

## District 2

### **RICHARD BRAASTAD - INCUMBENT**

15203 Radisson Rd. NE, Ham Lake, MN 55304

#### **Occupation**

Retired Electrical Contractor/Business Owner

#### **Board Experience**

Connexus Energy (2022 - Present)

#### **Post-Secondary Education**

MN Electrical Association – Electrical Licensing (every 2 years)

#### ***What do you believe is an important opportunity and the most important challenge facing Connexus Energy, and how would you address both if you were elected?***

It will be important for Connexus Energy to become as efficient as possible while exploring new and diverse delivery methods and business models. Embracing the opportunity to find and utilize new and upcoming technologies will lead to continued affordable and reliable energy. I see that the number one challenge facing Connexus will be meeting Minnesota's 100% carbon free legislation that mandates all electricity be generated from carbon free resources by 2040. It will be a challenge to meet these mandates and keep electricity costs affordable for all of our members.

#### ***What do you believe members want from their electric utility and what keeps them satisfied with Connexus Energy?***

Customers simply want affordable, reliable and sustainable energy. In a time where we are seeing prices increase all around us, Connexus Energy members have been very satisfied with the consistent low rates and reliable electrical service. Power outages have been kept to a minimum, and if they occur, Connexus Energy provides excellent customer service to get power restored quickly. I believe that the members find the cash rebates beneficial.

#### ***What personally motivates you to serve on the Connexus Energy Board of Directors?***

Having an opportunity to help guide Connexus into the future while serving its members efficiently is my main motivation. Three years ago, as a retired electrician and when I first began serving on the Board of Directors for Connexus Energy, I was eager to learn about the inter-operations of Connexus Energy. I continue to learn more and more as time goes on and truly embrace the opportunity to be involved in an organization that serves our community in such an important way.

#### ***What do you believe are the top three reasons you would be well-qualified to serve on the Connexus Energy Board of Directors?***

I believe that the three main reasons that make me a well-qualified director would be my communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills. These three characteristics are ones that I have relied upon my entire career as an electrician and as a successful business owner.

#### ***Tell us what you believe are three of the most impactful member-owner benefits of the electric cooperative business structure?***

First of all, Connexus is a not-for-profit company, so they put profits back into the cooperative for more efficient operations. This allows the board to keep the rates as low as possible. Secondly the members receive cash back as a benefit. Lastly Connexus gives so much back to the community in many different ways and partners with many different organizations within their service area.

#### ***Regarding your skills as a potential director, tell us one of your strengths and how it would contribute to the Connexus Board and list one weakness needing development and your plan to address it.***

I believe that I bring common sense decision making to the board which helps in being good at problem solving and strategic planning. I look forward to continuing to learn more about the behind the scenes of Connexus Energy, as there is a lot to it.

