participants' three-year historical average peak electric demand.

The Executive Committee also approved designating approximately \$230,000 into MEAN's Rate Stabilization Account, which is used to help stabilize rate volatility and to fund power plant capital expenses.

The MEAN Board annually evaluates MEAN's preliminary fiscal year finances and makes adjustments in accordance with MEAN's financial policies and guidelines.

## Utilities respond to Haxtun mutual aid request

The Nebraska Municipal Power Pool coordinated a mutual aid request from the Town of Haxtun, Colo., to restore power after a storm hit the town in the overnight on June 9.

NMPP member utilities from the area that sent utility crews, trucks and other equipment included: Morrill, Imperial and Sidney in Nebraska and Fort Morgan, Yuma and Holyoke in Colorado. Other utilities in the area were standing by to assist if needed. The storm caused significant electric system structure damage but there were no injuries. The system was able to be re-energized later that evening.

NMPP's mutual aid program began in the 1970s to assist utilities during emergencies. There are more than 70 utilities participating in the electric program and nine utilities participating in the natural gas program.



NMPP Energy photo

**Crews from several NMPP/MEAN area utilities answered the call to assist the Town of Haxtun, Colo., after a storm in early June.**

# Stuart's Bob Lockmon receives APPA award

Bob Lockmon, village superintendent for the Village of Stuart, Neb., received the Larry Hobart Seven Hats Award during the American Public Power Association's Public Power Connect: Virtual Summit and Business Meeting in June.

The award recognizes managers of small utilities serving fewer than 2,500 meters. These managers have a very small staff and must assume multiple roles. The seven hats they must wear are: planning and design, administration, public relations, field supervision, accounting, human resources, and community leadership.

Lockmon became the Stuart village superintendent in 1996 and immediately hit the ground running with ideas to make Stuart better. He worked across many departments including the water and sewer utilities, street, parks and cemetery departments, and public building maintenance.

Bob has been the long-time representative for Stuart within



*Bob Lockmon*

the organizations of NMPP Energy. He keeps the council informed with what is happening at NMPP Energy and is open to suggestions and directions from the Village Board on how to keep Stuart at the forefront of addressing today's issues. Bob works diligently with members of the community and his employees by quickly and efficiently coming up with solutions to improve the Stuart community.

## Walsenburg becomes member of NPGA/NMPP

The City of Walsenburg, Colo., recently became the newest member of the National Public Gas Agency (NPGA) and the Nebraska Municipal Power Pool (NMPP).

The NPGA Board of Directors earlier this year approved a total requirement gas supply agreement with the City, which became effective April 1. The agreement is a rolling three-year contract for wholesale natural gas supply. The City has been a wholesale gas supply customer of NPGA since 1996. Now as a full member, the City will have representation and voting rights on the NPGA Board.

The City is the county seat of Huerfano County, Colo., in southeast Colorado and has a population of approximately 3,000.

As a member of the Nebraska Municipal Power Pool, the City will have access to the utility-related, cost-based services provided by NMPP.

## Updated explanation of MEAN's power bill on website

An updated detailed explanation of the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska's monthly power bill is now available on the NMPP Energy website under the "Additional Resources" heading on MEAN's home page ([www.nmppenergy.org/mean](http://www.nmppenergy.org/mean)).

The four-page document explains the different components and charges on MEAN's monthly billing statement to its wholesale power supply total requirements participants.

For additional questions, contact Candy Thomazin at (800) 234-2595.



By Bob Poehling,  
Executive Director



## This Month at NMPP Energy

NMPP Energy will begin implementing its COVID-19 Return to Work Plan beginning July 6, with some staff voluntarily returning to the office beginning July 6. Additional staff will return in phases over time. Whether our team is working remotely or in the office, don't hesitate to contact them to assist you. Below is a list of a few of the activities and workstreams that occurred during the past month at NMPP Energy on behalf of member communities:

### Nebraska Municipal Power Pool

- Rate study work was performed for Bayard, Crete, Curtis, Nebraska City, North Platte, Pender, Imperial and Wisner in Nebraska and Carlisle, Iowa.
- Staff continues to provide remote assistance and training to PowerManager users and preparing quotes and reaching out to prospective users. The Village of Pender approved adding more PowerManager software modules.
- The Computer Services Review Committee held a virtual meeting in mid-June.
- Staff assisted with a review of Nebraska Department of Economic Development recertification paperwork for McCook's Economic Development Certified Community designation.
- Work continued on updating the PowerManager website.
- Staff participated in a Nebraska Chamber of Commerce presentation in its "Reopen and Recovery Series" of informative sessions as more businesses are opening up and adapting during the latest phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska

- Staff continued its work on several projects through teleconference meetings and training opportunities. The projects include:
  - o Advance Metering Infrastructure
  - o Unit Capability Testing preparations

- o Integrated Resource Plan preparations
- o Gunnison, Colo., solar project
- o California Independent System Operator Energy Imbalance Market
- o Western Energy Imbalance Service project update

### National Public Gas Agency

- The NPGA Board of Directors held its quarterly meeting June 11. The Board reviewed and approved changes to its hedging policy and parameters.
- A settlement in principle was reached with Northern Natural Gas on the rate case filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Staff has been actively working with the Midwest Region Gas Task Force to advocate for NPGA members Lyons, Pender and Stromsburg in Nebraska and resolve the case.
- A comprehensive plan was developed to purchase swaps to fulfill the hedging parameters established by the Board in June, to hedge up to 50 percent of this winter's volume and 50 percent of forward months 13-24, which begins July 2021.
- Staff participated in Constellation's Energy Market Intel which focused on supply and demand factors impacting the natural gas market.

### Public Alliance for Community Energy

- Staff sent responses to the Nebraska Public Service Commission on the docket it opened regarding the Choice Gas program.
- Staff and Board Chair Andrew Devine participated virtually in the Nebraska Public Service Commission's workshop on the Choice Gas Program held in June.
- Staff is assessing its recently completed Choice Gas campaign and is compiling ideas and procedures, including a "Lessons Learned" session to help make next year's campaign a success.
- Feedback meetings were held with ACE's wholesale natural gas supplier and with the Nebraska Public Service Commission.



### Follow NMPP Energy on Twitter and Facebook!

NMPP Energy is now sharing organizational, member and industry-wide news on Twitter as well as Facebook. Search for "NMPP Energy" and make us part of your social media experience!

# NMPP Board approves new Champions

The Nebraska Municipal Power Pool Board of Directors at its board meeting in May approved five new champion businesses of NMPP Energy.

NMPP Energy Champions are businesses and organizations that support NMPP Energy's effort to provide products and services to member communities. Each champion is approved by the NMPP Board of Directors and pays annual dues in return to be included in the monthly Essent newsletter champions directory, a periodic feature newsletter article and presentation and marketing opportunities at the NMPP Energy Annual Conference. The five businesses approved were:

- ABP Engineering
- Allo Communications
- Quanta Technology, Inc.
- ARC Consulting
- Farabee Mechanical, Inc.

\* \* \*

## Officers ratified for 2020-21

Officers for the NMPP Board of Directors were elected virtually

## NMPP Board Notes

in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic and then ratified at the May Board meeting. Those officers are:

- Darrell Wenzel, chief executive officer, **Waverly (Iowa) Utilities**, President
- Mike Palmer, electric superintendent, **Sidney**, Neb., Vice President
- Bill Hinton, electric superintendent, **Kimball**, Neb., Secretary/Treasurer

\* \* \*

## Committee members reappointed

NMPP Board President Darrel Wenzel announced the reappointment of committee members to the Energy Research and Development Fund (ERDF) and the Computer Services Review Committee.

Those reappointed to the ERDF Committee were:

- Collin Bielser, **Fairbury**, Neb.
- Pat Davison, **Imperial**, Neb.
- Tom Goulette, **West Point**, Neb.

- Duane Hoffman, **Oxford**, Neb.
- Bob Lockmon, **Stuart**, Neb.
- Mike Palmer, **Sidney**, Neb.
- Chris Rodman, **Wall Lake**,

Iowa

- Randy Woldt, **Wisner**, Neb.

The ERDF Committee manages ERDF grant funding for innovative energy projects to communities/utilities participating in the voluntary program.

\* \* \*

Those reappointed to the CSRC were:

- Lanette Doane, **Ansley**, Neb.
- Mary tenBensel, **Arapahoe**, Neb.
- Karla Rader, **Cozad**, Neb.
- Pam Rasmussen, **Gibbon**, Neb.
- Janine Schmidt, **Morrill**, Neb.
- Dana Klabenes, **Neligh**, Neb.
- Kellie Crowell, **Ravenna**, Neb.
- Nancy Bryan, **Stromsburg**, Neb.
- Stephanie James, **Wisner**, Neb.

The committee reviews PowerManager® software program requests from software users and assists in providing input and recommendations on software upgrades and improvements.

## City partners with restaurants to 'Take it Outside'

Fort Morgan, Colo., restaurants are responding to new public health guidance by looking for creative ways to expand their capacity through outdoor seating.

The City of Fort Morgan is working with several eateries on plans for outdoor dining areas adjacent to the restaurants. Colorado Gov. Jared Polis recently announced new COVID-19 Safer at Home guidance that allows

on-premises dining in restaurants at 50 percent capacity. By adding outdoor seating these businesses can increase their capacity and accommodate more diners.

The city is waiving fees and easing regulations to allow outdoor restaurant seating on public rights of way like sidewalks, and in some cases also providing picnic tables for businesses to use free of charge while the pandemic

restrictions are in place.

The permit for outdoor service is also available to other retail businesses for which it makes sense, also with the normal fees waived. Different rules may apply depending on whether the outdoor areas are on public or private property, whether the area is owned by the business or by others, and whether alcohol service is involved.

# Governance bill on final reading as Nebraska Legislature set to reconvene

Nebraska Unicameral Speaker Jim Scheer of Norfolk, Neb., announced in May that he will call senators back into session July 20. MEAN's modernization and streamlining legislation bill (LB 858), sponsored by Sen. Dan Hughes and chosen as a Committee Priority Bill, is lingering on final reading, a breath away from passing.

Scheer suspended the 2020 legislative session indefinitely in March due to public health concerns regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. In his announcement, Scheer said the decision to resume was based on the belief Nebraska will have reached the peak of COVID-19 cases by that time and will not have experienced a resurgence in cases following the

## Legislative Notes



By Chris Dibbern

## Natural Resources Committee Members

### Senator Hometown

\*Dan Hughes ..... Venango  
 Joni Albrecht ..... Thurston  
 Bruce Bostelman ..... Brainard  
 Suzanne Geist ..... Lincoln  
 Tim Gragert ..... Creighton  
 Steve Halloran ..... Hastings  
 Mike Moser ..... Columbus  
 Dan Quick ..... Grand Island

\* Chairperson

loosening of restrictions on businesses and social gatherings.

“Please keep in mind that I reserve the right to alter this 2020 reconvening session calendar should it appear best to do so,” he said. Under the new calendar, lawmakers are scheduled to complete their work for the session on Aug. 13.

MEAN's Governance Review Committee has reviewed the MEAN Bylaws consistent with LB 858 to be ready for action if/

when the bill passes. The committee, chaired by Tom Ourada of Crete, Neb., has been busy streamlining the role of the MEAN Management Committee, inviting Service Schedule M participants to join the MEAN Board and spearheading discussions of what the MEAN Board should look like in the future.

I cannot thank Sen. Hughes, Natural Resources Committee members, Chairperson Tom Ourada and MEAN Board Chair Tom Goulette enough for helping with LB 858. If passed, the bill will modernize MEAN to be more flexible and board-driven. The Governance Review Committee has several other important missions in the next year.

\* \* \*

Chris Dibbern is general counsel of NMPP Energy. Contact her at [cdibbern@nmppenergy.org](mailto:cdibbern@nmppenergy.org) or (800) 234-2595.

## Short-Term Energy Outlook predicts less electricity consumption

The U.S. Energy Information Administration released its Short-Term Energy Outlook in June and forecasted more than five percent less electricity consumption in the U.S. in 2020 compared with last year.

The largest decline by consumption sector on a percentage basis occurs in the commercial sector, where EIA expects retail sales of electricity to fall by 9.1 percent this year. EIA forecasts residential sector retail sales will

decrease by 1.5 percent in 2020.

EIA expects the share of U.S. utility-scale electricity generation from natural gas-fired power plants will increase from 37 percent last year to 41 percent this year and then falling to 36 percent in 2021 in response to higher natural gas prices. Coal's forecast share of electricity generation falls from 24 percent in 2019 to 17 percent in 2020 and then increases to 20 percent in 2021. Electricity generation from renew-

able energy sources is expected to rise from 17 percent in 2019 to 21 percent in 2020 and to 23 percent in 2021. The increase share from renewable generation is due to expected additions to wind and solar generating capacity.

The EIA expects total U.S. consumption of natural gas will average 81.9 billion cubic feet per day in 2020, down 3.6 percent from last year. The decline primarily reflects less consumption in the industrial sector.



## THIS MONTH'S FEATURED CHAMPION BUSINESSES

### Air Regulations Consulting provides excellence, expertise and efficiency

Air Regulations Consulting, LLC (ARC) makes complex problems simple. Environmental regulations are some of the most difficult and fluid compliance requirements to follow. ARC addresses their client's regulatory problems as their own through excellence, expertise, and efficiency. ARC is very happy to be part of the NMPP family as the only environmental consulting firm owned and operated in Nebraska by engineers from the University of Nebraska, with professional experience in the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and multiple state agencies, like Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE).

For the last decade, ARC has passionately served industry providing exceptional environmental solutions, permit applications, regulatory assistance, emissions inventories, inspection



assistance, and compliance reporting. ARC as a team embodies Clean Air and Water Act expertise, engineering tactics, and entrepreneurial force, and they have a growing client list of municipal and industrial organizations in Nebraska and coast-to-coast.

Will Adler and Shawn Zablocki are senior project managers at ARC. Will in particular

has worked with many NMPP members. He is renowned as one of the top engine regulation experts, emission modelers, and meteorologist in the Midwest. In addition, Shawn has exemplified strong leadership with more than 25 years of experience in environmental, health, and safety management. Shawn also holds a law degree and several professional engineering licenses.

## A complete listing of NMPP Energy Champion Businesses is on page 7

### Employment Opportunities

#### Street Superintendent

The City of **Broken Bow**, Neb., is accepting applications for the position of Street Superintendent. The Street Superintendent manages the construction and maintenance program for the City streets and right-of-way and manages the C&D Cell, the Tree Dump, and Mud Creek Levee. Candidates must possess a high school diploma or equivalent and a CDL. State Street Superintendent Certification is preferred, but not required. Five years of experience in operation, maintenance and safety involved in operation of street equipment. Knowledge of materials and equipment used in street construction. Basic requirements may be waived at the sole discretion of the Mayor. Salary and benefits will be negotiated based on qualifications and experience. The City of Broken Bow

is an EOE. Applications will be taken until the position is filled. Send a resume and a completed application to Street Superintendent Search, Attn: Stephanie Wright, P.O. Box 504, Broken Bow, NE 68822. Application materials may be submitted electronically to [clerk@cityofbrokenbow.org](mailto:clerk@cityofbrokenbow.org). If you have any questions, please call Stephanie Wright at (308) 872-5831.

#### Maintenance/lineman position

The City of **Blue Hill**, Neb., is accepting applications for a full-time maintenance/lineman position. The successful applicant should have prior experience and/or formal training of electrical distribution. Individual will perform skilled line work in operation, construction, maintenance, and repair of energized overhead and underground electrical distribution

systems and operate the City's electrical generation units. Experience in the construction and maintenance of overhead and underground, primary/secondary is desired. The department superintendent will provide training to the right applicant with appropriately completed credentials. Knowledge of construction in the electrical, water, and sewer is helpful.

Duties include but not limited to the following: assisting in snow removal, electrical, water, sewer construction, mowing parks, AMR meter reading, be able to work out of a bucket truck, be able to work up to 70 feet above ground, work below ground, and upkeep of all city buildings and equipment. Applicant must be

See 'EMPLOYMENT' on page 8

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## Support NMPP member communities through the Champions Business Program

Champions are businesses and organizations that support NMPP Energy's effort to provide products and services to members. Consider these businesses when your utility or municipality has a business need. If your business is interested in becoming an NMPP Energy Champion, call Andrew Ross at (800) 234-2595.



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## Champions Business Directory of Services

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### **Financial**

<b>Ameritas Investment Corp.</b> (Ameritas.com).....	Omaha, Neb.
<b>D.A. Davidson &amp; Co.</b> (dadavidson.com/ficm).....	Omaha, Neb.
<b>First National Bank</b> (Firstnational.com).....	Omaha, Neb.
<b>UNICO Group, Inc. and Midlands Financial Benefits</b> (unicogroup.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.
<b>Nebraska Energy Federal Credit Union</b> (ne-fcu.org).....	Columbus, Neb.

### **Regulatory/Compliance**

<b>Air Regulation Consulting</b> (airregconsulting.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.
<b>NAQS Environmental Experts</b> (naqs.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.

### **Utility/Community**

<b>Dogwood Energy</b> .....	Columbia, Md.
<b>EnergySolutions, Inc.</b> (energysolutions-inc.com).....	Omaha, Neb.
<b>Hometown Connections, Inc.</b> (Hometownconnections.com).....	Lakewood, Colo.
<b>Foundation for Educational Services</b> (fes.org).....	Lincoln, Neb.
<b>GenPro Energy Solutions</b> (GenProEnergy.com).....	Piedmont, S.D.
<b>JK Energy Consulting, LLC</b> (JKenergyconsulting.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.
<b>Border States</b> (borderstates.com).....	Fargo, N.D.
<b>NovaTech</b> (Novatechweb.com).....	Lenexa, Kan.
<b>PDS, Inc.</b> (PDSinc.biz).....	Omaha, Neb.
<b>Protective Equipment Testing Laboratory</b> (petl.com).....	Great Bend, Kan.
<b>RESCO (Rural Electric Supply Cooperative)</b> (resco1.com).....	Ankeny, Iowa
<b>Sol Systems</b> (solsystems.com).....	Washington, D.C.
<b>Sunbelt-Solomon Solutions</b> (sunbelt-solomon.com).....	Solomon, Kan.

### **Computer/Technology**

<b>Proteus</b> (Proteus.co).....	Lincoln, Neb.
<b>Quanta Technology</b> (quanta-technology.com).....	Raleigh, N.C.
<b>Salt Creek Software, Inc.</b> (Saltcreek.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.

### **Engineering**

<b>ABP Engineering LLC</b> (abpengineeringllc.com).....	Bennington, Neb.
<b>Exponential Engineering Company</b> (exponentialengineering.com).....	Fort Collins, Colo.
<b>Farrabee Mechanical Inc.</b> (farabeemechanical.com).....	Hickman, Neb.
<b>Halker Consulting</b> (Halker.com).....	Centennial, Colo.
<b>JEO Consulting Group, Inc.</b> (jeo.com).....	Wahoo, Neb.
<b>Lutz, Daily &amp; Brain, LLC</b> (ldbeng.com).....	Overland Park, Kan.
<b>Olsson</b> (Olsson.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.
<b>Shermco Industries</b> (Shermco.com).....	Omaha, Neb.

### **Insurance**

<b>League Association of Risk Management</b> (larmpool.org).....	Lincoln, Neb.
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### **Legal**

<b>Chapman and Cutler, LLP</b> (chapman.com).....	Salt Lake City, Utah
<b>Spiegel &amp; McDiarmid</b> (spiegelmcd.com).....	Washington, D.C.

### **Telecommunication**

<b>Allo Communications</b> (allocommunications.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.
<b>Community Broadband Action Network</b> (broadbandaction.com).....	Indianola, Iowa
<b>River Oaks Communications Corp.</b> (rivoaks.com).....	Centennial, Colo.



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## Employment (cont.)

able to operate mowers, tractors, loaders, back-hoes, bucket truck, digger derrick, dump truck motor grader, sewer jet machine, etc. Applicant must be at least 19 years old, be able to lift 50 lbs., work a 8-5 normal day, be able to work outdoors in extreme weather conditions, be on call on rotating weeks and after hours, be a legal citizen of the U.S., have a current Nebraska driver's license (CDL) or obtain one within 30 days of employment with a clean driving record. Applicant must live within 10 minutes google time from the city limits. The City provides the applicant with a pickup to take home at night to their residence without leaving city limits. This is full time employment with possible advancement. Benefits include health insurance, dental,

vision, pension, vacation, sick, holiday pay, overtime pay, uniforms, etc. Lineman will work under the electric superintendent. Wages rates are negotiable but compensatory with experience. Candidate may be subject to background check and drug and alcohol testing. Having basic computer skills is helpful along with the willingness to obtain a grade 4 water operator license and a mosquito spraying license when necessary.

Resume, cover letter, and application may be sent to: Tricia Allen, City Clerk/Treasurer, and P.O. Box 277, Blue Hill, NE 68930. City of Blue Hill is an E.O.E. Position is open until filled. Inquiries call Mark at (269) 804-7644.

## Upcoming Meetings

August 12.....ACE Board

August 12.....MEAN Committees

August 13.....MEAN Board

September 3.....NMPP Board

September 17.....NPGA Board

**To submit an employment ad...** NMPP members may advertise job openings for free in the Essent newsletter. The deadline is the 15th of each month to run the following month. E-mail [kwickham@nmppenergy.org](mailto:kwickham@nmppenergy.org).

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