

Election Q&A

Does the Cooperative provide members' contact information to candidates for campaigning?

No. The cooperative does not distribute members' email addresses, phone numbers, or other contact information.

Who votes in the cooperative's director elections?

Cooperative members (individuals and businesses receiving electric service from Connexus Energy) are eligible to vote in director elections.

How long are director terms and when do they begin?

Director terms are for three years and begin immediately following the Annual Meeting.

Do I vote in all director districts?

Yes, voting is at-large. Therefore, all members are able to vote in all director districts. Directors are nominated by director district, but are elected at-large and serve all members.

Who nominates the director candidates?

Director candidates are nominated by members of the cooperative who serve on a Selection Committee appointed each year. These members are independent from the cooperative office and board. This committee reviews the director candidate applications and conducts interviews prior to making nominations.

Candidates may also be placed on the ballot by member petition if they meet the bylaw qualifications for being a director.

How do I know who to vote for in the director election?

Candidate bios are provided in the mailed Annual Meeting voting packet and online.

When do I receive my ballot and Annual Meeting information?

In early April each year, the independent tabulation firm mails the ballots with the Annual Meeting packet to each member.

How do I vote in the director election?

You may vote online or by mail. Details to vote online and by mail are included in the Annual Meeting packet. Voting online requires your individual passcode included in the packet as a security measure.

Who counts the votes in the director election?

An independent tabulation firm is hired by the cooperative to mail, receive, and tabulate the ballots.

What is the deadline to vote?

Paper ballots must arrive at the tabulation firm by the Annual Meeting. Online votes must be placed by 10:15 a.m. on the day of the Annual Meeting.

What is the voter participation for Connexus Energy's director elections?

Connexus Energy's members participate in director elections at a rate on par with the national average of other large cooperatives (cooperatives with memberships between 94,000-190,000).

Do the candidates or the cooperative office know who I vote for in the director elections?

No. An independent tabulation firm is used to mail, receive, and tabulate the ballots. The tabulation firm assigns a voting passcode to each member, which is printed on the return mailing envelope included in the member voting packets. The privacy ballot envelope is separated from the return mailing envelope with this passcode. Therefore, who votes and how they voted is separated in the process of receipt and tabulation by the firm.

The Minnesota State Statutes for cooperative elections directs this process, which the tabulation firm follows. None of the information on who voted in the election is provided to individuals outside the tabulation firm. This helps ensure fair and unbiased elections.

When and how are the ballots counted?

The independent tabulation firm provides a secure online voting system, which tabulates the web votes when a member completes voting online. Therefore, online ballots are tabulated within their secure software system from the time ballots are received by members until the online deadline of 10:15 a.m. on the day of the Annual Meeting.

Mail-in paper ballots received by the tabulation firm are opened and processed/scanned based on the volume received each day from the time of the mailing of the ballots until the last post office pick-up made by the tabulation firm on the day of the Annual Meeting.

The tabulation firm calculates the total votes per candidate made online and by mail and provides the results to the legal counsel to announce at the Annual Meeting.

If the cooperative or tabulation firm has my email address, can we save paper and postage and just receive the information to vote electronically and not receive a packet in the mail?

The Minnesota State Statutes on cooperative elections state members must be mailed a ballot with a ballot privacy envelope and return mailing envelope to their residence. Therefore, while you may vote online, all members are mailed a voting

packet to their home, which includes members' privacy passcodes to enter the online web voting system. It also ensures members receive their voting packets if they change their email address.

Why are there two separate envelopes in the Annual Meeting packet to send in my ballot?

In accordance with the Minnesota State Statutes, the independent tabulation firm for the election will separate the return mailing envelope with the member's assigned privacy passcode (which the tabulation firm assigns) from the privacy ballot envelope, which then separates the ballot with votes cast from the mailing envelope that tracks who voted. This is also a security measure to eliminate voting by more than one of the two voting options.

Are businesses in the Connexus Energy service territory allowed to vote in the director election?

Yes. Businesses located in the cooperative's service territory and receiving electric service from Connexus are also considered members. Therefore, they will also receive a ballot to vote.

If I'm planning to vote online, do I need the Annual Meeting voting packet from the mail?

Yes. Online voting requires your individual privacy passcode provided by the independent tabulation firm, which is included in your mailed Annual Meeting voting packet. Or, you may scan the QR code with a mobile device to access your individual ballot.

Are the Board of Directors considered employees of the cooperative?

No. The directors are elected to the board by the membership. They serve as representatives of the cooperative membership and are not employed by Connexus Energy.

When are the election results announced?

Results of the election will be announced at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting.