

Member Survey 2016: Annual Meeting and Election

Summary of Results

A member survey targeting members who attended the annual meeting was released on May 2, 2016, and was closed on June 8, 2016. Attendees were contacted via email. A total of 195 members received the survey (out of 261 members who attended, 195 email addresses were available/valid). The final sample size was 90 respondents (46%). The following is a summation of the results. The survey questions and narrative responses are included at the end of the document.

Key takeaways:

- Members are closely divided about moving to all absentee voting versus the current process (electronic, mail-in, and in-person).
- The majority support spending more time for 'Q&A Session'.
- Members were largely satisfied with the 2016 annual meeting.
- Sound quality issues with the PA system were mentioned as the most important area for improvement.
- Members were most motivated to attend the annual meeting in order to 'stay informed about issues' and 'participate in co-op governance'.
- The majority prefer to keep the door prizes and bill credit incentives as they are.
- Most members reported that they do read the annual report and a slight majority (53%) prefer to read it online.
- The greatest areas of satisfaction are Q&A, presences of positive discourse, and open discussion about issues and concerns.

2016 Annual Meeting

Key takeaways:

- Members were largely satisfied (77.6%) with the 2016 annual meeting (36% very satisfied, 41.6% satisfied).
- Greatest area of improvement cited: sound system
- Greatest areas of satisfaction: Q&A, Presence of positive discourse, Open discussion about issues and concerns

When asked to rank annual rating meeting activities by importance, **the top three activities** were:

- Q&A with OPALCO leadership
- Hearing from OPALCO leadership
- Election results

Annual Election

Key takeaways:

- Members are fairly evenly divided about voting preferences: hybrid absentee + vote on the boat – 51.7% vs. all absentee – 48.3%.
- 40% of respondents reported attending a candidate forum

Annual Report

Key takeaways:

- A large majority of respondents (80%) read the annual report, with just over half (53%) preferring to read it online
- Financial reports were the most important content to 63% of respondents

The 80% of respondents who reported that they read OPALCO's annual report were asked a follow up question about their preference for the publication online or in print and why.

- Those who prefer online (53%) referenced cost and waste savings.
- Those who prefer print mentioned the ease of reading print.

Financial reports were the most important content to respondents, at 63.2%.

State of the Union reports were second most important, at 26.5%.

OPALCO Member Survey 2016

On Annual Meeting and Election

You are receiving this survey because you (or someone in your member household) attended the OPALCO Annual Meeting on April 30, 2016. Thank you for your participation in our Co-op governance!

This brief survey measures your preferences and satisfaction on the voting process, annual meeting activities and annual report publication for the purpose of planning next year's activities and events. We appreciate your feedback so that we can better meet the needs of our membership.

The survey is completely anonymous and only offered online.

Please submit your answers by Friday, May 27th.

Please click "Next" to continue (or click the arrow on an apple device).

1. The vast majority of members vote by absentee ballot. However, members can vote in person at the annual meeting, where those ballots are tallied by hand. The meeting tally is combined with the certified absentee ballot tally and results are announced at the annual meeting.

Our annual meeting agenda is primarily focused on the election with minimal time for other activities. Other co-ops have opted for absentee voting only and conclude their election before the annual meeting in order to use the meeting time for more member interaction and activities. What is your preference?

- a. Absentee ballots only; no voting at the annual meeting
 - b. Keep it the same: voting allowed by absentee ballot and in person at the meeting
2. What motivates you to attend the OPALCO Annual Meeting? Please pick up to 3 factors that motivate you:
 - a. \$5 Bill Credit
 - b. Participation in co-op governance
 - c. Lunch and door prizes
 - d. Staying informed about co-op issues
 - e. The opportunity to address the co-op membership and leadership
 - f. Visiting with friends from throughout the County
 - g. Other: (NARRATIVE)
 3. Which of the following Annual Meeting activities are most important to you (rate)
 - a. Election Results
 - b. Lunch and door prizes
 - c. Q & A with OPALCO leadership
 - d. Hearing from OPALCO leadership
 - e. Hearing from outside speakers
 - f. Other: (NARRATIVE)

4. In order to cut costs and reduce waste, OPALCO publishes its annual report online with an abbreviated version available in print, distributed only at the annual meeting. Do you read OPALCO's annual report? (y/n)
 - a. [Logic if Yes to 4] Do you prefer to read online or in print?
 - i. Online
 - ii. In print
 - b. [Logic if Online to 4a] Why do you prefer to read online?
 - c. [Logic if In Print to 4a] Why do you prefer to read in print?
 - d. [Logic if Yes to 4a] What content in the OPALCO Annual Report is most important to you?
 - i. Financial reporting
 - ii. State of the Union reports
 - iii. Photos
 - iv. Stories about members
 - v. Other

5. Our lender RUS requires us to hold an annual meeting and our bylaws have set a quorum at 100 co-op members. OPALCO offers incentives such as door prizes and a \$5 bill credit to ensure a quorum at the annual meeting. Would you prefer:
 - a. Keep it the same: door prizes and a \$5 bill credit
 - b. Larger bill credit and no door prizes
 - c. No incentive; members should attend in service to their Co-op
 - d. Other: (NARRATIVE)

6. How satisfied were you with the 2016 Annual Meeting? (scale)

7. What was the best part of the annual meeting for you? [narrative answer]

8. What is the #1 thing we could change to increase the value of the annual meeting for you? [narrative answer]

9. Did anyone from your household attend one of the candidate forums hosted by OPALCO?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

Thank you for your feedback and cooperation! Survey results will be posted in our Resource Library online at www.opalco.com by June 30, 2016. We are listening.

2016 Member Survey: Annual Meeting and Election

Narrative Responses

Note: duplicate responses are indicated with a number (x) following the comment

Q: What was the best part of the annual meeting for you?

- Getting to Orcas by noon!
- CEO presentation.
- Jeff's Galley lunch.
- Hearing about OPALCO issues
- gratitude expressed by members
- food, prizes, election results, hearing from the people.
- Question & Answer session and responses from management (10)
- Forecast of where the whole system is working. Optic Fiber report (towers, timeline, etc.) Meeting the directors and potential directors.
- meeting people, getting vote results 'first.'
- The weather (2)
- It was a nice day for a ferry ride
- No best part. The member comments were interesting. The entire meeting was a bit disjointed
- Defeat of [member name redacted] attempted coup.
- Seeing the energy and enthusiasm in the people in and around OPALCO/Rock Island
- Opportunity to speak and listen to others concerns. Eating lunch was also necessary
- Hearing positive experiences, not just the negatives in social media (6)
- hearing the propaganda of this "great" organization
- Staff (especially Foster) nicely moved the meeting along without short changing any member wishing to speak.
- Hearing from president and having him explain many of the member concerns. We felt better about OPALCO management and goals for important initiatives such as Internet and reasons for enormous future expenses.
- no "best" part
- Reports and Q &A
- information the lunch was poor
- Member participation; questions to BOD.
- Lunch and opportunity to get things to help us save power
- Hearing all the support expressed for OPALCO.
- Hearing civil Q&A and discussions, and the positive spin the meeting took. Hooray!!
- When the current board was re-elected.
- Hearing from the OPALCO Leadership
- Election results - outcome was as we voted And how dissidents were controlled
- all of it
- Door prizes. We won. (2)
- The worst part of the annual meeting was hearing a member bring up an issue for vote, having it seconded, and not allowing discussion or vote, after all what is an annual meeting of members for...just to be fed the board's information. If the board wants the trust of the board this needs to change

- Members having direct access to ask questions
- Discussion regarding Smart-grid. Meeting candidates.
- Having some contentious issues brought out in the open. More of this must be continuing...
- To hear what is happening with OPALCO and what is being done to better our co-op.
- interaction with the members
- The election results. The lunch was great, but was served way before lunch time....
- Hearing the reasoning behind the decision to purchase Rock Island and install fiber optics.
- Having more time for Q&A.
- Meeting members from my own and other Islands. A sense of county wide community.
- Hearing from the many members who appreciate the OPALCO/ROCK ISLAND broadband rollout, both fiber and LTE. This and the board voting results show that it's just a vocal minority who are against OPALCO providing this capability.
- just being there
- Election of members of the Board of Directors that I supported
- Presentation on modern grid
- Rock Island presentation
- Members voicing their opinions, and seeing many not normally in our daily orbit
- Talking to OPALCO staff
- Board Comments
- The worst part was seeing a member bring forth an issue for vote and discussion. Also Question and Answer period should be held for Questions and Answers not people standing to praise Rock Island...as I have heard many say ...It sounded Staged!!
- Votes
- Question and answer when it is done with spontaneity, not people planted to ask safe questions.
- Hearing about the future plans for the coop, also hearing members express POSITIVE comments about the coop and broadband services. I am sick to death with the negatons and their conspiracy theories about how the coop is out to screw us.
- The summary of issues by Vince
- talking with individuals about EV charging and alternative energy
- Participating in the coop

Q: What is the #1 thing we could change to increase the value of the annual meeting for you?

- Improve the sound system (11)
- Rope off/seating for Lopez. There were too few saved when we boarded. (3)
- too much time wasted on calling ## of door prizes...not have obvious plants in the audience...listen actively to members, too much preaching from 'leadership'...
- Increase amount of bill credit
- Have annual meeting in a big tent with BBQ and socializing, at Eastsound office, with shuttle from ferry for other islanders. Music, fiddlers, kids' activities, informative booths.
- And maybe reserve some seats for each island. By the time Lopez gets on, we get stuck in the back behind the food tables every year.
- We cannot think of a single thing! Good job done by all as far as we know. Thank you for the LED night light.
- There wasn't as much info from OPALCO or BPA this year-- and the sound system was really flaky.

- More info about online services
- More time for Q&A (7)
- We need name tags and real names drawn for door prizes instead of numbers. It was too impersonal
- Better audio equipment performance. That would allow more interaction during the Q&A with more points of contact, rather than one person running a microphone back and forth.
- Board members discussing what is important to them and future plans and issues facing the coop.
- decrease costs to members
- less talking by the slick rock island dudes and more flow charts and means of showing members the flow of funds and debt, roles played by upper management, you know, transparency in general, not just a lot of bs assurances from guys brought in from outside to snow the local rubes
- Cut down a bit on number of prizes offered to allow more discussion. Otherwise I think the 2016 meeting was well done.
- occur earlier in the year, before the weather turns nice, to avoid 'losing' a nice outside work day.
- Fix the sound system. Otherwise, well done. Such meetings are difficult to organize and execute on one-off basis. Lunches were very good and more efficiently handled. Big thanks to Jeff Nichols and his staff. Good to see such heavy support and attendance by OPALCO and other management. WSF did well with ferry service too. Lots of good stuff for prizes.
- Be honest! Too much patting on the back. Mutual admiration society.
- recycle the name tag neck holders for the following year
- Reduce the time given to the election of directors.
- More time devoted to explanations of OPALCO actions.
- Remove voting and election logistics
- 1) make Q&A session longer 2) give board candidates time to speak 3) shorten the endless "and thanks also to ..." session 4) eliminate door prizes 5) get competent people to set up the sound system
- If there are to be door prizes, have people's attention.; the non-attentionees were the ones that made the drawing tedious. And possibly less prizes.
- More seating where people can both see and hear. Lopez Island folks have trouble finding seats.
- Eliminate the Q & A period at the Annual Meeting and consider instead a quarterly (or semi-annually) open forum on each Island where members can have their Q&A with OPALCO Leadership. Leaving the Annual Meeting more for celebrating the Co-op and the values it represents.
- Don't do it on the boat - you could have better door prizes and a better attendance
- Have the leadership genuinely address concerns.
- Allow the freedom of membership to bring up any issue at the annual meeting for discussion and then vote without prior notice to the board. More transparency is needed. A committee (voted by membership, not appointed by the board) having an annual audit that is presented verbally and on paper at the annual meeting. If your reasoning that this open discussion and voting can't take place at the current meeting site that another site should be found. Also ballots for voting for OPALCO board members should NOT be sent out before the candidate meetings that are held on each Island as they were this year.
- Management and board being more authentic
- Much more careful attention to the distribution of loudspeakers, and always repeating the questions asked from the audience before answering. You may have noticed that those

attending are getting ever older and most likely deafer?

- I can't think of anything, seems like your doing a great job.
- more information about the future state of the coop and how we will be ready for the future, rather than listen to shouting members, who seem to be a minority.
- Have some mikes in back of the main meeting area so those late comers (Lopez) who must find other seating will be able to hear better.
- Four to five times the amount of time was spent on distributing door prizes than was spent in Q & A. A wonderful opportunity to explain was lost. A shame.
- We should have the outside auditors send someone to present a short "independent" look at the Coop's overall financial state.
- Nothing
- Better reporting on future directions of energy investment for our service area in the islands.
- Rotate among the islands for ferry departure (not always Orcas).
- everything is fine
- More focus on renewable energy sources and steps to modernize the grid and fiber systems. Create greater understanding of the community impacts of improvements to these systems
- Less bullshit, more transparency
- streamline voting to allow for more Q&A
- This is the Board's chance to tell the members about the major decisions they have made this year. We can better understand those decisions and the reasons for those decisions. Vince's info on smart grid is fine for a couple of years ago when you made that decision. This year RIC decision should have been the major topic. That would have been of great interest.
- Allow all members to have a say and bring up an issue for vote and to ALWAYS have OPEN and HONEST DISCUSSION. Candidate forum should be held before they send out any voting forms
- Make it more fun. It's rather boring. In the past there was more of a party atmosphere. There was an interesting managers report, more door prizes, there were booths he's for people to mill around, there were name tags, door prizes were called out by names, etc. this annual meeting was way to impersonal.
- Nothing. I thought the limit on comments was great and kept the negative folks from monopolizing the mic.
- Provide chairs for everyone
- I think you do it well for an A.G.M.
- better lunches - organic and local - I didn't really like the lunch served this time
- less talk – enough seating for everyone

Members were asked if they preferred to read the annual report in print or online. A follow up question was asked, depending on their answer:

Q: Why do you prefer to read than annual report online?

- short attention span
- Easy to save report electronically.
- reduce paper
- Support cost savings / avoid waste / save paper (16)
- Paper costs \$ to dispose of
- No material waste. Easy to catalog and reference.
- Easier and saves printing costs for the co-op
- active links to additional material
- gives me all the details I need, at my convenience, without wasting money or trees.
- It arrives in a timely way and is easy to read. Saves having to recycle the paper.
- The report can be printed.
- Easy
- no paper laying around the house
- as long as the print is large, I prefer to not generate one time paper
- I'm used to reading my professional documents, news, etc. on line. Conserves paper!
- I know it is cheaper. If I have a paper version, it gets recycled. Save paper up front!

Q: Why do you prefer to read in print?

- better retention
- Can be re-read easily. Easy to make notes from print. Do not need an electronic device to read.
- If it is print I pick it up and read it. On line is out of sight out of mind.
- Old eyes. I cannot read from screens very long without difficulty
- easier and more convenient (6)
- personal preference; easier to read than online
- keep around as a reference material
- I just do like print version
- have copy in hand
- length, portability.
- Easier to read when I look at computers all day already
- convenient
- Easier and like to keep them - more personal (3)
- There are some members who do not use a computer and have a right to the information
- I can read it over time, it doesn't get lost in my email before I finish reading it.
- More time to ruminate, & old eyes tired of screen time
- Because my computer doesn't work very well at times.
- Not always online
- More comfortable
- Actual Document
- I actually prefer both, so all membership has access to it, even those technically challenged!

- clarity & margin notes
- like to not read on the computer but I can print it out
- It is important to have it in print for those members who don't use a computer
- I am old
- Why do I need to justify my preference? I will read it if in hand, otherwise, out of sight, out of mind.
- I can read it over time, it doesn't get lost in my email before I finish reading it.
- can absorb it better