



# BYLAWS

## Holston Electric Cooperative, Inc.

### Article I Membership

**Section 1.01. Eligibility.** Any natural person, firm, association, corporation, cooperative, business trust, partnership, federal, state or local government, or departments, agencies or any other political subdivision thereof (each hereinafter referred to as "person," "applicant," "him" or "his") shall be eligible to become a member of, and, at one or more premises owned or directly occupied or used by him, to receive electric service from, Holston Electric Cooperative (hereinafter called the "Cooperative").

**Section 1.02. Application for membership.** Application for membership—wherein the applicant shall agree to purchase electric power and energy from the Cooperative and to be bound by and to comply with all of the other provisions of the Cooperative's Articles of Incorporation and By-laws, and all rules, regulations, rate classifications and rate schedules established pursuant therein, to all the same then exist or may thereafter be adopted or amended (the obligations embraced by such agreement being hereinafter called "membership obligations") – shall be made in writing on such form as is provided therefor by the Cooperation. With respect to any particular classification of service for which the Board of Directors shall require it, such application shall be accompanied by a supplemental contract, executed by the applicant on such form as is provided therefor by the Cooperative. The membership application shall be accompanied by the membership fee provided for in Section 1.03 (together with any service security deposit, service connection deposit or fee, facilities extension deposit, or contribution in aid of construction that may be required by the Cooperative), which fee (and such service security deposit, service connection deposit or fee, facilities extension deposit, or contribution in aid of construction, if any) shall be refunded in the event the application is not approved.

**Section 1.03. Membership Fee; Service Security and Facilities Extension Deposits; Contribution in Aid of Construction.** The membership fee shall be as fixed from time to time by the Board of Directors. The membership fee (together with any service security deposit, or service connection deposit or fee, facilities extension deposit, or contribution in aid of construction, or any combination thereof, if required by the Cooperative) shall entitle the member to one service connection. A service

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connection deposit or fee, in such amount as shall be prescribed by the Cooperative (together with a service security deposit, a facilities extension deposit or a contribution in aid of construction, if required by the Cooperative), shall be paid by the member for each additional service connection requested by him.

**Section 1.04. Joint Membership.** A husband and wife, by specifically so requesting in writing, may be accepted into joint membership or, if one of them is already a member, may automatically convert such membership into a joint membership. The words, "member," "applicant," "person," "his" and "him," as used in these Bylaws, shall include a husband and wife applying for or holding a joint membership, unless otherwise clearly distinguished in the text; and all provisions relating to the rights, powers, terms, conditions, obligations, responsibilities and liabilities of membership shall apply equally, severally and jointly to them. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing –

- (a) the presence at a meeting of either or both shall constitute the presence of one member and a joint waiver of notice of the meeting;
- (b) the vote of either shall constitute one joint vote;
- (c) notice to, or waiver of notice signed by, either or both shall constitute, respectively, a joint notice or waiver of notice;
- (d) suspension or termination in any manner of either shall constitute suspension or termination of the joint membership;
- (e) either, but not both concurrently, shall be eligible to serve as a Director of the Cooperative, but only if both meet the qualifications required therefor.

**Section 1.05. Acceptance into Membership.** Upon complying with the requirements set forth in Section 1.02, any applicant shall automatically become a member on the date of his connection for electric service; **PROVIDED**, the Board of Directors may by resolution deny an application and refuse to extend service upon its determination that the applicant is not willing or is not able to satisfy and abide by the Cooperative's terms and conditions of membership or that such application should be denied for other good cause.

**Section 1.06. Purchase of Electric Power and Energy; Power Production by Member; Application of Payments to All Accounts.** The Cooperative shall use reasonable diligence to furnish its members with adequate and dependable electric service, although it cannot and therefore does not guarantee a continuous and uninterrupted supply thereof; and each member, for so long as such premises are owned or directly occupied or used by him, shall purchase from the Cooperative all central station electric power and energy purchased for use on all premises to which electric service has been furnished by the Cooperative pursuant to his membership, unless and except to the extent that the Board of Directors may in writing waive such requirement and shall pay therefor at all times, and in accordance with the rules, regulations, rate classifications, and rate schedules (including any monthly minimum amount that may be charged without regard to the amount of electric power and energy actually used) established by the Board of Directors and, if in effect, in accordance with the provisions of any supplemental contract that may have been entered into as provided for in Section 1.02. Production or use of electric energy on such premises, regardless of the source thereof, by means of facilities which shall be intercon-

nected with Cooperative facilities, shall be subject to appropriate regulations as shall be fixed from time to time by the Cooperative. Each member shall also pay all other amounts owed by him to the Cooperative as and when they become due and payable. When the member has more than one service connection from the Cooperative, any payment by him for service from the Cooperative shall be deemed to be allocated and credited on a pro rata basis to his outstanding accounts for all such service connections, notwithstanding that the Cooperative's actual accounting procedures do not reflect such allocation and proration.

**Section 1.07. Excess Payments to be Credited as Member-Furnished Capital.** All amounts paid for electric service in excess of the cost thereof shall be treated as member-furnished capital as provided in Article IX of these Bylaws.

**Section 1.08. Wiring of Premises; Responsibility Therefor; Responsibility for Meter Tampering or Bypassing and for Damage to Cooperative Properties; Extent of Cooperative Responsibility; Indemnification.** Each member shall cause all premises receiving electric service pursuant to his membership to become and to remain wired in accordance with the specifications of the Tennessee Fire Insurance Underwriters Association, the National Electric Code, any applicable state code or local government ordinances, and of the Cooperative. If the foregoing specifications are variant, the more exacting standards shall prevail. Each member shall be responsible for – and shall indemnify the Cooperative and its employees, agents and independent contractors against death, injury, loss or damage resulting from any defect in or improper use or maintenance of – such premises and all wiring and apparatuses connected thereto or used thereon. Each member shall make available to the Cooperative a suitable site, as determined by the Cooperative, whereon to place the Cooperative's physical facilities for the furnishing and metering of electric service and shall permit the Cooperative's authorized employees, agents and independent contractors to have safe access thereto for meter reading and bill collecting and for inspections, maintenances, replacement, relocation, repair or disconnection of such facilities at all reasonable times. As part of the consideration for such service, each member shall be the Cooperative's bailee of such facilities and shall accordingly desist from interfering with, impairing the operation of or causing damage to such facilities, and shall use his best efforts to prevent others from so doing. Each member shall also provide such protective devices to his premises, apparatuses or meter base as the Cooperative shall from time to time require in order to protect the Cooperative's physical facilities and their operations and to prevent any interference with or damage to such facilities. In the event such facilities are interfered with, impaired in their operation or damaged by the member, or by any other person when the member's reasonable care and surveillance should have prevented such, the member shall indemnify the Cooperative and its employees, agents and independent contractors against death, injury, loss or damage resulting therefrom, including but not limited to the Cooperative's cost of repairing, replacing or relocating any such facilities and its loss, if any, of revenues resulting from the failure or defective functioning of its metering equipment. The Cooperative shall, however, in accordance with its applicable service rules and regulations, indemnify the member for any overcharges for service that may result from a malfunctioning of its metering equipment or any error occurring in the Cooperative's billing

procedures. In no event shall the responsibility of the Cooperative extend beyond the point of delivery.

**Section 1.09. Member to Grant Easements to Cooperative and to Participate in Required Cooperative Load Management Programs.** Each member shall, upon being requested so to do by the Cooperative, execute and deliver to the Cooperative, without charge, grants of easement or right-of-way, on and under such lands owned or leased by or mortgaged to the member, and in accordance with such reasonable terms and conditions, as the Cooperative shall require for the furnishing of electric service to him or other members or for the construction, operation, maintenance or relocation of the Cooperative's electric facilities. Each member shall participate in any required program and comply with related rates and service rules and regulations that may be established by the Cooperative to enhance load management, more efficiently to utilize or conserve electric energy or to conduct load research.

## **Article II**

### **Membership Suspension and Termination**

**Section 2.01. Suspension; Reinstatement.** Upon his failure, after the expiration of the initial time limit prescribed either in a specific notice to him or in the Cooperative's generally publicized applicable rules and regulations, to pay any amounts due the Cooperative or to cease any other non-compliance with his membership obligations, a person's membership shall automatically be suspended; and he shall not during such suspension be entitled to receive electric service from the Cooperative or to cast a vote at any meeting of the members. Payment of all amounts due the Cooperative, including any additional charges required for such reinstatement, and/or cessation of any other noncompliance with his membership obligations within the final time limit provided in such notice or rules and regulations shall automatically reinstate the membership, in which event the member shall thereafter be entitled to receive electric service from the Cooperative and to vote at the meetings of its members.

**Section 2.02. Termination by Expulsion.** Upon failure of a suspended member to be automatically reinstated to membership, as provided in Section 2.01, he may, without further notice, but only after due hearing if such is requested by him, be expelled by resolution of the Board of Directors at any subsequently held regular or special meeting of the Board. After expulsion of a member, he may not again become a member except upon new application therefor duly approved as provided in Section 1.05; but the Board of Directors, acting upon principles of general application in such cases, may establish such additional terms and conditions for renewed membership as it determines to be reasonably necessary to assure the applicant's compliance with all his membership obligations.

**Section 2.03. Termination by Withdrawal or Resignation.** A member may withdraw from membership upon such generally applicable conditions as the Board of Directors shall prescribe and upon either (a) ceasing to (or, with the approval of the Board of Directors resigning his membership in favor of a new applicant who also shall) own or directly occupy or use all premises being furnished electric service pursuant to his membership, or (b) except when the Board of Directors specifically waives such condition, abandoning totally and permanently the use of central station electric services on such premises.

**Section 2.04. Termination by Death or Cessation or Existence; Continuation of Membership in Remaining or New Partners.** The death of a natural person member shall automatically terminate his membership. The cessation of the legal existence of any other type of members shall automatically terminate such membership; **PROVIDED** upon the dissolution for any reason of a partnership, or upon the death, withdrawal or addition of any individual partner, such membership shall continue to be held by such remaining and/or new partner or partners as continue to own or directly to occupy or use the premises being furnished electric service pursuant to such membership in the same manner and to the same effect as though such membership had never been held by different partners; **PROVIDED FURTHER**, neither a withdrawing partner nor his estate shall be released from any debts then due the Cooperative.

**Section 2.05. Effect of Termination.** Upon the termination in any manner of a person's membership, he or his estate, as the case may be, shall be entitled to refund of his membership fee (and to his service security deposit, if any theretofore paid the Cooperative), less any amounts due the Cooperative; but neither he nor his estate, as the case may be, shall be released from any debts or other obligations then remaining due the Cooperative. Notwithstanding the suspension or expulsion of a member, as provided for in Sections 2.01 and 2.02, such suspension or expulsion shall not, unless the Board of Directors shall expressly so elect, constitute such release of such person from his membership obligations as to entitle him to purchase from any other person any central station electric power and energy for use at the premises to which such service has therefore been furnished by the Cooperative pursuant to such membership.

**Section 2.06. Effect of Death, Legal Separation or Divorce Upon a Joint Membership.** Upon the death of either spouse of a joint membership, such membership shall continue to be held solely by the survivor; in the same manner and to the same effect as though such membership had never been joint; **PROVIDED**, the estate of the deceased spouse shall not be released from any debts due the Cooperative. Upon the legal separation or divorce of the holders of a joint membership, such membership shall continue to be held solely by the one who continues directly to occupy or use the premises covered by such membership in the same manner and to the same effect as though such membership had never been joint; **PROVIDED**, the other spouse shall not be released from any debts due the Cooperative.

**Section 2.07. Board Acknowledgment of Membership Termination; Acceptance of Members Retroactively.** Upon the termination of a person's membership for any reason, the Board of Directors, so soon as practicable after such termination is made known to all, shall by appropriate resolution formally acknowledge such termination, effective as of the date on which the Cooperative ceased furnishing electric service to such person. Upon discovery that the Cooperative has been furnishing electric service to any person other than a member, it shall cease furnishing such service unless such person applies for, and the Board of Directors approves, membership retroactively to the date on which such person first began receiving such service, in which event the Cooperative, to the extent practicable, shall correct its membership and all related records accordingly.

**Article III**  
**Meetings of Members**

**Section 3.01. Annual Meeting.** For the purpose of electing directors, hearing and passing upon reports covering the previous fiscal year, and transacting such other business as may properly come before the meeting, the annual meeting of the members shall be held on the second Tuesday of the month of October each year, at such place in Hawkins County, Tennessee, and beginning at such hour, as the Board of Directors shall from year to year fix; **PROVIDED**, for cause sufficient to it, the Board of Directors may fix a different day for such annual meeting not more than sixty-five (65) days prior or subsequent to the day otherwise established for such meeting in this Section. Failure to hold the annual meeting at the designated time and place shall not work a forfeiture or dissolution of the Cooperative.

**Section 3.02. Special Meetings.** A special meeting of the members may be called by the Board of Directors, by that number of directors that is one (1) less than a majority of the directors in office, or by petition signed by no fewer than ten (10%) percent of the members, and it shall thereupon be the duty of the Secretary to cause notice of such meeting to be given as hereinafter provided in Section 3.03. Such a meeting shall be held at such place in Hawkins County, Tennessee, on such date, not sooner than sixty-five (65) days after the call for such meeting is made or a petition therefor is filed, and beginning at such hour as shall be designated by the Board of Directors.

**Section 3.03. Notice of Member Meetings.** Written or printed notice of the place, date and hour of the meeting and, in case of a special meeting or of an annual meeting at which business requiring special notice is to be transacted, the purpose or purposes of the meeting shall be delivered to each member, by mail, by the Secretary. Any such notice may be included with member service billings or as an integral part of the Cooperative's monthly newsletter. No matter the carrying of which, as provided by law, requires the affirmative votes of at least a majority of all the Cooperative's members shall be acted upon at any meeting of the members unless notice of such matter shall have been contained in the notice of the meeting. Such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail, addressed to the member at his address as it appears on the record of the Cooperative, with postage thereon prepaid and postmarked not later than the minimally required days prior to the meeting date that notice must be given, as follows:

- (1) except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, not less than ninety (90) days prior to the date of a meeting of the members at which the Cooperative's dissolution or the sale or lease-sale of all or any substantial portion of its assets and properties devoted to and used or useful in furnishing electric service is scheduled to be considered and acted upon; or
- (2) except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, not less than forty-five (45) days prior to the date of a meeting of the members of the Cooperative at which a merger or consolidation with one or more other cooperatives is scheduled to be considered and acted upon; or
- (3) if subdivision (1) or (2) foregoing is not applicable, not less than five (5) nor more than twenty-five (25) days prior to the date of the meeting.

The incidental and non-intended failure of any member to receive such notice shall not invalidate any action which may be taken by the members at any such meeting, and the attendance in person of a member at any meeting of the members shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting unless such attendance shall be for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business, or one or more items of business, on the ground that the meeting shall not have been lawfully called or convened. Any member attending any meeting for the purpose of making such objection shall notify the Secretary prior to or at the beginning of the meeting of his objection.

**Section 3.04. Quorum.** A quorum for the transaction of business at meetings of the members shall, except as provided in the next following sentence, be the lesser of two percent (2%) of all members or one hundred (100) members; and, once such a quorum is established, the meeting may proceed to transact all business that may lawfully come before it so long as at least the lesser of one percent (1%) of all members or fifty-one (51) members remain present. In the case of a meeting of the members at which the dissolution of the Cooperative or the sale or lease-sale of all or any substantial portion of its assets and property devoted to and used or useful in furnishing electric service is scheduled to be considered and acted upon pursuant, the quorum requirement shall be and shall remain through the meeting ten percent (10%) of all members. If, at any member meeting, less than the required quorum is present to enable the meeting to begin transacting business, or if the quorum requirement for it to continue ceases to exist, a majority of those present may adjourn the meeting.

**Section 3.05. Voting.** Each member who is not in a status of suspension, as provided for in Section 2.01, shall be entitled to only one vote upon each matter submitted to a vote at any meeting of the members. Voting by members other than members who are natural persons shall be allowed upon the presentation to the Cooperative, prior to or upon registration at each member meeting, of satisfactory evidence entitling the person presenting the same to vote. At all meetings of the members, all questions shall be decided by a majority of the members voting thereon, except as otherwise provided by law or by the Cooperative's Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws. Members may not cumulate their votes.

**Section 3.06. Credentials and Election Committee.** The Board of Directors shall, at least ten (10) days before any meeting of the members, appoint a Credentials and Election Committee consisting of an uneven number of members, not less than three (3), who are not members of the Nominating Committee or existing Cooperative employees, agents, officers, directors or known candidates for director, and who are not close relatives or members of the same household thereof. In appointing the Committee, the Board of Directors shall have regard for the equitable representation of the several areas served by the Cooperative. The Committee shall elect its own chairman and secretary prior to the member meeting. It shall be the responsibility of the Committee to establish or approve the manner of conducting member registration and any ballot or other voting, to pass upon all questions that may arise with respect to the registration of members in person, to count all ballots or other votes cast in any election or on any other matter, to rule upon the effect of any ballots or other vote irregularly or indecisively marked or cast, to rule upon all other questions that may arise relating to member voting and the election of directors (including but not limited to the validity of petitions of nomination or the qualifications of candidates and the

regularity of the nomination and election of directors), and to pass upon any protest or objection filed with respect to any election or other matter voted upon by the members or to conduct affecting the results of any election or other voting. In the exercise of its responsibility, the Committee shall have available to it the advice of counsel provided by the Cooperative. Any such protest or objection must be filed during, or within three (3) business days following the adjournment of, the meeting in which the voting is conducted. The Committee shall thereupon be reconvened, upon notice from its chairman, not less than seven (7) days after such protest or objection is filed. The Committee shall hear such evidence as is presented by the protestor(s) or objector(s), who may be heard in person, by counsel, or both, and any opposing evidence; and the Committee, by a vote of a majority of those present and voting, shall, within a reasonable time but not later than thirty (30) days after such hearing, render its decision, which may be to affirm an election or other matter voted upon, to change the outcome thereof, or to set it aside. The Committee may not act on any matter unless a majority of the Committee is present. The Committee's decision on all matters covered by this Section shall be final, subject only to a contrary holding by a court, and the report or certificate of its decision shall constitute prima facie evidence of the facts stated therein.

**Section 3.07 Order of Business.** The order of business at the annual meeting of the members and, insofar as practicable or desirable, at all other meetings of the members, shall be essentially as follows:

- (1) Report on the number of members present in person in order to determine the existence of a quorum;
- (2) Reading of the notice of the meeting and proof of the due giving thereof, or of the waiver or waivers of notice of the meeting, as the case may be;
- (3) Reading of unapproved minutes of previous meetings of the members and the taking of necessary action thereon;
- (4) Presentation and consideration of reports of officers, directors and committees;
- (5) Election of directors;
- (6) Unfinished business;
- (7) New business; and
- (8) Adjournment.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Board of Directors or the members themselves may from time to time establish a different order of business for the purpose of assuring the earlier consideration of and action upon any item of business the transaction of which is necessary or desirable in advance of any other item of business; **PROVIDED**, no business other than adjournment of the meeting to another time and place may be transacted until and unless the existence of a quorum is first established.

#### **Article IV Directors**

**Section 4.01. Number and General Powers.** The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be managed under the direction of a board of seven (7) directors. The Board shall exercise all of the powers of the Cooperative except such as are by law or by the Cooperative's Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws conferred upon or reserved to the members.

**Section 4.02. Qualifications.** No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative who is a close relative of an incumbent director or of an employee of the Cooperative, or is not a member of the Cooperative and receiving service therefrom at his primary residential abode. No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative who is not at least eighteen (18) years of age, or is in any way employed by or substantially financially interested in a competing enterprise, or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business substantially engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies primarily to the members of the Cooperative, or who is an elected public official. Notwithstanding any of the foregoing provisions of this Section treating with close relative relationships, no incumbent director shall lose eligibility to remain a director or to be re-elected as a director if, during his incumbency as a director, he becomes a close relative of another incumbent director or of a Cooperative employee because of a marriage to which he was not a party.

Upon establishment of the fact that a nominee for director lacks eligibility under this Section or as may be provided elsewhere in these Bylaws, it shall be the duty of the chairman presiding at the meeting at which such nominee would otherwise be voted upon to disqualify such nominee. Upon the establishment of the fact that any person being considered for, or already holding, a directorship lacks eligibility under this Section, it shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to withhold such position from such person, or to cause him to be removed therefrom, as the case may be. Nothing contained in this Section shall, or shall be construed to, affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the Board of Directors, unless such action is taken with respect to a matter which is affected by the provisions of this Section and in which one or more of the directors have an interest adverse to that of the Cooperative.

**Section 4.03. Election.** At each annual meeting of the members, directors shall be elected by secret ballot by the members, and **PROVIDED**, when the number of nominees does not exceed the number of directors to be elected from a particular Directorate District, and if there is no objection, secret balloting may be dispensed with in respect of that particular election and voting may be conducted in any other proper manner. Directors shall be elected by a plurality of the votes cast. Drawing by lot shall resolve, where necessary, any tie votes.

**Section 4.04. Tenure.** Directors shall be so nominated and elected that one director from each of Directorate District Nos. One and Two shall be elected for three-year terms at an annual member meeting; one director from each of Directorate District Nos. Three, Four and Five shall be elected for three-year terms at the next succeeding annual member meeting; and one director from each of Directorate Districts Nos. Six and Seven shall be elected for three-year terms at the next succeeding annual member meeting. Upon their election, directors shall, subject to the provisions of these Bylaws with respect to the removal of directors, serve until the annual meeting of the members of the year in which their terms expire or until their successors shall have been elected and shall have qualified. If for any reason an election of directors shall not be held at an annual meeting of the members duly fixed and called pursuant to these Bylaws, such election may be held at an adjournment of such meeting or at a subsequently held special or the next annual meeting of the members. Failure of an election for a given year shall

allow the incumbents whose directorship would have been voted on to hold over only until the next member meeting at which a quorum is present and they or their successors shall be elected, whichever be the case.

**Section 4.05. Directorate Districts.** The territory served by the Cooperative shall be divided into seven (7) Directorate Districts. Each District shall be represented by one director.

The Board of Directors, at any regular or special meeting thereof held not less than ninety (90) days prior to any annual meeting of the members, or special meeting of the members, held in lieu of such annual meeting, may, by resolution, alter the geographical boundaries of the seven districts with the aim of arranging more equitable districting.

**Section 4.06. Nominations.** It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to appoint, not less than thirty (30) days nor more than sixty-five (65) days before the date of a meeting of the members at which directors are to be elected, a committee on nominations consisting of not less than five (5) nor more than eleven (11) members who shall be selected so as to give equitable representation on the committee to the geographical areas served by the Cooperative. No officer or member of the Board of Directors shall be appointed a member of such committee. The committee shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative at least thirty (30) days before the meeting, a list of nominations for directors, but any fifteen (15) or more members may make other nominations in writing over their signature not less than sixty-five (65) days prior to the meeting and the Secretary shall post the same at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted. The Secretary shall mail with the notice of the meeting a statement of the number of directors to be elected and showing separately the nominations made by the committee on nominations, and the nominations made by petition, if any. The members may, at any meeting at which a director or directors shall be removed, as hereinbefore provided, elect a successor or successors thereto without compliance with the foregoing provisions with respect to nominations. Notwithstanding anything in this Section contained, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of directors.

**Section 4.07. Voting for Directors; Validity of Board Action.** In the election of directors, each member shall be entitled to cast the number of votes (but not cumulatively) which corresponds to the total number of directors to be elected, but no member may vote for more than the number of nominees from any particular Directorate District than there are to be elected. Votes cast in violation of the foregoing restriction with respect to one or more Directorate Districts shall be invalid and shall not be counted with respect to such District or Districts. Notwithstanding the provisions contained in this Section, failure to comply with any of them shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken by the Board of Directors after the election of directors.

**Section 4.08. Removal of Directors by Members.** Any member may bring one or more charges against any one or more directors, alleging acts or omissions adversely affecting the business and affairs of the Cooperative and amounting to actionable negligence, malfeasance, misfeasance, nonfeasance, fraud or criminal conduct, and may request the removal of such director(s) by reason thereof by filing with the Secretary such charge(s) in writing together with a petition, signed by not less than ten (10%) percent of the total membership of the Cooperative, which calls for a special

member meeting thereon and specifies the place, time and date thereof not less than sixty (60) nor more than sixty-five (65) days after the filing of such petition, or which requests that the matter be acted upon at the subsequent annual member meeting if such meeting will be held no sooner than sixty (60) nor more than ninety (90) days after the filing of such petition. Each page of the petition shall, in the forepart thereof, state the name(s) and address(es) of the member(s) filing such charge(s), a verbatim statement of such charge(s) and the name(s) of the director(s) against whom such charge(s) is (are) being made. The petition shall be signed by each member in the same name as he is billed by the Cooperative and shall state the signatory's address as the same appears on such billings. Notice of such charge(s) verbatim, of the director(s) against whom the charge(s) have been made and of the member(s) filing the charge(s) shall be contained in the notice of the meeting or separately noticed to the members not less than five (5) days prior to the member meeting at which the matter will be acted upon; **PROVIDED**, the notice shall set forth (by random selection but otherwise in alphabetical order) only twenty (20) of the names and addresses of the charging members if twenty (20) or more members file the same charge(s) against the same director(s). Such director(s) shall be informed in writing of the charges after they have been validly filed and at least twenty-five (25) days prior to the meeting of the members at which the charge(s) are to be considered, shall have an opportunity at the meeting to be heard in person, by witnesses, by counsel or any combination of such, and to present evidence to respect of the charge(s), and shall be heard last; and the person(s) bringing the charge(s) shall have the same opportunity, but shall be heard first. The question of the removal of such director(s) shall, separately for each if more than one has been charged, be considered and voted upon at such meeting, and any vacancy created by such removal shall be filled by vote of the members at such meeting without compliance with the foregoing provisions with respect to nominations, except that nominations shall be made from the floor; **PROVIDED**, the question of the removal of a director shall not be voted upon at all unless some evidence in support of the charge(s) against him shall have been presented during the meeting through oral statements, documents, or otherwise; **AND PROVIDED FURTHER**, no director shall be so removable from office for the reason that he, in good faith and believing such to be the best interests of the Cooperative and of its present and future members, failed or declined to support, or that he opposed, (1) a proposal to sell or lease-sell all or a substantial portion of the Cooperative's assets and properties or to dissolve the Cooperative, or (2) a motion to notify the Cooperative's members of a proposal received by the Cooperative for such a sale, lease-sale or dissolution, or (3) a motion or any other effort to call a meeting of the Cooperative's members to consider and act upon a proposal for such a sale, lease-sale or dissolution. A newly elected director shall be from the same Directorate District as was the director whose office he succeeds and shall serve out the unexpired portion of the removed director's term.

**Section 4.09. Vacancies.** Subject to the provisions of these Bylaws with respect to the filling of vacancies caused by the removal of directors by the members, a vacancy occurring in the Board of Directors shall be filled by the Board of Directors. A director thus elected shall be from the same Directorate District as was the director whose office was vacated and shall serve out that director's unexpired term.

**Section 4.10. Compensation; Expenses.** Directors shall, as determined by resolution of the Board of Directors, receive on a per diem basis a fixed fee, which may include insurance benefits, for attending meetings of the Board of Directors and, when approved by the Board of Directors, for otherwise performing their duties. The fee or fees fixed for otherwise performing their duties need not be the same as the fee fixed for attending meetings of the Board of Directors. Directors shall also receive advancement to reimbursement of any travel and out-of-pocket expenses actually, necessarily and reasonably incurred, in performing their duties. No close relative of a director shall be employed by the Cooperative and no director shall receive compensation for serving the Cooperative in any other capacity, unless the employment of such relative or the service of such director is temporary and shall be specifically authorized by a vote of the Board of Directors or the members upon a determination that such was an emergency measure; **PROVIDED**, a director who is also an officer of the Board, and who as such officer performs regular or periodic duties of a substantial nature for the Cooperative in its fiscal affairs, may be compensated in such amount as shall be fixed and authorized in advance of such service by the unanimous vote of the remaining directors; **AND PROVIDED FURTHER**, an employee shall not lose eligibility to continue in the employment of the Cooperative if he becomes a close relative of a director because of a marriage in which he was not a party.

**Section 4.11. Rules, Regulations, Rate Schedules and Contracts.** The Board of Directors shall have power to make, adopt, amend, abolish and promulgate such rules, regulations, rate classifications, rate schedules, contracts, security deposit and any other types of deposits, payments or charges, including contribution in aid of construction, not inconsistent with law or the Cooperative's Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws, as it may deem advisable for the management, administration and regulation of the business and affairs of the Cooperative.

**Section 4.12. Accounting System and Reports.** The Board of Directors shall cause to be established and maintained a complete accounting system of the Cooperative's financial operations and condition, and shall, after the close of each fiscal year, cause to be made a full, complete and independent audit of the Cooperative's accounts, books and records reflecting financial operations during, and financial condition as of the end of, such year. A financial statement shall be submitted to the members at or prior to the succeeding annual meeting of the members. The Board may authorize special audits, complete or partial, at any time and for any specified period of time.

**Section 4.13. "Close Relative" Defined.** As used in these Bylaws, "close relative" means a person who, by blood or in law, including step, half, and adoptive kin, is either a spouse, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, nephew, or niece of the principal.

## **Article V**

### **Meetings of Directors**

**Section 5.01 Regular Meetings.** A regular meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held, without notice, immediately after the adjournment of the annual meeting of the members, or as soon thereafter as conveniently may be, at such site as designated by the Board in advance of the annual member meeting. A regular meeting of the Board of Directors shall also be

held monthly at such date, time and place in Hawkins County, Tennessee as the Board shall provide by resolution. Such regular monthly meeting may be held without notice other than such resolution fixing the day, time and place thereof, except when business to be transacted thereat shall require special notice; **PROVIDED**, any director absent from any meeting of the Board at which such a resolution initially fixes or makes any change in the day, time or place of a regular meeting shall be entitled to receive written notice of such at least five (5) days prior to the next meeting of the Board; **AND PROVIDED FURTHER**, if a policy therefor is established by the Board, the President may change the day, time or place of a regular monthly meeting for good cause and upon at least five (5) days' notice thereof to all directors.

**Section 5.02 Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by Board resolution, by the President, or by any three (3) directors, and it shall thereupon be the duty of the Secretary to cause notice of such meeting to be given as hereinafter provided in Section 5.03. The Board, the President, or the directors calling the meeting shall fix the date, time and place for the meeting, which shall be held in Hawkins County, Tennessee.

**Section 5.03. Notice of Directors Meetings.** Written or oral notice of the day, time, place, and purpose(s) of any special meeting of the Board and, when the business to be transacted thereat shall require such, of any regular meeting of the Board shall be delivered to each director not less than five (5) days prior thereto either personally or by mail, by or at the direction of the Secretary or, upon a default in this duty by the Secretary, by him or those calling it in the case of a special meeting or by any director in the case of a meeting whose day, time and place have already been fixed by the Board resolution. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail, addressed to the director at his address as it appears on the records of the Cooperative, with first class postage thereon prepaid first class, and postmarked at least five (5) days prior to the meeting date. The attendance of a director at any meeting of the Board shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting unless such attendance shall be for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business, or of one or more items of business, on the ground that the meeting shall not have been lawfully called or convened.

**Section 5.04. Quorum.** The presence in person of a majority of the directors in office shall be required for the transaction of business and the affirmative votes of a majority of the directors present and voting shall be required for any action to be taken; **PROVIDED**, a director who has a conflict of interest in a matter to be considered shall not, with respect to that matter, be counted in determining the number of directors in office or present; **AND PROVIDED FURTHER**, if less than a quorum be present at a meeting, a majority of the directors present may adjourn the meeting from time to time, but shall cause the absent directors to be duly and timely notified of the day, time and place of such adjourned meeting.

## **Article VI**

### **Officers; Miscellaneous**

**Section 6.01 Number and Title.** The officers of the Cooperative shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as may from time to time be determined by the Board of Directors. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same person.

**Section 6.02. Election and Term of Office.** The four offices named in Section 6.01 shall be elected by secret written ballot, annually and without prior nomination, by and from the Board of Directors at the first meeting of the Board held after the annual meeting of the members. If the election of such officers shall not be held at such meeting, it shall be held as soon thereafter as conveniently may be. Each such officer shall hold office until the meeting of the Board first held after the next succeeding annual meeting of the members or until his successor shall have been duly elected and shall have qualified, subject to the provisions of the Bylaws with respect to the removal of directors and to the removal of officers by the Board of Directors. Any other officers may be elected by the Board from among such persons, and with such title, tenure, responsibilities and authorities, as the Board of Directors may from time to time deem advisable.

**Section 6.03. Removal.** Any officer, agent or employee elected or appointed by the Board of Directors may be removed by the Board whenever in its judgement the best interest of the Cooperative will thereby be served.

**Section 6.04. Vacancies.** A vacancy in any office elected or appointed by the Board of Directors shall be filled by the Board for the unexpired portion of the term.

**Section 6.05. President.** The President shall:

- (a) be the principal executive officer of the Board and shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors, and, unless determined otherwise by the Board of Directors, at all meetings of the members;
- (b) and may sign any deeds, mortgages, deeds of trust, notes, bonds, contracts or other instruments authorized by the Board of Directors to be executed, except in cases in which the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board of Directors or by these Bylaws to some other officer or agent of the Cooperative, or shall be required by the law to be otherwise signed or executed; and
- (c) in general, perform all duties incident to the office of President and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors from time to time.

**Section 6.06. Vice President.** In the absence of the President, or in the event of his inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President, and, when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President; and shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Board of Directors.

**Section 6.07. Secretary.** The Secretary shall:

- (a) keep, or cause to be kept, the minutes of meetings of the members and of the Board of Directors in one or more books provided for that purpose;
- (b) see that all notices are duly given in accordance with these Bylaws or as required by law;
- (c) be custodian of the corporate records and of the seal of the Cooperative and see that the seal of the Cooperative is affixed to all documents the execution of which, on behalf of the Cooperative under its seal, is duly authorized in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or is required by law;
- (d) keep, or cause to be kept, a register of the name and post office address of each member, which address shall be furnished to the Cooperative by such member;

- (e) have general charge of the books of the Cooperative in which a record of the members is kept;
- (f) keep on file at all times a complete copy of the Cooperative's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, together with all amendments thereto, which copies shall always be open to the inspection of any member, and, at the expense of the Cooperative, furnish a copy of such documents and all amendments thereto upon request to any member; and
- (g) in general, perform all duties incident to the office of the Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Board of Directors.

**Section 6.08. Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall:

- (a) have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Cooperative;
- (b) receive and give receipts for monies due and payable to the Cooperative from any source whatsoever, and deposit or invest all such monies in the name of the Cooperative in such bank or banks or in such financial institutions or securities as shall be selected in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws; and
- (c) in general perform all the duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Board of Directors.

**Section 6.09. Delegation of Secretary's and Treasurer's Responsibilities.** Notwithstanding the duties, responsibilities and authorities of the Secretary and of the Treasurer hereinbefore provided in Sections 6.07 and 6.08, the Board of Directors by resolution may, except as otherwise limited by law, delegate, wholly or in part, the responsibility and authority for, and the regular or routine administration of one or more of each such officer's such duties to one or more agents, other officers or employees of the Cooperative who are not directors. To the extent that the Board does so delegate with respect to any such officer, that officer as such shall be released from such duties, responsibilities and authorities.

**Section 6.10. General Manager.** The Board of Directors may appoint a General Manager, who may be, but who shall not be required to be, a member of the Cooperative. Such officer shall perform such duties as the Board of Directors may from time to time require and shall have such authority as the Board of Directors may from time to time vest in him.

**Section 6.11. Bonds.** The Board of Directors shall require the Treasurer and any other officer, agent or employee of the Cooperative charged with responsibility for the custody of any of its funds or property to give bond in such sum and with such surety as the Board of Directors shall determine. The Board of Directors in its discretion may also require any other officer, agent or employee of the Cooperative to give bond in such amount and with such surety as it shall determine. The cost of all such bonds shall be borne by the Cooperative.

**Section 6.12. Compensation; Indemnification.** The compensation, if any, of any officer, agent or employee who is also a director or close relative of a director shall be determined as provided in Section 4.10 of these Bylaws, and the powers, duties and compensation of any other officers, agents and employees shall be fixed or a plan therefor approved by the Board of Directors. The Cooperative shall indemnify present and former Cooperative directors, officers, including the General Manager, agents and

employees against liability and cost of defending against liability, and shall purchase insurance in reasonable face amounts to cover such indemnification to the fullest extent such insurance is available, to the fullest extent permissible by law, including Sections 48-58-301 through 48-58-601 (Section 304 excluded) of the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, as the same may from time to time be amended.

**Section 6.13. Reports.** The officers of the Cooperative shall submit at each annual meeting of the members reports covering the business of the Cooperative for the previous fiscal year and showing the condition of the Cooperative at the close of such fiscal year.

## Article VII

### Contracts, Checks and Deposits

**Section 7.01. Contracts.** Except as otherwise provided by law or these Bylaws, the Board of Directors may authorize any Cooperative officer, agent or employee to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name and on behalf of the Cooperative, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

**Section 7.02. Checks, Drafts, Etc.** All checks, drafts or other orders for the payment of money, and all notes, bonds or other evidences of indebtedness, issued in the name of the Cooperative, shall be signed or countersigned by such officer, agent or employee of the Cooperative and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

**Section 7.03. Deposits; Investments.** All funds of the Cooperative shall be deposited or invested from time to time to the credit of the Cooperative in such bank or banks or in such financial securities or institutions as the Board of Directors may select.

## Article VIII

### Membership Certificates

**Section 8.01. Certificate of Membership.** Membership in the Cooperative may, if the Board so resolves, be evidenced by a certificate of membership, which shall be in such form and shall contain such provisions as shall be determined by the Board of Directors not contrary to, or inconsistent with, the Cooperative's Articles of Incorporation or its Bylaws. Such certificate, if authorized to be issued by the Board, shall be signed by the President and by the Secretary, and the seal shall be affixed thereto; **PROVIDED**, the seal and the signatures of the President and the Secretary may be imprinted thereon by facsimile.

**Section 8.02. Issue of Membership Certificates.** No membership certificate shall be issued for less than the membership fee fixed by the Board of Directors nor until such membership fee, any required service security deposits, facilities extension deposits, service connection fees, or contributions in aid of construction have been fully paid.

**Section 8.03. Lost Certificate.** In case of a lost, destroyed or mutilated certificate, a new certificate may be issued therefor upon such terms and such indemnity to the Cooperative as the Board of Directors may prescribe.

## Article IX

### Non-Profit Operation

**Section 9.01. Interest or Dividends on Capital Prohibited.** The Cooperative shall at all times be operated on a cooperative non-profit basis for the mutual benefit of its patrons. No interest or dividends shall be paid or payable by the Cooperative on any capital furnished by its patrons.

**Section 9.02. Disposition of Revenues; Distribution of Excess.** With respect to the Cooperative's furnishing of electric service, the revenues therefrom for any fiscal year, in excess of the amount thereof necessary::

- (1) to defray expenses of the Cooperative, including the operation and maintenance of its facilities during such fiscal year;
- (2) to pay interest and principal obligations of the Cooperative coming due in such fiscal year;
- (3) to finance, or to provide a reserve to finance, the construction or acquisition by the Cooperative of additional facilities to the extent determined by the Board;
- (4) to provide a reasonable reserve for working capital;
- (5) to provide a reserve for the payment of indebtedness of the Cooperative maturing more than one year after the date of the incurrence of such indebtedness in an amount not less than the total of the interest and principal payments in respect thereof required to be made during the next following fiscal year;
- (6) to comply with any covenant or obligation of the Cooperative pursuant to any contract it has entered into; and
- (7) to provide a fund for education in cooperation and for the dissemination of information concerning the effective use and conservation of electric power and energy and concerning any other services made available by the Cooperative, including, if the Board so authorizes, publication of or subscription to a Cooperative newsletter and/or a statewide or regional publication.

Shall be distributed or credited by the Cooperative to patrons:

- (A) as patronage refunds prorated in accordance with the patronage of the Cooperative by the respective patrons paid for during or with respect to such fiscal year; or
- (B) by way of general reductions of rates or other charges; or
- (C) by any combination of such methods.

**Section 9.03. Use of Contributed Capital.** The primary purpose of the Cooperative is to furnish its patrons with electric service at the lowest rates and charges consistent with prudent management and sound economy. Therefore, all amounts received and receivable from the furnishing of electric energy to patrons, members and non-members alike, in excess of operating costs and expenses properly chargeable thereto are at the moment of receipt by the Cooperative received with the understanding that they are furnished by the patrons as capital. Capital contributed by the patrons shall be used only for capital purposes, including, without limitation, new electric system construction, the retirement of electric system indebtedness at or prior to maturity, and working capital adequate for all purposes, and for facilitation of general rate reduction.

**Section 9.04. Ascertainment of Contributed Capital.** The Cooperative shall maintain such books and records as will enable it at any time, upon reasonable notice, to compute the amount of capital contributed during any given accounting period by each of its patrons.

**Section 9.05. Contract.** The patrons of the Cooperative, by dealing with the Cooperative, acknowledge that the provisions of this Article of the Bylaws shall constitute and be a contract between the Cooperative and non-member patrons, and both the Cooperative and such patrons are bound by such contract as fully as though each patron had individually signed a separate instrument containing such terms and provisions. The provisions of this Article of the Bylaws shall be called to the attention of such patrons by being posted in a conspicuous place in the Cooperative's offices.

**Section 9.06. Patronage Refunds in Connection with Furnishing Other Services or Goods.** In the event that the Cooperative should engage in the business of furnishing services or goods other than electric power energy, all amounts received and receivable therefrom which are in excess of costs and expenses properly chargeable thereto shall, insofar as permitted by law, be prorated annually on a patronage basis and, subject to their prior use for any proper purposes, be returned to those patrons from whom such amounts were obtained pursuant to such method, at such time, on such basis and in such order of priority as the Board of Directors shall determine.

#### **Article X**

##### **Waiver of Notice**

Any member or director may waive, in writing, any notice of meetings required to be given by these Bylaws or any notice that may otherwise be legally required, either before or after such notice is required to be given.

#### **Article XI**

##### **Disposition and Pledging of Property;**

##### **Distribution of Surplus Assets on Dissolution**

**Section 11.01. Disposition and Pledging of Property.** The Cooperative may authorize the sale, lease, lease-sale, disposition, pledging, mortgaging or encumbering of all, a substantial portion or any part of its assets and properties as provided by law, including Sections 65-25-113 and 114 of the Tennessee Code Annotated, as the same may from time to time be amended.

**Section 11.02. Distribution of Surplus Assets on Voluntary Dissolution.** Upon the Cooperative's voluntary dissolution, any assets remaining after all liabilities or obligations of the Cooperative have been satisfied and discharged, or adequate provision therefor has been made, shall be distributed as provided for in Section 65-25-120 (b) (2) of the Tennessee Code Annotated, as the same may from time to time be amended.

#### **Article XII**

##### **Fiscal Year**

The Cooperative's fiscal year shall begin on the first day of the month of July of each year and end on the last day of the month of June following.

**Article XIII**  
**Rules of Order**

Parliamentary procedure at all meetings of the members, of the Board of Directors, of any committee provided for in these Bylaws and of any other committee of the members or Board of Directors which may from time to time be duly established shall be governed by the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except to the extent such procedure is otherwise determined by law or by the Cooperative's Articles of Incorporation or By-laws. This Article shall be subordinate to any other provision of these Bylaws pertaining to the votes required for action by members, directors or committees.

**Article XIV**  
**Seal**

The Corporate seal of the Cooperative shall be in the form of a circle and shall have inscribed thereon the name of the Cooperative and the words "Corporate Seal, Tennessee."

**Article XV**  
**Bylaw Amendments**

**Section 15.01. Power to Amend.** The Cooperative's Bylaws may, subject to Section 15.02, be changed (adopted, amended or repealed) by the members; **PROVIDED**, either the Board of Directors or the members may change any bylaw if, as established by law, such bylaw is illegal or has become a legal nullity.

**Section 15.02. Procedure for Amending.** A bylaw may be changed only if (1) a copy or an accurate summary explanation of the proposed change is contained in or with the notice of the member or Board meeting at which it is to be acted upon; and (2) if to be acted upon by the members, it is sponsored by the Board of Directors or at least fifty (50) members who over their signatures filed with the Cooperative a petition, proposing such change and setting forth with particularity the wording thereof and the time that the change is to become effective, at least forty-five (45) days prior to the date of the member meeting at which such change is proposed to be acted upon; **PROVIDED**, if the Cooperative is presented with a written request by one or more but less than fifty (50) members that a bylaw change be noticed to and acted upon by the members, and if the request sets forth with particularity the wording of the proposed change and the time that the change is to become effective, the Board of Directors may, but shall not be obligated to, waive the foregoing petition requirement and cause such proposed change to be noticed and acted upon; **PROVIDED FURTHER**, the Board of Directors shall not cause any proposed bylaw change to be noticed or acted upon, or permit any amendment to a proposed bylaw change to be acted upon, if it determines that such, if adopted, would be illegal or a legal nullity.