

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE  
TOMBIGBEE ELECTRIC POWER ASSOCIATION HELD FEBRUARY 13, 2020

The Board of Directors of the Tombigbee Electric Power Association met at the Tupelo Headquarters Office, Tupelo, MS, on Thursday, February 13, 2020, at 5:00 p. m. The following directors were present:

<u>Class of 2020</u>	<u>Class of 2021</u>	<u>Class of 2022</u>
Lynn Turner	Jim Gray	Pat Carr (A)
Guy Harris (A)	Steve Holland	John McFerrin
Chip Prestage	Don Knight	Buddy Palmer
Brenda Goff Shumpert (A)	Andy Spradling	Malcolm Wesson (A)
F. G. Wiygul, Jr.	Cecil Weeks	

(A)—Not present

Also present were:        Scott Hendrix, Attorney  
                                 Jonathan Hagood, Auditor  
                                 Mitzi Hinds, Member Services Director  
                                 Bruce Williams, Tupelo Office Manager  
                                 William Long, General Manager

F. G. Wiygul called the meeting to order and called on Cecil Weeks to open the meeting with prayer.

Mr. Wiygul then opened the floor for consideration of the January 2020, Board Meeting Minutes. **Chip Prestage made a motion that the meeting minutes be approved as prepared and mailed to Directors for review.** Don Knight seconded the motion for approval and upon vote taken a majority vote was observed.

Mr. Wiygul then inquired of the Board if there was a need for an Executive Session. Hearing none, Mr. Wiygul continued and recognized Attorney Scott Hendrix for a report. Mr. Hendrix stated that he had no business items at this time requiring action of the Board.

**Committee Reports:**

Mr. Wiygul then called upon committee chairmen to present information to the Board on behalf of their respective committees:

**SmartGrid:** Buddy Palmer, Chairman, provided an update of committee activities and reported on multiple matters that the committee has studied:

- a) Mr. Palmer presented information to the Board for development of a budget to be used for advertising and various other events in support of broadband. A summary and printout of the budget was presented for Director review and questions. Mr. Palmer pointed out that the planned budget amount is within the amount projected in the feasibility study prepared by Conexon. **On behalf of the committee's work, Mr. Palmer stated that the committee recommends the adoption of the draft budget to be utilized during the first phase of broadband construction.** Requiring no second coming from the Committee, and upon vote taken, approval of the budget was adopted.

- b) Mr. Palmer then led a discussion and presented information to the Board which identified amounts determined by the staff utilizing information contained in the broadband feasibility study for residential and commercial services available for member selection. After discussion, **Mr. Palmer recommended that the charges and charge structures for residential and commercial internet/data and phone service, as provided by the staff for board consideration be approved.** Requiring no second, and upon a vote taken, a majority vote in favor of the Committee recommendation was observed.
- c) Mr. Palmer then presented for discussion and approval, participation and application for Round 2 of the ReConnect Grant Program. After review and discussion, **Mr. Palmer made a motion that TEPA apply for the grant.** Lynn Turner seconded the motion and upon vote taken a majority vote was observed.
- d) Mr. Palmer then presented an overview of other charges and billing procedures to be utilized in the process of presenting a bill to broadband customers and the options that the customer will have for multiple ways of paying their broadband bill. Upon thorough discussion of the incremental charge and billing **Steve Holland made a motion that the billing provisions presented by Mr. Palmer and the staff be approved except without the provision for assessing a charge for processing a paper billing invoice.** Cecil Weeks seconded the motion and upon vote taken a majority vote was observed.

Long presented additional broadband project information to the Board concerning member response to fiber to the home advertisement, certain details of the ReConnect Grant Program application process, the status of the First Phase of construction and future staffing needs for the broadband subsidiary.

**Executive:** F. G. Wiygul, Chairman, presented revised committee appointments for the year in progress due to Board action taken at the January board meeting. Mr. Wiygul provided information concerning new assignments within the committee make up and emphasized that input from Directors concerning their interest in serving on various committees was incorporated into the committee appointments. Directors were encouraged to continue to provide input according to their interest.

Mr. Wiygul then called upon Scott Hendrix to present the next order of business. Mr. Hendrix continued and explained the need for the Board to adopt a policy that states the process and specific details by which an Association member will be entitled to examine certain Association records and information. After explanation of the proposed policy by Mr. Hendrix, **Chairman Wiygul on behalf of a review and unanimous approval of the policy by the Executive committee, recommended that the policy as developed by Mr. Hendrix be approved.** Requiring no second, and upon vote of the Board, a majority vote was observed.

**Personnel:** F. G. Wiygul, Chairman, presented information to the Board for incorporation of a new staff position referred to as an Information Technology (IT) Specialist. The duties of the position will include service to the electric function as well as the broadband function. The position will be advertised for member applications through the normal method through the WIN Job Center, the Times, the Daily Journal and by listing on the TEPA website. After explanation of the staffing request by management, and on behalf of the Personnel Committee, **Mr. Wiygul made the recommendation that the new staff position be filled.** Requiring no second by the committee recommendation, a majority vote of approval was observed.

#### **Auditor's Report:**

Mr. Hagood provided Directors with a copy of the TEPA Monthly Highlights Report, prepared by Franks, Franks, Wilemon and Hagood for the six (6) months ending December 2019. Mr. Hagood explained various details and information provided by the report. Net income is tracking very close to last year but lagging slightly due to reduced sales to the residential sector due to mild winter weather conditions.

**Manager's Report:** Long reported to the Board on the following matters:

Electric Cooperative activities:

- Provided general information concerning a request by an investment firm that is making a proposal to the City of Tupelo concerning an upgrade to LED street light fixtures. TEPA is being approached by the same company offering to review a similar proposal for replacement of lighting for that part of the city that TEPA serves.
- The electric bill pre-pay program is working well. To date, there are more than 40 members utilizing that program. After a little more use of the program for working out startup problems, we will start advertising the program to members.
- Provided a thank you response from Mrs. Mabel Murphree for the Board's endorsement for her as a future candidate for a TVA Board position.

Broadband Subsidiary activities:

- Provided general information concerning the upcoming broadband RDOF Grant Program. Application to occur later this year.
- Provided more general information concerning the Reconnect Round 2 grant.
- Provided an update of the contractor progress with the different segment of the fiber system construction.

Matters of Mutual Concern:

There being no further business, **Don Knight made a motion that the March 2020 Board meeting be held at the Tupelo Headquarters.** Buddy Palmer seconded the motion and upon vote taken a majority vote was observed.

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F. G. Wiygul, Jr., President

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Buddy Palmer, Vice-president