



POWERGRAM

A monthly newsletter for OCEC Members

LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2026 ANNUAL MEETING

Otero County Electric Cooperative held its 2026 Annual Membership Meeting on Saturday, August 1, at the Cloudcroft High School Gymnasium. A total of 368 members registered, providing the quorum needed to conduct cooperative business.

Members received the 2026 Annual Report as part of their registration packet. The report includes updates from Board President Charlie Mulcock, Treasurer Scott Shafer, and General Manager Mario Romero. Copies are also available online at www.ocec-inc.com or at any OCEC office.

Treasurer Scott Shafer shared a brief financial update, highlighting another year of strong financial performance. Total assets grew to \$139 million, up \$8 million from 2024, while member equity increased to \$44 million. The value of the cooperative's plant and equipment also grew from \$102 million to \$107.5 million.

Strong financial results also allowed OCEC to return \$884,000 in capital credits to members. This year's retirement covered all remaining capital credits from 2000 and 2001, along with a portion of 2002. Members attending the meeting were able to pick up their checks, while remaining checks were mailed following the meeting.

General Manager Mario Romero reviewed another successful year for the cooperative, highlighting continued investments in reliability, safety, and long-term financial stability. He reported that major transmission line improvements serving Cloudcroft and surrounding mountain communities were completed during the past year, including replacement of a vandalized transmission structure and other aging infrastructure.

Romero also announced that OCEC will begin a major vegetation management project along the transmission corridor in the coming months as part of the cooperative's ongoing wildfire mitigation efforts. The project will be funded through previously deferred revenues, allowing important reliability improvements without affecting current or future member margins.

He noted that while OCEC posted another strong financial year with \$2.3 million in margins, rising costs across the utility industry will likely require a modest rate adjustment in 2028. Even so, the cooperative has maintained stable electric rates since 2020 despite several years of record inflation.

Romero recognized OCEC employees and trustees for work anniversaries, including Charlie Mulcock, who has served on the OCEC Board for an impressive 35 years. He also thanked employees for their continued dedication to safely serving members through system maintenance, construction projects, broadband expansion, and power restoration efforts.

He concluded by discussing the cooperative's ongoing wildfire mitigation work, partnerships with state and federal agencies to improve powerline management in national forests, and emerging challenges facing the electric utility industry. Romero also thanked members for their patience during January's historic winter storm and commended employees for their tireless work restoring power under extremely difficult conditions.

Board elections were held for two trustee positions. Cheri Hass (CN District) and Kenny Blazer (SW District) were both unopposed and will continue serving on the Board of Trustees. No petition was submitted for the NE District position. Please see the article on page 2 for information about how that vacancy will be filled.

Following the business meeting, members enjoyed a barbecue lunch prepared by the Cloudcroft High School Culinary Arts Program and participated in the drawing for nearly 100 door prizes.

Be sure to mark your calendar for next year's Annual Membership Meeting, which will be held on **Saturday, August 7, 2027**.



AUGUST CALENDAR PHOTO
submitted by DeMarco Salazar

**AUGUST
2026**

**CLOUDCROFT
575-682-2521**

**ALTO
575-336-4550**

**CARRIZOZO
575-648-2352**

**LOBBY HOURS
8 AM - 4 PM
MONDAY - FRIDAY**

**TO REPORT AN
OUTAGE, CALL
1-800-548-4660**

**FOR BALANCE
INFORMATION OR TO
PAY YOUR BILL, CALL
1-855-940-3957**

WWW.OCEC-INC.COM

THANK YOU, BILL BIRD, FOR 37 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE



Otero County Electric Cooperative extends its heartfelt appreciation to Bill Bird for his remarkable 37 years of service on the Board of Trustees. Since joining the Board in 1989, Bill has faithfully represented the members of OCEC, helping guide the cooperative through decades of growth, change, and opportunity.

In addition to his service on the OCEC Board, Bill represented the cooperative on the Tri-State Board from 2004 to 2014. In that role, he helped make decisions that affected not only OCEC but electric cooperatives throughout the region.

Serving as a cooperative trustee requires much more than attending monthly meetings. It means spending countless hours reviewing information, traveling to meetings, making difficult decisions, and always keeping the best interests of the membership at the forefront. Trustees volunteer their time because they believe in the cooperative mission of neighbors serving neighbors.

Throughout his years of service, Bill has provided thoughtful leadership, sound judgment, and a steady commitment to the cooperative and its members. His contributions have helped strengthen OCEC and will have a lasting impact for years to come.

We would also like to recognize Bill's wife, Sharon, whose support has been an important part of his journey. The commitment required to serve as a trustee is shared by family members as well, and we sincerely appreciate the encouragement, patience, and sacrifices she has made over the years.

Bill and Sharon, thank you for your years of dedication, friendship, and service to Otero County Electric Cooperative. We wish you both every happiness as you begin this new chapter and hope you enjoy the well-deserved time ahead.

TRUSTEE POSITION AVAILABLE IN NORTHEAST DISTRICT

The Board of Trustees for Otero County Electric Cooperative (OCEC) is seeking interested candidates to fill a vacant position. The Board will appoint a trustee to serve for a term that ends August 4, 2029. At the end of the term, the appointed trustee would need to file a petition for election and be elected by the members of the Northeast District of OCEC to continue serving.

To qualify for the position, applicants must reside within the Northeast District of the OCEC service territory, which includes Hondo, San Patricio, Glencoe, Tinnie, Arabela, Lincoln, Picacho, Riverside, and Alto.

Those interested in being considered for the position need to submit a letter of interest and/or resume to Charlie Mulcock, Board President, at charliem@ote-coop.com. Deadline to submit information for consideration is September 18, 2026.

If you have questions, please contact Kelley Sanders, 575-682-7606 or 1-800-548-4660.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

August heat can put your air conditioner to the test, making it a great time to check your system's air filter. A dirty, clogged filter restricts airflow, forcing your cooling system to work harder than necessary to keep your home comfortable. That extra strain can reduce efficiency, increase energy use and contribute to unnecessary wear and tear on equipment. Inspect your filter monthly during periods of heavy air conditioner use and replace it if it appears dirty. A clean filter supports efficient operation and can even enhance indoor air quality—helping you stay cool and comfortable during the hottest days of summer.

2026 ANNUAL MEETING



Treasurer of the OCEC Board, Scott Shafer, presents the financial report to members present at the 87th Annual Meeting of Members.



Since 1989, over \$2.1 million has been distributed to 441 students for expenses related to continuing their education. Some of those recipients were present at this year's annual meeting to express their appreciation to the board and membership for the generous award.

TO MAKE A PAYMENT BY PHONE OR OBTAIN YOUR BALANCE, PLEASE CALL

1-855-940-3957