

BOARDLINES

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Info and Opinions from Your Board Members



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Self-Healing Power Lines

While reading the American Public Power Association's July 9, 2015 national newsletter I saw the headline "Seattle puts 'self-healing' power lines into operation" - - "automated switching technology designed to speed the restoration of service when a power line is damaged. The distribution automation equipment works by detecting an outage and isolating the section of the circuit that is affected. Power is then re-routed to restore service to all areas except for those that are directly affected."

Originally distribution lines went from the power source to customers in a single direction. For several years Central Lincoln has been upgrading our lines, and we continue to update to loops that go out around and return back to the power source. The loop allows redundancy, so power can be sent out in both directions. Our line crews can isolate the problem and reenergize unaffected customers while repairing the problem. This is a great improvement, however it requires waiting until a line crew reaches the location.

As I read the article it occurred to me Central Lincoln PUD also has "self-healing power lines." With our recent Smart Grid Project a large portion of Central Lincoln's infrastructure was upgraded similarly to the APPA article, allowing us faster response to many power issues.

Evaluating A General Manager

In a recent Boardlines I wrote about this Board's duties and responsibilities. Some are required by statute and others are established by the Board. One of the board's most important established roles is to review the performance of the general manager.



Board members Ron Benfield, Larkin Kaliher, and Tom Tymchuk were each re-elected to new four year terms in November last year. Lincoln County Clerk Dana Jenkins (right) performed the swearing-in ceremony

Imbedded in our board's governance model are areas that focus on the board-general manager relationship and executive limitations. These areas and others provide the board with a basis to monitor the general manager's performance. The monitoring is structured to be continuous throughout the year with an annual review.

During her most recent performance review with the board, our current general manager, Debra Smith, was praised for meeting or exceeding our expectations. She has truly focused our employees on providing

outstanding service to our customers. She is well-respected in the Northwest public power community. I have personally been approached by employees and customers who have mentioned what a great job she has been doing.

Some of you might know that I am a Beaver Believer (OSU) but sadly, Debra is a Duck,(UofO), however in time I am hopeful we might convert her.



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ESA- Take 2

Last year in Boardlines, I discussed a fund used by the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) called the Energy Supplier Assessment (ESA). This fund is paid into by energy suppliers including Central Lincoln, and is used to support projects and programs that ODOE feels it needs to underwrite. The problem is that there is no oversight as to what projects are funded and years ago the Oregon Legislature provided a very generous cap to the amount ODOE can assess.

Because of this lack of oversight, last year I reported we were looking into getting a legal judgment as to whether this assessment was actually a tax, and not a fee. The advantage of this determination would be that any adjustments to the Energy Supplier Assessment would have to be approved by a 2/3 majority of the Legislature. ODOE came back and struck a bargain in which it promised to be very transparent with its budget and any plans to adjust the assessment. In return, we would not push for a legal judgment.

Well, ODOE has not lived up to its end of the bargain and is moving ahead with plans to fund things like a new building— again without oversight. At this point the Department has violated a state statute that clearly defined a process for budget transparency and oversight. We just received our assessment for this year, and it went up 34.6% over last year's assessment. Central Lincoln paid under protest.

We firmly believe that your hard-earned dollars should not be spent on the latest whim of ODOE or other state departments that have utilized the ESA money. It looks like we will be back to getting a legal judgment from the courts on this issue. Stay tuned; we will keep you updated.



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Good Things Happen When People Work Together

I've lived on the Oregon Coast for 65 years, and I love it here. My kids grew up here, and some of my grandchildren have, too. The community has had some tough times, so I am really pleased when I see folks working together to move us in a positive direction.

Reedsport just said goodbye to a graduate student who worked as our Main Street Coordinator, helping to raise some \$31,000 towards community projects, with over 40 volunteers pulling together to make good things happen. New banners are going up, engraved bricks are being installed, and storefront facades are getting new looks. Clean-up events have been held, too.

Reedsport's own Katie Lockard is coming back after time at Oxford

University to take over as Main Street Coordinator this month, and I'm looking forward to see what more will be done as she and volunteers in the community focus on work that's needed to make our communities shine. Again and again, it's always great to see what can happen on the Oregon Coast when people work together for the common good.



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What's Up with Those Trucks and Linemen?

I've had several folks ask me about all the Central Lincoln activity on Highway 101 in the northern portion of Florence: What's going on??

I'm happy to share that Central Lincoln is investing about \$6 million in upgrading our lines on Highway 101 in Florence, which will complete a loop around Florence that will reduce outages in this area. You hate outages as do I, and less of them will be a good thing.

We're also building a new substation at the Pacific View Business Park. We've been planning for this substation for many years, and now it's needed due to considerable growth in the Florence area in the past ten years. We hope to have the new Kingwood Substation up and running by the end of this year.

The third phase of the project is an upgrade of our Heceta Beach Substation. It's served the north Florence area well, but needs modernizing to accommodate additional growth in our system. We expect to start this last phase of the project in the spring of next year, completing the project next October.

Central Lincoln exists solely to serve its customers, and I'm hopeful these upgrades will give you even more reasons to be pleased with the service we provide.



Board member Judy Matheny rode in a 100% electric-powered car in Florence's famed Rhododendron Festival Grand Floral Parade this year.