

2017 Member Focus Group
Platte-Clay Electric Cooperative
June 27, 2017
6:30 p.m.

Present:

Platte-Clay Members: Terry Banks, Lee Brown, Muriel Daniels, Catherine Dunn, J. Brent Gerling, Richard Hartnett, Mark Hasse, Jerry Hearne, John Huddart, Sarah McKinley, Jeff Saxton, Bill Shelley, James Shrimpton, Tom Smith, Duke Snider, Marie Steiner, Allan Tison, Leona Vest, and Steve Williams.

Platte-Clay Employees: Dave Deihl, Cheryl Barnes, Jennifer Grossl, and Rebecca Pendleton-Meek

1. Dave Deihl opened the meeting and welcomed the focus group participants, thanking them for their commitment. He indicated that Platte Clay has conducted a focus group for approximately 20 years, but this year the topics covered would be different. He went on to explain that a motion was made by a member at the 2017 annual meeting regarding individual environmental concerns. A second motion was made to table the original motion and have the Focus Group review the motion and provide a report that would be read at the 2018 annual meeting.
2. Dave introduced the employees that were in attendance at the Focus Group meeting and turned the meeting over to Jennifer Grossl, Manager of Marketing and Communications.
3. Jennifer welcomed the participants as well and provided a brief introduction of herself to the Focus Group. Jennifer then had the participants tell a little bit about themselves.
4. Next Jennifer tended to some housekeeping issues.
5. Jennifer then explained the purpose of the Focus Group and that the group this year is larger in size than those in the past. Given the sensitivity of the issues stated in the motion Platte-Clay felt to get a good representation of what the membership as a whole felt we would need a larger audience for the focus group. She explained as Dave had about the motion that was made during the 2017 Annual Meeting concerning the environment. Then she read the motion to the participants. The motion is as follows:
 - That a column titled "Platte-Clay, the Environment Our Future" be added to our monthly newsletter, "Northland Connection." That the first column be in our July issue and continue for a minimum of 6 consecutive months. The column is to discuss issues relative to the environment and our future including:
 - Our environmental impact and goals,
 - A discussion of members environmental concerns,

- The incorporation of the environment into our mission statement,
- Increasing our solar power capacity and other subjects pertinent to our environmental concerns and our future.

After reading the motion Jennifer let the participants know that the same member who made the above motion during the Annual Meeting had also requested a “Member Viewpoint” section be added to voice concerns at a prior Annual Meeting.

Platte-Clay placed a “Member Viewpoint” section on their webpage and also in the newsletter, which has been in place for several years, and there has been limited interest from the membership in sharing their views.

She also indicated that the participants will be given a handout showing this at the end of the meeting.

The ultimate goal of the Focus Group is to have a consensus report on co-op environmental activities and the member’s motion to be shared with the rest of the membership at the 2018 Annual Meeting.

6. The agenda and presentations planned for each meeting were discussed.

7. Platte Clay operates daily using the 7 cooperative principles. Each principle was discussed.

- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic member control
- Members economic participation
- Autonomy and independence
- Education, training and information
- Cooperation among cooperatives
- Concern for the community

The cooperative difference video was played.

8. Jennifer discussed Platte-Clay’s demographics. The members who attend the annual meeting elect the Board of Directors to represent them. There are 9 directors that represent three districts, each serving a three-year term.

Bylaws are found on the website at www.pcec.coop.

9. In 2015 TSE Services conducted an American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) survey with the results being delivered in 2016. The data showed the majority of the membership were happy with what we were doing, ranking Platte-Clay top five in the state for overall member satisfaction.

10. Rural electric cooperatives are part of a three tier system. It all starts with Associated Electric Cooperative (AECI) that generates the power that Platte-Clay members use.

- Generation Cooperative – Associated Electric Cooperative Inc. (AECI), Springfield, MO. They are owned by and serve six regional transmission cooperatives. They provide power for 51 local electric cooperative systems, serving nearly 900,000 members. Associated has a diverse mix that they use to generate power. They use coal (63% last year), natural gas (16% last year, price is very volatile), hydropower (14% last year), and wind (7% last year)

- Transmission Cooperative – N.W. Electric, Cameron, MO. They build and maintain high voltage transmission systems
- Members/Platte-Clay, Kearney and Platte City

The AECl clean video was shown.

11. Platte-Clay’s goal is to provide reliable, affordable electric service. This is seen in the by-laws and in the mission statement.
 - The first sentence of the by-laws – “It shall be the aim of Platte-Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc., to make electric energy available to its members at the lowest cost consistent with sound economy and good management.”
 - Mission Statement – “Platte-Clay Electric Cooperative’s mission is to provide quality electric service beyond member’s and customers’ expectations while maintaining a sound financial structure providing the most competitive rates possible.”

Missouri’s three tier system has a long and successful record of balancing affordable, reliable electricity with sound environmental stewardship. It has been developed over eighty years and decisions are made very carefully.

12. Regional demographics and state median household income were reported to the Focus Group. Platte County and Clay County are first and fourth in per capita income in the state. People in the counties that we service are shown to have higher high school graduation rates as well as higher enrollment in college.
13. Throughout the years the amount of wind and solar net metered accounts installed in Platte-Clay Electric Cooperative’s service territory has increased with the peak being in 2016 at 36, total systems 76 to date. The spike that year was attributed to the ending of tax breaks associated with construction of those systems.
14. Past survey results were discussed. The Platte-Clay Electric Cooperative’s community solar array was built in response to three surveys that Platte-Clay members completed. Those surveys showed that the membership had a large interest in renewable energy and in particular, solar.
15. Based upon the survey results Platte-Clay Electric determined that the membership wanted to participate in solar, but wanted to keep it small. In 2015 Platte-Clay Electric Cooperative produced the first utility community solar array in Missouri after extensive surveys of the membership. After two years the community solar project is 1/3 subscribed.
16. For the next meeting, Associated Electric Cooperative will be our guest speaker. They will speak about the steps AECl has taken over the years in regards to the environment. Jennifer discussed possible dates for the next meeting with the group. A folder with recent AECl articles concerning the environment was distributed to the participants to review.

The meeting concluded at 7:30 p.m.