

Guidry reflects on career

Ask Mike Guidry what he enjoyed most about the past 22 years serving as general manager of SLECA and there is no hesitation: "It's the people."

He could have done without the storms, the floods and the long hours. But as he enters retirement this month, Guidry said what really stands out is the employees who dedicated themselves to the task of making sure SLECA members throughout the five parish area were able to flip a light switch at any hour of the day and night and receive the power they needed.

Retirement for Guidry means spending more time with leisure activities such as tennis, camping, fishing and golf. But most importantly, it means spending more time with his wife of 41 years, Candy, his daughter, Lindsey, and his son-in-law, Brady. Oh, and there's the small fact that he just became a grandfather for the first time when Brielle entered the world eight months ago.

"There were times when the job pulled me away from my family and now I want to make up for that," said Guidry, who was first hired back in 1978 as a member services representative after working as a local school teacher. "Candy and Lindsey were always there for me and were always understanding and supportive, and now I need to give them more attention."

Ask Guidry what was the worst thing about his tenure as SLECA's longest-serving general manager and again there's no hesitation: "The Cajun Electric bankruptcy." This was a five-year time span beginning in 1995 when the power generation facility collectively owned by Louisiana's electric cooperatives entered receivership. Guidry, who served on an ad hoc bankruptcy case committee as one of the state's cooperative leaders, was pulled away from his job at SLECA and his family and into a situation that effectively caused the state's electric cooperative family to turn against each other.

"Those were five of the most miserable years of my life," Guidry said. It was during this fray that Guidry experienced a heart attack that required a stent. He takes pride in noting, "that was the only board meeting I ever missed."

Interestingly, the bankruptcy battle resulted in lower rates for SLECA members and preceded a five-year period of relative peace and stability for the local cooperative. Then came Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, and three years later Gustav and Ike, each with their own unique challenges. (Acct. No. 10032602)

Hurricanes have been known to sweep electric co-op right out of existence depending on how well the cooperative responds to the satisfaction of the members. Guidry said the employees with their hard work and perseverance, and the members with their patience and understanding, all scored high marks through each of those storms.

"Who you are when you're born is determined by your genes, but who you become is determined by how you respond to challenges," said Guidry, noting that after Hurricane Ike he went nearly 20 nights without sleeping in his own bed, physically exhausted and wracked with worry over the plight of those still without power. "I think the employees and board and members did a commendable job, but it took a lot of hard work."

Another memorable event that comes immediately to Guidry's mind when reflecting on his career is the time during the oil bust when there was a move afoot to have one of the municipal power suppliers take over the cooperative.

Guidry spearheaded an effort to communicate directly with the membership on the advantages of keeping their cooperative and maintaining a long-range view of the future. That pitch was made more difficult with rates 15-20 percent higher at a time when unemployment was rampant and people were struggling.

"Times were tough and there were times I didn't think we would make payroll. We went door to door to everyone and asked them what they wanted to do. They decided to keep their co-op, even though we had higher rates. They said they liked us because of our service. I learned that even if you have higher rates, people will be loyal if you give them the quality service they deserve. It all worked out over the long run."

Guidry, who last year was elected president of the board of directors at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in Washington, D.C., said he intends to carry out his national board responsibilities until 2014 and stay involved on the rural electric cooperative scene.

In noting that he never had a full-week vacation during his tenure as general manager, Guidry said ultimately he always saw himself as the tool carrier.

"At a cooperative, you become a family because you see everyone all the time," he said. "You see their kids grow up and you see them become grandparents. You see them when storms come, how they work hard to get the job done and don't complain. My job was just to give them the opportunity to work and make a living to take care of their families and just provide them the tools they needed to get the job done."

Interim Manager Joe Ticheli said, "Mike Guidry is a hard act to follow. He's leaving behind a cooperative that's been well run and excels in delivering reliable service and low rates to the members."

SLECA News



Low Rates. High Expectations.

Joe Ticheli, Interim Manager
Alexander Doyle, President
South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Assn.
P.O. Box 4037, Houma, LA 70361 (876-6880)



Qualifying for SLECA's Board of Directors set for February

Qualifying for SLECA's Board of Directors for districts 4, 5 and 6 will get under way in February.

Qualified SLECA members who wish to seek election as a director of district 4, 5 or 6 must file their applications at SLECA's main office at 2028 Coteau Road, Houma, on Wednesday and Thursday, Feb. 1-2 from 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Friday, Feb. 3 from 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 6 and 7 from 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Elections will be held at the district meetings.

Only members who officially qualify will be eligible to run for director, as nominations will not be allowed from the floor at the district meetings.

To be eligible, a member must qualify for the district in which they reside.

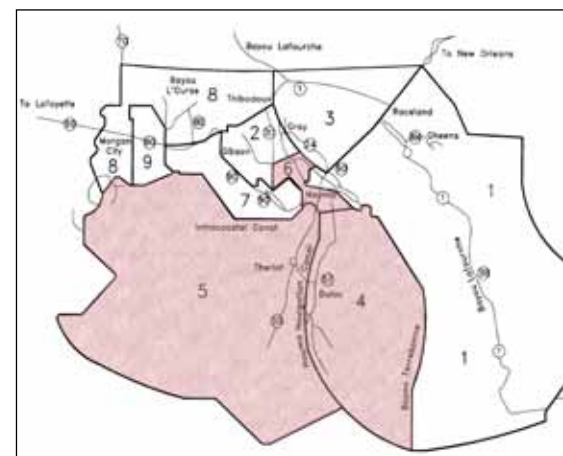
The District 4 meeting will be held at the Grand Caillou VFW Hall in Dulac on Wednesday, Feb. 29.

The District 5 meeting will be held at the Bayou Dularge Recreation Center Gymnasium in Theriot on Thursday, March 1.

The District 6 meeting will be held at the Mulberry Baptist Church in Houma on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

Meeting registration begins at 6 p.m. and closes at 7 p.m. Only those in line at registration closing time can complete registration to vote. All district meetings begin at 7 p.m.

The details and guidelines for qualifying for the board of directors are outlined in the accompanying excerpts from the bylaws.



SLECA By-Laws

ARTICLE IV

SECTION 3. QUALIFICATIONS AND TENURE (A).

The persons named as directors in the articles of conversion shall compose the Board of Directors until the next meeting or until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified. These bylaws acknowledge and affirm the action of the Board of Directors that directors from District 1, 2 and 3 are serving three year terms beginning in the year 1980; that the directors from District 7, 8 and 9 are serving three year terms beginning in the year 1981; and the directors from Districts 4, 5 and 6 will be elected for three year terms in the year 1982. At the annual meeting in 1983, the directors from Districts 1, 2 and 3 will be elected to serve for a period of three years. Thereafter, a director whose term shall expire as above provided shall be elected at the respective district meeting to serve for a period of three years or until their successors shall have been elected by and from the members of the respective district. No member shall be eligible to become or remain director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who is not a bona fide resident in a district served by the Cooperative or who is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise. (Amended at a meeting of the membership held on April 28, 1988.) (Amended at a meeting of the membership held on April 10, 1992.)

(B). In order to qualify to become or remain on the Board of Directors, a person seeking or holding the position of Director must live and reside in the District in which he is elected. If said Director should move within the area served by the Cooperative during his term, he shall remain on the board until his successor is chosen at the next district meeting. In the event the Director moves outside the area served by the Cooperative a vacancy shall occur and the Board of Directors shall appoint a new Director. Additionally, in order to qualify as a candidate for director from a district, the candidate must sign qualifying papers at the Cooperative's main office in Houma, Louisiana during the first five working days of February. The qualifying papers shall be returned to the Cooperative's main office.

All applicants attempting to qualify for director will be notified within forty-eight (48) hours of the close of the qualifying period that they do or do not qualify. Written reasons will be submitted for any rejection upon request.

In order to qualify for the Board of Directors, any candidate for election to the Board shall be not more than 45 days in arrears regarding any indebtedness or any electric bill owed to the Cooperative. In the event said candidate is a majority stockholder in a corporation which likewise shall be indebted to the Cooperative by being more than 45 days in arrears on any indebtedness or any electric bill, then that person shall not so qualify as a candidate to be a member of this board. Further, if any Board member, once elected, becomes indebted for any electric bill or otherwise for more than 45 days, or any corporation in which he owns a majority of stock becomes indebted to the Cooperative for its electric bill or otherwise for a period of more 45 days in arrears, then that board member must resign from the Board of Directors at the end of any 45 day period; provided, in the event of a Board member

being asked to resign, he will be given thirty (30) days additional written notice; provided, further, any party affected by the foregoing may make arrangements with the Cooperative to pay any arrearages on a work-out plan approved by the Board so as to remain a member in good standing and thus eligible to be either a candidate for election to the Board or to remain on the Board. (Amended at a meeting of the membership held on April 28, 1988.) (Amended at a meeting of the membership held on April 10, 1992.)

(C.) Blood relatives of employees of the Cooperative shall not be permitted to qualify and run for the Board of Directors. Blood relatives are defined as direct descendants, descendants and collateral relations; that is, mother, father, son, daughter, grandfather, grandmother, brother, sister, aunt and uncle. (Amended at a meeting of the members held on April 26, 1984.)

SECTION 4 (A). NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF DIRECTORS. Not less than twenty (20) days prior to any meeting in which directors are to be elected, the Board of Directors shall serve notice of a separate meeting of the members of each district from which directors will be elected to be held at a suitable place in such district for the purpose of selecting a director to represent such district and the members located within such district, the notice of such meeting shall be delivered to each member located in such district in the same manner as provided in Section 3, of Article III, and shall indicate the district to which such member belongs. The notice shall state names of the persons running for director and shall state the exact time and place of the meeting. The meeting shall, however, be opened for discussion of any other matters pertaining to the business of the Cooperative, regardless of whether or not such matters were listed in the notice of the meeting; and recommendations with respect thereto may be submitted to the Board of Directors of the entire membership.

The district meeting shall be called to order by the director representing the district or by another designated representative of the Board of Directors, or in his absence, by any member residing within the district. The members shall then proceed to elect a chairman, who shall be someone other than a director, and who shall appoint a secretary to act for the duration of the meeting. Forty members residing in the district shall constitute a quorum. Members must be present to vote. In the event no quorum exists at the district meeting, the election from that district will be held at the regular annual meeting. However, only members from any district lacking a quorum at the district level would be allowed to constitute a quorum for that district (a quorum being a minimum of 40 members) at the annual meeting and vote for the candidate(s) who previously qualified for director as provided for herein. It will not be necessary for there to be a quorum at the regular annual meeting to conduct the district election, provided that district has a quorum of at least 40 of its members present at the regular annual meeting. (Amended at a meeting of the membership held on April 28, 1988.)

SECTION 4 (B). ELECTION OF DIRECTORS. Nominations for directors shall not be allowed from the floor at the district meeting. The election for directors from the various

districts shall take place at least twenty (20) days and not more than forty-five (45) days prior to the annual meeting and newly elected directors shall take office and be sworn in at the annual meeting. Notice of the time for directors to qualify as a candidate for director from a district shall be given to the members at least ten (10) days prior to the time of qualification. (Amended at a meeting of the membership held on May 29, 1986.)

SECTION 4 (C). PROCEDURE FOR VOTING FOR DIRECTORS. The Board of Directors is authorized and directed to enact policies to insure and protect the sanctity of the ballot at all elections for members of the Board of Directors. Voting shall be by secret ballot and can be by voting machine or by ballot box. No member or employee of the Cooperative shall be authorized to fill out the ballot of another member or assist another member with his or her ballot. If a member needs assistance in casting his ballot, this assistance may only be furnished by a person designated to do so by the Board of Directors of this Cooperative and approved by the candidates in the election. After the member has received his official ballot he shall be directed forthwith to the ballot box to cast his vote. No unauthorized person shall be in the voting area during the time that members are receiving their ballots and casting their votes.

The candidate receiving a plurality of the vote shall be declared as the elected director from the district. In the event there are more than two candidates and the top two candidates receive the same number of votes there shall be a second election between the top two candidates. In the event of another tie the Board of Directors shall select a director from among said candidates who were tied. In the event there are only two candidates and there is a tie there shall be no second election and the Board of Director shall select the director from among said candidates who were tied. (Amended at a meeting of the membership held on May 29, 1986.)

SECTION 4 (D). PENALTIES FOR VIOLATING THE VOTING PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THESE BYLAWS AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. Any employee of this Cooperative who violates any of the election procedures established by these bylaws and by the board of Directors shall be discharged from his employment. Any member of this Cooperative who violates any of the election procedures established by these bylaws and by the Board of Directors may be terminated in his membership after a hearing concerning the charges against him before the Board of Directors. Any member may bring charges against another member for violation of election rules. Thereafter the accused member shall be informed in writing of the charges at least ten days prior to the hearing before the Board of Directors at which the charges are to be considered and shall have an opportunity to be heard in person or by counsel and to present evidence in his own behalf. (Acct. No. 20058601)

The question of whether or not to terminate the membership for violation of the election rules shall be voted on by the Board of Directors and any decision made by the Board of Directors may be appealed to the membership at either the annual or special meeting. (Amended at a special meeting of the members held on August 19, 1971.)

SLECA to implement rate adjustment in January

After serving its members for nearly 30 years without a change in rates, SLECA recently announced that a modest adjustment will take effect for all consumers in January. Beginning with the January bills, SLECA consumers will notice an increase of 7.44 percent in the base rate. For the average consumer purchasing 1,000 kWh per month, the increase will equal to approximately \$3.53. (Acct. No. 5385401)

This change in the base rate is the first of a two-phase revenue adjustment plan recently approved by the Louisiana Public Service Commission. The second phase, set to be implemented in May of 2012, involves the application of what the LPSC calls a Formula Rate Plan (FRP).

The LPSC, working in conjunction with electric utilities across the state, devised the FRP to replace the old, inefficient procedure for preparing and presenting a case for periodic rate adjustments.

The FRP assesses the financial condition of the consumer-owned, non-profit organization annually and calculates a new rate – up, down or unchanged – that will enable SLECA to cover the expenses of providing electric service and also meet its

debt obligations.

"This new plan was created so that utilities don't have to spend a whole lot of needless time and money conducting rate studies whenever there's a need to adjust rates to meet our financial benchmarks," said SLECA Manager Mike Guidry.

Guidry said that even with the new rate, SLECA continues to be one of the lowest cost providers in the state. He said it's a credit to the board, management and employees that SLECA has been able to operate effectively without a change in its rates for nearly three decades.

"Like everything else, the cost of providing affordable, reliable power keeps going up," Guidry said.

Guidry noted that over the years SLECA's revenue has been negatively impacted by the damage caused by four hurricanes and last year's BP oil spill.

"I think we've done a remarkable job to stave this off for many years. It's very unusual for a utility to go this long without a rate adjustment. I commend all of our employees and board members for their hard work and dedication on behalf of our members," Guidry said.

Across the Board

November 7, 2011

Present were directors Alexander Doyle, president; David Luke, vice-president; Brian Rivet, secretary; Terry Trahan, treasurer; Tracy Duval, J. D. Boudreaux, Eroy Acosta, Roger Dale DeHart, Larry J. Daigle and Lloyd Gibson, advisor. Also attending were Michael Guidry, general manager, James Funderburk, attorney and Elaine Robertson, member services supervisor.

After the invocation and pledge, the board approved the minutes of the October 3rd regular board meeting, the special board meetings of October 17th and October 31st, 187 new members and the ALEC Report.

The financial report, approved by the board, highlighted interest earnings, cash on hand, rate comparison showing SLECA having the lowest rates compared to other area utilities, line loss, kilowatt hour sales for the month, cumulative sales to date, cost of service, equity, TIER and electric and total revenue verses cost per kilowatt hour.

Following an update on upcoming schools, meetings and events, Mr. Guidry reported on the following: (1) SLECA continues to have the lowest rates in the area; (2) The Cross State Air Pollution Rule becomes effective in Louisiana during the "Ozone Season" May 1st to September 1st beginning in 2012. EPA has increased the allowances for Louisiana that postpones the necessity to install scrubbers and La Gen plans to purchase the additional needed allowances and is projecting a much lower cost to us; (3) Entergy has approached SLECA requesting a tie-line in the Stephensville area for reliability purposes during emergencies that would be no cost to SLECA; (4) The company that was cutting the substations was terminated; (5) The PSC approved SLECA's Formula Rate Plan filing and the Letter of Non-Opposition to SLECA's RUS loan request. The rate change will begin in January, 2012 and will be approximately \$3.53 per 1000 kwh; (6) A request was made and the board agreed to meet on Tuesday, November 29th to review the 2012 budget; (7) There were no NERC/SERC violations this period and SLECA sent out some AURORA information that refers to how it would notify its members about someone having equipment that spins; and (8) The Touchstone survey that was supposed to have taken place in October was postponed and should be done on Thursday and Friday of that week. (Acct. No. 3322201)

After the board approved the manager's report and expenses, Mr. Guidry answered a question from Mr. DeHart about the progress of the lake line.

Next, the board approved the safety report showing employees have worked 2,454,922 hours without a loss-time accident since December, 1996, the attorney's report and fees, a resolution accepting the status of the La Gen arbitration, a second resolution to amend the promissory note and Letter of Credit with CoBank and the incentive program made by the general manager.

The meeting was then adjourned.

You may obtain copies of the minutes by contacting SLECA, P.O. Box 4037, Houma, LA 70361 or by calling (985) 876-6880 or 1-800-256-8826.

Your Cooperative Connection

LOUISIANA COUNTRY

SLECA NEWS
Pages 8-9 • Jan. 2012
Vol. 28, No. 10



HONORED TO SERVE
Guidry reflects on
22 years as
General Manager

