

THE ISLAND WAY

PODCAST

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EPISODE 1: COMMUNITY SOLAR

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Episode 1: Community Solar



ANNUAL MEETING RECAP

On Saturday, April 24th, Doug Marshall of the member Election and Governance Committee announced the results of OPALCO's Board of Director election at the Annual Meeting held via Zoom. In District 2 (Orcas et al), Jeff Struthers led with 871 votes, landing a three-year term; Rick Christmas was close with 664 votes to serve a two-year term. The balance of the votes for District 2 were Rick Fant with 534 votes and Joseph Cohen with 490 votes. In District 3 (Lopez, Decatur et al), Tom Osterman won the position with 535 votes and will serve a three-year term. The balance of the votes for District 3 were Eric Beckman with 485 votes and Peter Garlock with 325 votes. A total of 1,425 ballots were cast, which equates to 12.6% of the membership. The majority of the membership voted online.

Marshall encouraged OPALCO members to step up and serve on the volunteer Elections and Governance Committee (EGC). The EGC is responsible for cultivating qualified candidates for each board election. There are currently open positions on the EGC in every district. The time commitment is reasonable: committee members work year-round on a casual basis to identify potential candidates; meetings are concentrated November through January during the election season.

About 135 people logged in to participate in the annual membership meeting on Zoom. In their state of the co-op addresses, Board President Vince Daucinas and General Manager Foster Hildreth acknowledged the top-notch co-op team – staff and Board members – who provided the “safety, reliability” power during the COVID-19 pandemic. Daucinas relayed the big picture concerns for how our energy landscape is changing. Hildreth recounted the major challenges to our island communities during the pandemic, and some of the accomplishments of 2020 including the Decatur Island Microgrid project, COVID-19 energy assistance programs and Rock Island Communications' success in providing internet services to more than 47% of the County.

Hildreth gave members a bright look forward with the mission and activities of the Island Way Campaign: Determining our own Energy Future. The campaign is designed to help members prepare for the major change in the energy industry due to the escalating climate emergency and resulting shift away from fossil fuels. Hildreth

encouraged members to take advantage of OPALCO's programs and on-bill financing to make efficiency upgrades and switch to electricity for heating and transportation.

More than 50 of the attendees participated in a Q&A session and asked thoughtful questions about solar power, the future of our power supply, broadband access and tidal power. Members also expressed gratitude for the cooperative, the dedicated line crew and the various programs that OPALCO offers, like the EV Happy Deal. OPALCO will be posting the recording of the Annual Meeting on their website.

Thanks to donations from OPALCO's generous vendors and partners, about 25 door prizes were given out to members attending the meeting including electric lawn tools, emergency prep kits, battery backups for computers and electric home goods and gift cards. Prizes were provided by: Carlson Sales Metering solutions, CRC, Earthworks, Evergreen Consulting, GenPac, Jen-Jay Inc (local business), NRUCFC, NWPPA, Orcas Construction Co, Pixelspoke, Schrock, Rock Island Communications, Orcas Saw and Rental and Peppe Piccone's Greenworks dealership.

Based on a roll taken during the annual meeting, members who attended will receive a \$10 bill credit (one per membership). The following co-op members who voted in this years election will receive a \$50 bill credit after their names were randomly drawn from all ballots received: Asborn Osland, Margaret Cocchi, Trish Maharam, Michelle Harden, Emma Timmins-Schiffman, Steven Henigson, Christopher Duty, Mark Reisinger, Ida Forsythe, and Arthur Lange.

Members in attendance at the annual meeting also were credited with one raffle entry for a drawing on October 1st. OPALCO is giving away ten shares of the 2021 Community Solar project and a Greenworks electric lawnmower. Members can enter to win by attending the Island Way workshops; one entry per member per event they attend, based on a roll taken at each meeting.

OPALCO is required by the Rural Utilities Services (RUS) to hold an annual meeting each year. Members who missed the meeting can read the 2020 Annual Report online (www.opalco.com).

THE ISLAND WAY

DETERMINING OUR OWN ENERGY FUTURE

Everyone plays a part in the transition away from fossil fuels - for the good of our island communities and the planet.

YOU CAN:

Electrify Heating and Transportation

Subscribe to Community Solar

Use Smarthub to monitor your energy usage

Find ways to conserve and become more efficient



LEARN MORE AT WWW.OPALCO.COM/ISLANDWAY

ISLAND WAY WORKSHOP SESSIONS

- May 27th @ 5 pm: The Island Way – Virtual
- June 1st @ 5 pm: Get the most out your Ductless Heat Pump – Virtual
- June 14th @ 12 pm: Switch It Up! – Virtual
- August 5th @ 4:30 pm: Electric Vehicle Fair – OPALCO Eastsound Parking Lot
- August 26th @ 12 pm: How to use SmartHub – Virtual
- September 20th @ 5pm: Solar Town Hall #2 – Virtual

Island Way workshops are interactive hour-long sessions designed to help members get the information and support they need to prepare for a sustainable energy future.

PLUS, you get entered to win 10 shares of Community Solar or an electric lawnmower. Each time you attend a workshop, you get another entry to win - drawing October 1st for OPALCO members.

FIND THE FULL LIST OF ISLAND WAY SESSIONS AT WWW.OPALCO.COM/CALENDAR