

# NEWS



**Crawford Electric**  
A Touchstone Energy®  
Cooperative 

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Voters turn out to participate in Crawford Electric's virtual meeting 3 incumbent directors re-elected**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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BOURBON – The 80<sup>th</sup> meeting of members of Crawford Electric Cooperative drew near-record voter participation to a completely virtual event on Wednesday, Sept. 16.

"Members really responded to the call to cast their absentee ballots," said Laura Hengstenberg, who organizes the co-op's member meeting. "Due to the pandemic, we couldn't hold a large, in-person gathering. So, quorum had to be reached by members voting in the director election."

Quorum is the minimum number of participating members required to conduct official business at a member meeting. The co-op's bylaws specifically recognize absentee voters as counting toward quorum requirements.

When the monthlong voting window closed, there were 1,135 cast ballots, well exceeding the 184 members required for quorum.

The virtual member meeting on Sept. 16 was a mix of livestream action and pre-recorded segments. There were opening ceremonies, including a recording of local singing sensation Blake Beckett performing the National Anthem. The co-op's attorney Shawn Battagler acted as parliamentarian and conducted the official business, including announcing election results. Co-op CEO/General Manager Tony Mallory offered his remarks in the form of a pre-produced video that included drone footage of the co-op.

A recording of the entire meeting may be found at <https://crawfordelec.com/content/special-meeting-2020>

"Things were a little different this year, but we were able to conduct the required business and have a little fun with the new format," Hengstenberg said.

Of the 1,135 participating members, 284 voted online and 851 submitted mail-in ballots. That was the second highest mail-in ballot total in the 25 years that mail-in balloting has been a part of Crawford Electric director elections.

"Only the election in 2005 had more mail-in ballots," Hengstenberg said. "And that year, we had contests in all three district races."

In the 2020 director election, there was only one contested race. Members chose to re-elect all three incumbent directors to three-year terms.

Both the District 1 and District 3 incumbents were unopposed in their re-election bids. Janice Dorson of Sullivan (District 1) and Joe Cason of Cuba (District 3) won near-unanimous support, earning more than 90% of the vote.

District 2 was a four-way contest, with incumbent Debbie Willette of Sullivan winning by more than 300 votes. Willette garnered 548 votes. Her closest challenger, James H. "Jim" Smith of Bourbon, received 210. Other challengers in that district were Valery Wright of Owensville (197 votes) and Larry Motsinger of Leslie (153 votes).

The co-op offered several incentives to encourage members to vote.

"The first 1,000 voters were guaranteed a \$5 electric credit," Hengstenberg said. In a random draw, 43 members also won higher-value electric credits, ranging from \$50 to \$100, \$250 to \$500. The grand prize was a \$1,000 electric credit, won by David Calkins of Beaufort.

Crawford Electric Cooperative is a member of Touchstone Energy, a national alliance of locally owned, community-minded electric co-ops with high standards of service. Crawford Electric serves about 20,000 meters along almost 3,000 miles of distribution lines in Crawford, Franklin, Gasconade, Washington and Dent counties.