



***Solutions for the Future***

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**Nushagak Electric & Telephone Cooperative, Inc.  
23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Membership Meeting  
Tuesday, April 2, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.  
Dillingham Elementary School Gymnasium  
In Person & Virtual**

**Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME**

Board President Peter Andrew called the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Membership Meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

**PRESENTATION OF FLAGS**

The American Heritage Girls presented the Flags for the United States of America and the State of Alaska, then recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**INVOCATION**

Dennis Payne from Bristol Bay Church led the invocation for the Annual Meeting.

**INTRODUCTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Board President Peter Andrew introduced the Board of Directors and CEO/GM to the membership.

They were:

Pete Andrew, President	Present
Henry Strub, Vice President	Present
Annie Fritze, Secretary	Present
Wanda Wahl, Treasurer	Present
Sue Flensburg, Director	Present <Zoom>
Bruce Baltar, Director	Present

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Jean Barrett, Director	Present
Mark Lisac, Director	Present
James Hall, Director	Present

William Chaney, CEO/GM	Present
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Mr. Chaney presented Board President Pete Andrew with a 24-year service pin; Mr. Andrew then went on to present the remaining service pins to Henry Strub 40 years, Annie Fritze 9 years, Wanda Wahl 6 years and Bruce Baltar 6 years.

Mr. Andrew also recognized the years of service dedicated to serving on the board by current and past board members.

### **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS/EMPLOYEES**

William Chaney, CEO/GM, introduced employees and guests:  
Dennis Payne, Michael Timmerman, Jeff Fonkert, Ryan Savo, Christian Olson, La'akea Chu, Angie Venua, Heather Savo, Deon Lopez, Angela Thames, Heidi Savo, Chrissie Messer, Angela Lopez, Joel Collins, Jim Denslinger, Bernie Venua, Nathan Suttles, John Gleason, Bradon Stumpner, Tyler Eveslage, Jon Taylor, Kevin McCambly and Chris Williams.

### **DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

Board Secretary Annie Fritze read the Certification & Determination of Quorum. She reported that at least 50 members, or 3% of the members, whichever shall be larger, as required per Article III, Section 5, "Quorum," of the Cooperative's bylaws participated in the Annual Meeting: a total of 61 members had registered at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Membership Meeting of Nushagak Electric & Telephone Cooperative, Inc.

### **CERTIFICATION OF NOTICE OF MEETING**

Board Secretary Annie Fritze read the Certification of the Notice of Meeting and declared that proper notice had been given to the membership.

### **READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Board President Pete Andrew asked for a motion to approve minutes of the 2023 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Membership Meeting. John Heyano motioned, and William Johnson seconded the motion to approve the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Membership Meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried.

### **CEO/GM Report:**

Mr. Chaney introduced himself and gave a brief history of the Cooperative, outlining the changes the Cooperative has seen as well as the changes that will be forthcoming.

Specifically, on the Fiber Build Project, Mr. Chaney reports that in collaboration with Choggiung Limited and Curyung Tribal Council, alongside the communities of Aleknagik, Ekwok, and Levelock, Nushagak is currently undertaking the establishment of the first physical connection to the wider world through a fiber optic cable. Mr. Chaney explained that the implementation of this infrastructure will significantly enhance the connectivity of our region for future generations. Furthermore, this initiative will serve as a crucial component in extending the network into the YK Delta, thereby improving services throughout that region as well. Additionally, Nushagak is pleased to announce the integration of an aerial-to-underground conversion for the Lake Road distribution line, which is scheduled to commence this summer.

Mr. Chaney also reported that Nushagak is preparing to initiate the second study season for the Nuyakuk Hydro feasibility assessment. This feasibility assessment will evaluate a hydro resource with a capacity of 12-14 MW. Should this resource prove viable, it has the potential to meet the energy requirements of our communities for years to come, establishing a reliable baseload resource that would facilitate the integration of additional renewable energy sources in the future. This initiative will significantly enhance the region's energy security and independence.

Further details regarding both projects will be provided in presentations scheduled for later in the evening.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

Scott Runzo with the Dillingham Emergency Medical Services (DEMS) & Dillingham Volunteer Fire Department (DVFD) reported that the DEMS/DVFD answered 325 EMS calls, 21 Fire & Rescue calls, participated in school programs and open houses, and facilitated community trainings. Mr. Runzo introduced an exciting new recognition: The Coolie Award. DVFD Assistant Chief Jonathan Larson took a moment to honor this year's awardee, Norman "Coolie" Heyano, and graciously presented him with a special gift.

Deputy Director Michael Rovito of Alaska Power Association (APA) provided a brief explanation of the services that the APA offers its members, including Nushagak Cooperative. Mr. Rovito praised Nushagak for being an exemplary company that has embraced the significant challenge of the Nuyakuk Hydroelectric Concept—a considerable endeavor for a utility of its size.

Telecom Operations Manager Dennis Payne gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Fiber Build Project. Highlights included a much later start than anticipated, mainline and drops installed in Aleknagik, Crews working toward Ekwok, and that the project is anticipated to be completed by mid to late summer 2024. Mr. Payne then showed a diagram explaining how the

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fiber-to-the-home build would look inside a home. Mr. Payne finished his report by explaining the cause of the system-wide internet outage, which was that a generator 2 throttle module failed, causing catastrophic damage to both systems, a battery string, and a management router. The repairs took several days to complete.

CEO/GM Will Chaney gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Nuyakuk Hydroelectric Project.

Key Developments Over the Past Year:

- Geotechnical Analysis
- Biological study camp established
- All requisite natural resource permit applications submitted
  - ADNR Land Use Permit
  - ADFG Fish Habitat Permit
  - ADFG Fish Resource Permit
- 2023 Study Season Completed
  - Fisheries – 6 Studies
  - Water Resources – 4 Studies
  - Terrestrial – 3 Studies
  - Cultural – 2 Studies
  - Recreation – 2 Studies
- Development of Life Cycle and Economic Models
- Cooperative Agreements reached with BBSRI, BBNA, and NMSF related to certain study elements
- Filing of the Initial Study Report (ISR) and held Study Report Meetings
- Formation of resource-specific Technical Working Groups (TWG)
  - Cultural/Substance
  - Terrestrial
  - Recreation
- Collaborative ARWG and public involvement related to technical study plan improvements (collective development, review, and commenting)
  - Bi-monthly ARWG meetings
  - Website updates and emails to contact list throughout process
  - Review/comment period associated with the RSP
- Responses to comments received on the ISR
- Logistical planning and scheduling for the upcoming 2024 study season

2024 Planning/Schedule

- Logistical prep
- Schedule coordination
- Implement 2024 study activities
  - Fisheries
  - Water resources
  - Terrestrial

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- Cultural/Subsistence
- Recreation
- Conceptual design
- Data Analysis
- Development of Updated Study Report (USR)
- Begin feasibility determinations related to potentially filing a license application for the Project

Overall Project Licensing Schedule  
Key FERC Milestones\*

- 2nd Comprehensive Study Season – 2024
- Study Reporting – late 2024
- Study Reporting Meetings –late 2024
- Ongoing Infrastructural and Site Analysis and Design – 2024 and beyond if Project deemed feasible
- Further Geotechnical Analysis –2025 and beyond if Project deemed feasible
- Preliminary Licensing Proposal – early 2025 if Project deemed feasible
- PLP Comment Period – early 2025 if Project deemed feasible
- Final License Application – late 2025 if Project deemed feasible

\*Both mandated and informal commenting periods will be available throughout.

**SCHOLARSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Board Director and Scholarship Committee Chair Annie Fritze introduced the Scholarship Committee members and announced the 2023 scholarship award recipients as follows:

MEMBERS

Annie Fritze, NETC  
Jean Barrett, NETC  
Laticia Swift, City of Dillingham  
Serena McArthur, BBNA  
Megan McCambly, DCSD

AMOUNT AWARDED

\$21,500.00

NUMBER OF QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

21

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

21

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ACADEMIC

\$1,500 Kristian Nudlash-Barger	\$1,000 Torin Schroeder
\$1,500 Trinity Eager*	\$1,000 Abbey Whitcomb
\$1,500 Ellie Hink	\$1,000 Luke Wulvik
\$1,500 Sawyer Sands	\$500 Joseph Bailey
\$1,500 David Wetter	\$500 Cadence Dray
\$1,000 Demetry Hoseth	\$500 Charlene Lopez
\$1,000 Kaylee Lopez	
\$1,000 Angelica Marx	

VOCATIONAL

\$1,000 Jenice Cox  
\$1,000 Livia Cruikshank  
\$1,000 Austin Finkenbinder  
\$1,000 Katrena Finkenbinder  
\$1,000 Maddison Swift  
\$500 Logan Ito  
\$500 Josiah Young\*

\*Pending Membership Status

In 2021, a Scholarship in memory of Dr. Radenbaugh was established in conjunction with the regular Nushagak Cooperative Scholarship. The Dr. Todd Radenbaugh Scholarship award would be \$500 and recognized as a supplemental scholarship to a student that addresses through the essay how their field of study would benefit and/or contribute to improving the environment.

DR. TODD RADENBAUGH SCHOLARSHIP

\$500 Luke Wulvik

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Over the years, the Board of Directors, along with management, has consistently sought cost-effective solutions for power, telephone, and internet access for Nushagak members.

I am proud to have a diverse and dedicated team of board members representing the member-owners.

Energy costs, both now and in the future, will be challenging for everyone. We continue to explore solutions to become self-sustaining in order to keep energy costs low, which will, in turn, support economic growth.

In the past, Nushagak studied potential wind and hydro sites, such as Lake Elva and Grant Lake, but these efforts did not yield results.

Currently, Nushagak is studying a concept at Nuyakuk Falls for the fourth consecutive year as a potential site for electricity production. As a power provider, we recognize the importance of protecting our natural resources, particularly fish, which are vital to our community and people around the world. Nushagak has implemented a Fish First Policy, ensuring that we will not pursue construction of the hydro project if studies indicate it could harm our natural resources.

Regarding broadband services, Nushagak has been working on solutions to improve access. The fiber project connecting Levelock to Dillingham has begun, and as of now, the fiber is two-thirds of the way to Levelock from Dillingham.

I want to emphasize that collaboration among entities can lead to greater benefits for our community and foster economic growth.

I would also like to thank Choggiung LTD and the Curyung Tribe for their support. I encourage all of you to learn as much as possible, ask questions, and stay engaged.

## **DIRECTORY COVER PRESENTATION**

Chrissie Messer and Heidi Savo presented the 2024 Directory Cover Photo Contest front cover winner, Ted Angasan III, with a 16 x 24 framed version of his submission titled *Salmon Berries*. Mr. Angasan's submission, *Mushrooms*, was the back cover winner, and he received an 8 x 10 framed print.

## **OUT-OF-TOWN DOOR PRIZE DRAWING**

\$100 Gift Card – Melvin & Sally  
\$100 Gift Card – Gerald Schwantes & Charlotte Smith  
\$100 Gift Card – Harry Edgbert  
\$100 Gift Card – Steven & Christina Libby

## **DOOR PRIZE DRAWING #1**

- Porcelain Serving Bowls & Electric Warming Tray – Fredrick Nielsen
- Bakeware Set – Manual & Karen Brito
- Couch/Bed Cup Holder Pillow & Knitting Yarn Storage Bag – Community Baptist Church
- Slow Cooker & Shiatsu Back and Shoulder Massager – United Tribes of Bristol Bay
- \$100 Visa Gift Card – Travis & Nicole Krause
- Wooden Vertical Raised Garden Bed – Vince & Patty Luckhurst
- Mini Electric Chainsaw & 2 Ceramic Planters – Margaret Wiley
- Electric Crock-Pot Lunch Box & Hydroponics Growing System – John & Lois Sorensen
- LED Floor Lamp – Palescovica Petla
- \$100 Gift Card – Laticia Swift
- Sherpa Fleece Electric Blanket & Bluetooth Speaker Alarm Clock/Light – Noah Harper

- Beats Solo 3 Wireless On-Ear Headphones – Jeff Fonkert
- 2 Stater Growing Trays w/Grow Light & Portable Neck Fan – Ashley Miller

## **INTRODUCTION OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Board Vice President Henry Strub thanked the Nominating Committee, Alice Ruby, Rachel Tilden and Jeanie Timmerman.

## **INTRODUCTION OF THE CANDIDATES**

Board President Pete Andrew introduced the candidates and gave each of them a chance to speak to the members of the Cooperative. The candidates were: Annie Fritze (Incumbent), James Hall (Incumbent) and Henry Strub (Incumbent)

## **15 MINUTE INTERMISSION**

## **CALL FOR BALLOTS**

## **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP**

Q: Todd Fritze: Is there a plan to help membership transition from Cable TV to streaming services?

Dennis Payne: Nushagak understands that the transition is not ideal, but the cost associated with maintaining and providing cable tv is not advantageous for the cooperative. Dennis offered assistance to Mr. Fritze, and anyone else needing help setting up their TV.

Q: Jonathan Larson: Mr. Larson requested clarification on the rollout date for fiber, specifically whether it would be later this year.

Dennis Payne: Mr. Payne explained that fiber-to-the-home will not be available later this year; however, the completion of the middle-mile fiber build is expected to be completed.

Q: Johnathan Larson: Mr. Larson followed up with a question regarding plan pricing for membership.

Dennis Payne: It is understood that Nushagak must be price-competitive with Starlink, but at this time, plan pricing has not been set.

Q: Kevin Hardin: If the Hydroelectric Concept were to move forward, what would be the long-term plan for diesel operations?



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Will Chaney: If the hydroelectric concept were to move forward and were operational, Nushagak would still need to maintain the diesel operations to provide 100% redundancy coverage. The diesel plant would be in place for future use or emergencies.

Q: Noah Harper: Mr. Harper asked for additional details on the estimated completion date for the middle-mile construction. If the estimated completion time frame is scheduled for later this year, does that time frame include building the facilities and connecting the switchgear?

Dennis Payne: Mr. Payne confirmed that the equipment had been ordered, but it is unclear when the items would be delivered.

Q: Warren Kasayulie: Mr. Kasayulie asked if the power transmission line will be similar to the lines near Kenai, AK. Mr. Kasayulie shared his concerns about natural disasters and restoration time.

Will Chaney explained that a hydroelectric transmission line is designed and constructed differently than a distribution line; transmission lines are built to a heavier grade. Once the voltage has been determined, the layout and design process can begin.

Q: Volet Apalayak asked for information on the Raspberry Pi's that some members have.

Dennis Payne explained that the FCC mandates that internet providers receiving federal funding conduct speed and latency tests on a random sample of customer locations to ensure quality standards are met.

Q: Noah Harper: Inaudible Recording. This is a question possibly relating to ISPN.

Dennis Payne stated that he has engaged with a few different entities \*remainder of answer inaudible\*

## INTRODUCTION AND REPORT OF CREDENTIALS & ELECTION COMMITTEE

Laticia Swift, Committee Chair, read the voting results aloud as follows:

The voting results were read aloud as follows:

	<u>Mail in Ballots</u>	<u>Cast at Meeting</u>	<u>Final Ballot</u>
<b>Tally</b>			
Total Ballots Received	194	32	226
Total Ballots Invalid	2	0	2
Total Ballots Counted for Votes	192	32	224

Total invalid ballots: 2

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**Directors**

Annie Fritze	201 votes
James Hall	150 votes
Henry Strub	189 votes
Write In	3 votes

**Election Results:** Annie Fritze, Incumbent, James Hall, Incumbent, and Henry Strub, Incumbent, were elected for a three-year term ending in 2027.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

No unfinished business at this time.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business at this time.

**DOOR PRIZE DRAWING #2**

- Samsung 64GB Android Tablet – Ryan & Amanda Luiten
- Oculus Quest 2 Virtual Reality Headset – Fannie Yukluk
- DLG to ANC Round Trip Ticket on Alaska Airlines – Chandler Kemp


**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the membership, Board President Pete Andrew adjourned the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Membership Meeting at 9:27 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted By:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Angela Lopez, Human Resources Generalist/Executive Secretary/Recorder  
4/08/2025  
Date

**Approved By:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Annie Fritze, Board Secretary  
4/8/2025  
Date

