



Board Candidate Biography



DAREN BOWLES

District 2 - Incumbent

Ozark Electric Member for 31 Years

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF OZARK ELECTRIC?

31 Years.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE ON THE BOARD OR IS THERE A PARTICULAR ISSUE THAT MOTIVATES YOU?

I desire to serve on the Board with an increasing motivation to protect and preserve a healthy future to provide reliable and affordable electricity for all our current and future members of Ozark Electric. Before having the opportunity to serve on the Board the past three years, I like many, took for granted the complexity of what is needed to provide electricity to our homes. I would like to continue serving on the Board to help ensure a good future for Ozark Electric and its members.

WHAT SKILLS DO YOU POSSESS THAT YOU BELIEVE WILL BE AN ASSET TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

After serving on the board for three years, I have gained a sufficient knowledge and confidence that has allowed me to inform and educate the membership that I represent to help answer the questions that they may have. I will continue to be a voice for the membership as I bring those concerns to the board room for consideration. With the opportunity to continue serving on the Board, I am striving to better educate myself so I can be a contributing member of the Board to serve our members and protect the future of our COOP.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE PRIMARY WORK OR ROLE OF THE BOARD?

The primary role of the Board is to oversee the fiduciary duty of Ozark Electric and its future by good governance of responsible financial stability and making difficult decisions that will impact the future of reliable and affordable electricity for our member owners.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE GREATEST CHALLENGE OR TOP PRIORITY AT THE TIME FOR OZARK ELECTRIC?

In a growing and everchanging industry our top priority is to continue to provide reliable and affordable electricity. The national power grid continues to see growth in demand for electricity while the generation of electricity struggles to keep up with that demand. The aging infrastructure has to always be in mind with ongoing plans to update and build what is necessary to provide electricity to our membership. With the retirement of coal plants and the overreach of EPA regulations slated to take place in 2028, we at Ozark Electric and Board of Directors have to pay constant attention to changing trends in electric production to ensure the best possible future for Ozark Electric Cooperative.

ARE YOU COMFORTABLE INTERACTING WITH THE COMMUNITY AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK/INPUT FROM MEMBERS?

I feel very comfortable and enjoy interacting with our members in the community. I consider it a great privilege to serve our membership by answering their questions and concerns and informing them with important and pertinent information concerning their cooperative. It is my responsibility to take the members concerns to the board for consideration.

HOW WILL YOU HANDLE PUSHBACK FROM MEMBERS ON DIVISIVE ISSUES OR DECISIONS?

It is my responsibility as a representative to the membership to listen with an open mind to divisive issues as they share their concerns. It is my practice to answer them with appropriate information as I have it and consult with the board or senior staff for further information if needed. It is important to let members know that sometimes difficult decisions have to be made to ensure the financial stability of the cooperative for the good of the entire membership and its future.

IN ONE OR TWO SENTENCES, EXPLAIN THE PROPER ROLE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

The Board of Directors is responsible to oversee the financial stability of the cooperative with good governance by consulting with the General Manager and senior staff without catering to any specific group or persons but for the sake of the entire cooperative membership.

WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO ULTIMATELY SUPPORT A BOARD DECISION OF WHICH YOU WERE NOT IN FAVOR?

I believe that the Board is a democratic process that allows a diverse group of members to come together with individual thoughts and ideas, but after a vote is made I believe it is necessary to come together as a unified Board and be in support of the decision that was made for the favor of the entire cooperative and its future.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE BEST WAY TO ADDRESS DIFFERENCES OF OPINION ON THE BOARD?

Each Board Director has the right to their own thoughts and ideas on any given issue. We need to allow each board member to be heard without prejudice or preference and come to a reasonable decision together that will benefit the entire cooperative and its future.

DO YOU HAVE SUFFICIENT TIME TO DEVOTE TO THIS POSITION?

Yes, I do.

ARE YOU AWARE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST YOU MAY HAVE IN SERVING ON THE BOARD?

No.

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT WITH OZARK ELECTRIC.

I am involved in monthly board meetings while serving on the finance committee for one year of the three-year term. I have regular calls with other board members to discuss pertinent issues and decisions to be made for future board meetings and occasional calls with senior staff to address member concerns or pressing issues. I attend the annual AECl, KAMO, and NRECA meetings to stay informed with current happenings in the generation, transmission, and distribution industry. I do regular research and am continuing education to help make me a better and more informed board member. I take regular calls with member questions and concerns to serve our membership the best I can.

IN ONE OR TWO SENTENCES, DESCRIBE YOUR VISION FOR OZARK ELECTRIC.

My vision for Ozark Electric is to strive to stay on the cutting edge of one of the top distribution cooperatives in the state, and continue to be an example of how a healthy cooperative operates and serves its members well. To succeed at this we must continue to explore new ideas and technologies to be the best electric cooperative for our current members and for the future of our next generation.