



# Board Candidate Biography



## MISTY SKINNER

### District 3

*Ozark Electric Member for 36 Years*

#### **HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF OZARK ELECTRIC?**

36 Years.

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

As a 36-year OEC member, living in the same residence in Lawrence County where I raised my kids, I chose now to get involved because it is time for change.

For years I trusted the OEC to make sound decisions and keep me informed. That trust was lost last year by the poor rollout of the Demand Charge. Overnight we were faced with making decisions about when we could do our laundry or run our dishwashers. Many of us had to quickly figure out which 15-minute combination of appliances and HVAC equipment would throw demand charge outside our household budgets, at a time when budgets were already stretched because of high grocery costs. One year later, we face another 20% increase for kwh on our April 2025 bills. In a twelve-month time span, many of us will see a 50% increase in our electricity bills. As members we understand energy costs are going up and expect increases. What is tough to understand is why, in the span of 12 months, our electricity bills are up 50%. We need better answers and solutions from our Coop leadership. It is time for change.

About me. I'm not affiliated with any organization or political group. I'm simply a Lawrence Countian who has lived, worked, and raised my family in Southwest Missouri my entire adult life. I am also an experienced leader and executive. I have spent my career as an executive for technology companies and know how boards and operating teams should work together. Here's what I know, when all decisions are unanimous, something is wrong. I'm a seasoned leader and will not, and have never, just "gone along" with the majority. I am not afraid to stand alone.

Please feel free to check out my LinkedIn profile at  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/misty-skinner-60408532/>

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

My career has been spent as an executive for medium to large businesses. I am familiar with serving on many boards. I have the ability to ask tough, pointed questions and navigate disagreement. My career success is driven by sometimes being the only voice in the room demanding we find or make different decisions, when no good alternatives are presented. Being popular with those sitting around the table with me is not important. Making good decisions that put our members first is.

I also bring financial expertise to our board. I've spent a career being responsible for multi-million-dollar financial reporting. I can hit the ground running on understanding OEC's financial reports and debt structure, which gives me a unique advantage. We need experienced financial operators on our board to provide oversight on spending. I have this experience.

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

The primary role of a Board Member is to serve the people who are working, raising families, and living in SW Missouri. We count on our Coop to deliver dependable and affordable electricity to our homes and businesses. The Board's responsibility runs deeper than dependable and affordable electricity. We expect, and now must demand, transparency and accountability from our Board Members.

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

We need to rebuild the partnership and trust between members and the Coop we once had. I am committed to building back a member centered Coop with transparency and real communication, which means listening to members, not talking "at them." It takes very little time to lose trust, as we've seen, and will take time to earn it back.

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

Of course. As a leader of large teams, success was always dependent on interacting and listening to my teams. We got to the right decision through thoughtful and respectful communication.

I attended an after-hours event in Mt. Vernon last year. A young woman took the podium and articulately, without emotion, stated why members were frustrated by the demand charge scheme. Her well delivered message was met with the "talk track" as if she wasn't even heard. That behavior does not build trust by the members. It has to stop.

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

Our Coop has 28,000 members. I don't think anyone believes or expects everyone to agree with all decisions. In my experience, divisive issues demand honest and straightforward communication. Members being heard and respected should be more important than telling them why they are wrong.

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

I'll do it in one... Board members should be counted on to be transparent and accountable **to the members.**

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

This is an interesting question. We shouldn't expect 100% agreement. Someone isn't doing their job if everyone agrees, all the time. That's why we have 9 members of the board. The majority will decide and I cannot say I will be in the majority. You can count on me to respect and follow the bylaws and the majority vote. You can also count on me to do my best at convincing other board members to vote against decisions that don't put our members and their families first.

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

I welcome these conversations! Change does not occur when agreement is valued over healthy debate. In my experience the best answers are often the hardest to get at. Disagreement should be celebrated.

**DO YOU HAVE SUFFICIENT TIME TO DEVOTE TO THIS POSITION?**

Yes. I took a voluntary career break several years ago when my brother was diagnosed with cancer. After his passing, I decided to make some life decisions and not go back to my corporate role. At the time, our local school districts were desperate for help, so I got involved. Turns out, I love working with high school students! I spend most of my time working with business classes and the GoCaps program, serving SW MO. A few years ago, I would not have had the time to commit to the OEC Board. I do now and look forward to it.

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

No, I have no conflicts.

**PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT WITH OZARK ELECTRIC.**

I'm a 36-year member. I attend the annual meetings and the after-hours meetings. I also always read the Rural Missouri Magazine to stay informed on what is happening with our Coop.

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

I want the OEC members to regain the trust we once had in the OEC Board and Leadership. Members should know that their elected Board is prioritizing their needs as they live their lives in SW Missouri.