

***FRENCH BROAD ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION***

***BYLAWS***

Restated: \_\_\_\_\_

## USDA STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability. Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (*e.g.*, Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed complaint form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

USDA notice provided in accordance with applicable federal regulation.

## CONTENTS

<b>ARTICLE I - DEFINITIONS</b> .....	1
SECTION 1.01 - General Provisions.....	1
SECTION 1.02 - Defined Terms .....	1
<b>ARTICLE II - COOPERATIVE MEMBERSHIP</b> .....	4
SECTION 2.01 - Membership Eligibility .....	4
SECTION 2.02 - Application for Membership; Renewal of Prior Application .....	4
SECTION 2.03 -Service Security Deposit and Facilities Extension Fees; Contributions in Aid of Construction .....	5
SECTION 2.04 - Acceptance into Membership .....	5
SECTION 2.05 - Joint Membership .....	5
SECTION 2.06 - Conversion of Membership .....	5
SECTION 2.07 - Effect of Death, Legal Separation or Divorce upon a Joint Membership.....	6
SECTION 2.08 - Purchase of and Payment for Electric Service; Power Production by Member; Application of Payments to All Accounts .....	6
SECTION 2.09 - Reduction in Electric Service .....	6
SECTION 2.10 - Excess Payments to be Credited as Member-Furnished Capital .....	7
SECTION 2.11 - Wiring of Premises; Responsibility Therefor; Load Management Devices; Responsibility for Meter Tampering or Bypassing and for Damage to Cooperative Properties; Extent of Cooperative Responsibility; Indemnification.....	7
SECTION 2.12 - Member to Grant Easements to Cooperative and to Participate in, if Required, Cooperative Load Management Programs.....	8
SECTION 2.13- Dispute Resolution.....	8
<b>ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION</b> .....	9
SECTION 3.01 - Suspension by Non-Compliance; Reinstatement.....	9
SECTION 3.02 - Termination by Expulsion; Renewed Membership .....	9
SECTION 3.03 - Termination by Withdrawal or Resignation .....	9
SECTION 3.04 - Termination by Death or Cessation of Existence; Continuation of Membership in Remaining or New Partners; Limitations on Transfer of Interests.....	9
SECTION 3.05 - Effect of Termination .....	10
SECTION 3.06 - Board Acknowledgment of Membership Termination; Acceptance of Members Retroactively .....	10
SECTION 3.07 - Membership List.....	10

<b>ARTICLE IV - MEETING OF MEMBERS</b> .....	10
SECTION 4.01 - Annual Member Meetings .....	10
SECTION 4.02 - Special Meetings .....	11
SECTION 4.03 - Notice of Member Meetings .....	11
SECTION 4.04 - Record Date .....	12
SECTION 4.05 - Member Meeting List .....	12
SECTION 4.06 - Member Action by Written Consent .....	13
SECTION 4.07 - Member Quorum .....	13
SECTION 4.08 - Voting .....	14
SECTION 4.09 - Accepting and Rejecting Notarized Member Voting Documents .....	14
SECTION 4.10 - Proxies .....	14
SECTION 4.11 - Order of Business .....	15
SECTION 4.12 - Credentials and Election Committee .....	16
<b>ARTICLE V - DIRECTORS</b> .....	17
SECTION 5.01 - Number and General Powers .....	17
SECTION 5.02 - Qualifications .....	17
SECTION 5.03 - Election .....	19
SECTION 5.04 - Tenure .....	19
SECTION 5.05 - Nominations .....	19
SECTION 5.06 - Directorate Districts .....	20
SECTION 5.07 - Voting for Directors .....	20
SECTION 5.08 - Removal of Directors by Members .....	21
SECTION 5.09 - Removal of Directors by Board .....	21
SECTION 5.10 - Vacancies .....	21
SECTION 5.11 - Director Compensation .....	22
SECTION 5.12 - Director Conduct .....	22
SECTION 5.13 - Policies, Rules, Regulations, Rate Schedules and Contracts.....	23
SECTION 5.14 - Accounting System and Reports .....	24
SECTION 5.15 - “Close Relative” Defined .....	24
SECTION 5.16 - Indemnification of Directors, Officers and Employees .....	24
SECTION 5.17 - Insurance .....	26
SECTION 5.18 - Conflict of Interest Transaction .....	26

<b>ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS OF DIRECTORS</b> .....	27
SECTION 6.01 - Regular Meetings .....	27
SECTION 6.02 - Special Meetings .....	27
SECTION 6.03 - Notice of Directors' Meetings .....	27
SECTION 6.04 - Waiver of Board Meeting Notice .....	28
SECTION 6.05 - Director Quorum .....	28
SECTION 6.06 - Board Action by Written Consent .....	28
 <b>ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS; MISCELLANEOUS</b> .....	 29
SECTION 7.01 - Number and Title .....	29
SECTION 7.02 - Election and Term of Office .....	29
SECTION 7.03 - Removal .....	29
SECTION 7.04 - Vacancies .....	29
SECTION 7.05 - President and Chairman of the Board .....	29
SECTION 7.06 - Vice President .....	30
SECTION 7.07 - Secretary and Assistant Secretary .....	30
SECTION 7.08 - Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer .....	30
SECTION 7.09 - Delegation of Secretary's and Treasurer's Responsibilities .....	31
SECTION 7.10 - Chief Executive Officer and General Manager .....	31
SECTION 7.11 - Committees .....	31
SECTION 7.12 - Executive Committee .....	32
SECTION 7.13 - Bonds .....	32
SECTION 7.14 - Compensation .....	32
SECTION 7.15 - Reports .....	32
 <b>ARTICLE VIII - COOPERATIVE OPERATION AND CAPITAL</b> .....	 32
SECTION 8.01 - Definitions .....	32
SECTION 8.02 - Non-profit and Cooperative Operation .....	34
SECTION 8.03 - Allocating and Crediting Capital .....	34
SECTION 8.04 - Assignment of Capital Credits .....	35
SECTION 8.05 - Retiring Capital Credits .....	36
SECTION 8.06 – Interest in Separate Business Entities .....	38
SECTION 8.07 – Net Savings .....	38
SECTION 8.08 - Reasonable Reserves .....	38

SECTION 8.09 - Patron Agreement .....	39
SECTION 8.10 - Non-Member Patrons and Non-Patrons.....	39
<b>ARTICLE IX - DISPOSITION OF COOPERATIVE ASSETS .....</b>	<b>39</b>
SECTION 9.01 - Transfer of Cooperative Assets .....	39
SECTION 9.02 - Merger or Consolidation .....	40
SECTION 9.03 - Distribution of Cooperative Assets Upon Dissolution .....	41
<b>ARTICLE X - MISCELLANEOUS .....</b>	<b>41</b>
SECTION 10.01 - Bylaw Amendments .....	41
SECTION 10.02 - Rules of Order .....	42
SECTION 10.03 - Fiscal Year .....	42
SECTION 10.04 - Notice .....	42
SECTION 10.05 - Governing Law .....	43
SECTION 10.06 - Titles and Headings .....	43
SECTION 10.07 - Partial Invalidity .....	43
SECTION 10.08 - Cumulative Remedies .....	44
SECTION 10.09 - Entire Agreement .....	44
SECTION 10.10 - Successors and Assigns .....	44
SECTION 10.11 - Waiver .....	44
SECTION 10.12 - Lack of Notice .....	44

**BYLAWS OF  
FRENCH BROAD ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION**

**Article I - Definitions**

**SECTION 1.01 - General Provisions.**

Within these Bylaws of French Broad Electric Membership Corporation, as currently existing or as later amended (“Bylaws”):

1. Unless otherwise provided, words and phrases used in these Bylaws have their customary and ordinary meaning;
2. The singular use of any word includes the plural use, and the plural use of any word includes the singular use;
3. The masculine use of any word includes the feminine and neutral uses, the feminine use of any word includes the masculine and neutral uses, and the neutral use of any word includes the masculine and feminine uses;
4. The present tense of any word includes the past and future tenses, and the future tense of any word includes the present tense; and
5. The words “shall” or “must” indicate a mandatory action or requirement, and the word “may” indicates a permissive action or requirement.

**SECTION 1.02 - Defined Terms.**

These Bylaws define certain words and phrases within Bylaw sections (“Defined Terms”). Defined Terms are:

1. Capitalized and enclosed within parenthesis and quotation marks following or otherwise located within the section of the Defined Term’s definition; and
2. Capitalized when otherwise used in these Bylaws.

Unless the context requires otherwise, Defined Terms have the meaning specified in the appropriate Bylaw section. The following Defined Terms are defined in the following Bylaw sections:

Additional Payments - Bylaw Section 2.02  
Amended - Bylaw Section 10.01  
Annual Member Meeting - Bylaw Section 4.01  
Applicant - Bylaw Section 2.01  
Appraisal - Bylaw Section 9.01  
Assets - Bylaw Section 9.01  
Board - Bylaw Section 2.02  
Board Committees - Bylaw Section 7.11  
Board Meeting - Bylaw Section 6.03

Bylaws - Bylaw Section 1.01  
Bylaw Provision - Bylaw Section 10.07  
C & E Committee - Bylaw Section 4.12  
Candidate Challenge – Bylaw Section 4.12  
Capital Credits - Bylaw Section 8.01  
Certificate - Bylaw Section 2.02  
Close Relative - Bylaw Section 5.15  
Conflict of Interest Transaction - Bylaw Section 5.18  
Consolidate or Merge - Bylaw Section 9.02  
Consolidation or Merger Agreement - Bylaw Section 9.02  
Cooperative - Bylaw Section 2.01  
Cooperative Equipment - Bylaw Section 2.11  
Cooperative Services - Bylaw Section 8.01  
Defined Terms - Bylaw Section 1.02  
Director - Bylaw Section 5.01  
Director Quorum - Bylaw Section 6.05  
Director Removal Petition - Bylaw Section 5.08  
Director Term - Bylaw Section 5.04  
Director Written Consent - Bylaw Section 6.06  
Dispute Resolution – Bylaw Section 2.13  
Executive Committee - Bylaw Section 7.12  
Governing Documents - Bylaw Section 2.02  
Indemnification Advance - Bylaw Section 5.16  
Indemnification Director or Officer - Bylaw Section 5.16  
Indemnification Director Quorum - Bylaw Section 5.16  
Indemnification Expense - Bylaw Section 5.16  
Indemnification Individual - Bylaw Section 5.16  
Indemnification Party - Bylaw Section 5.16  
Indemnification Proceeding - Bylaw Section 5.16  
Indemnification Standard of Conduct - Bylaw Section 5.16  
Joint Member - Bylaw Section 2.05  
Joint Membership - Bylaw Section 2.05  
Member - Bylaw Section 2.04



Member Committees - Bylaw Section 7.11  
Member Demand - Bylaw Section 4.02  
Member Meeting - Bylaw Section 4.03  
Member Meeting List - Bylaw Section 4.05  
Member Petition - Bylaw Section 5.05  
Member Petition Nominations - Bylaw Section 5.05  
Member Quorum - Bylaw Section 4.07  
Member Voting Document - Bylaw Section 4.08  
Member Written Consent - Bylaw Section 4.06  
Membership List - Bylaw Section 3.07  
Membership Obligations - Bylaw Section 2.02  
New Entity - Bylaw Section 9.02  
Nominating Committee - Bylaw Section 5.05  
Nominating Committee Nominations - Bylaw Section 5.05  
Non-Member Patron - Bylaw Section 8.10  
Non-Member Non-Patron - Bylaw Section 8.10  
Non-patronage Earnings – Bylaw Section 8.01  
Non-patronage Loss – Bylaw Section 8.01  
Other Officer - Bylaw Section 7.01  
Patron - Bylaw Section 8.01  
Patronage – Bylaw Section 8.01  
Patronage Earnings – Bylaw Section 8.01  
Patronage Loss – Bylaw Section 8.01  
Reasonable Reserves - Bylaw Section 8.08  
Regular Board Meeting - Bylaw Section 6.01  
Required Officer - Bylaw Section 7.01  
Retirement – Bylaw Section 8.01  
Special Board Meeting - Bylaw Section 6.02  
Special Member Meeting - Bylaw Section 4.02  
Suspension Reason - Bylaw Section 3.01  
Total Membership - Bylaw Section 4.02  
Transfer - Bylaw Section 9.01

## **Article II - Cooperative Membership**

### **SECTION 2.01 - Membership Eligibility.**

Any natural person with the capacity to enter legally binding contracts or any legal entity, including any firm, association, corporation, business trust, partnership, federal agency, state or political subdivision thereof, or body politic (each hereinafter referred to as “Person,” “Applicant,” “him” or “his”) shall be eligible to become a Member (hereinafter “Member”) of, and, at one or more premises owned or directly occupied or used by him, to receive electric service from, French Broad Electric Membership Corporation (hereinafter called the “Cooperative”). No person or legal entity shall hold more than one (1) Cooperative Membership.

The existence of a legal entity shall be established by verification with the corporations division of the North Carolina Secretary of State or by presentation of the legal entity’s Federal Tax Identification Number.

### **SECTION 2.02 - Application for Membership; Renewal of Prior Application.**

When a person or legal entity applies to become a Member, the Applicant shall agree to purchase electric service from the Cooperative and to be bound by and to comply with all of the other provisions of the Cooperative’s Certificate of Incorporation (“Certificate”) and Bylaws, and all rules, regulations, rate classifications and rate schedules established pursuant thereto, as all the same then exist or may thereafter be adopted, repealed or amended (the obligations embraced by such agreement being hereinafter called “Membership Obligations”). The application shall be made in writing on such form, whether paper or electronic, as is provided or accepted therefor by the Cooperative (collectively “Governing Documents”). With respect to any particular classification of service for which the Board of Directors (“Board”) 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 any service security deposit, service connection fee, facilities extension fee or contribution in aid of construction that may be required by the Cooperative (hereinafter “Additional Payments”), under generally applicable terms and conditions. Such fees and such Additional Payments, if any, shall be refunded in the event the application is by Board resolution denied.

Any former Member of the Cooperative may again become a Member by either executing a new Membership application or renewing and reactivating any prior Membership application as if the application had been newly made, and paying applicable fees and any outstanding account, including an account pursuant to a former Joint Membership, plus interest thereon at the legal rate as it is established in North Carolina General Statute Section 24-1, or its successor, and as the same is amended from time to time, compounded annually, together with any Additional Payments. Any person who has actually used and benefited from electric service which has been supplied to premises owned or directly occupied or used by him, for which service there is an outstanding indebtedness remaining due the Cooperative, may become a Member by executing a Membership application, and paying the outstanding indebtedness for the service which was supplied to the premises owned or directly occupied or used by him.

**SECTION 2.03 - Service Security Deposit and Facilities Extension Fees; Contributions in Aid of Construction.**

Subject to the terms of these Bylaws, the application, together with any Additional Payments, shall entitle the Member to one service connection. A service connection deposit or fee, in such amount as shall be prescribed by the Cooperative under generally applicable terms and conditions, together with Additional Payments, if any, shall be paid by the Member for each additional service connection requested by him.

**SECTION 2.04 - Acceptance into Membership.**

Upon complying with the requirements set forth in Section 2.02, any Applicant shall automatically become a Member on the date of the Applicant's connection for electric service ("Member"); PROVIDED, that the Cooperative may reject or deny an application and refuse to furnish service upon its determination that the Applicant is not willing or is not able to satisfy and abide by the Membership Obligations or that such application should be denied for other good cause.

**SECTION 2.05 - 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, convert such membership into a joint membership ("Joint Membership"). The terms "Member" and "Applicant," as used in these Bylaws, shall include a spouse 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 —

1. the presence at a meeting of either or both shall constitute the presence of one Member, a joint waiver of notice of the meeting and a revocation of any proxy executed by either or both;
2. the vote of, or proxy executed by, either or both shall constitute, respectively, one joint vote. Parties to a Joint Membership are responsible for resolving disagreements involving their vote prior to the time of the election;
3. notice to, or waiver of notice signed by, either or both shall constitute, respectively, a joint notice or waiver of notice;
4. termination in any manner of either shall constitute termination of the Joint Membership;
5. 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; and
6. neither will be permitted to have any additional service connections except through their one Joint Membership.

**SECTION 2.06 - Conversion of Membership.**

A Membership which is a singular Membership may be converted to a Joint Membership upon the written request of either spouse on a form provided by or otherwise acceptable to the Cooperative. Upon the conversion of a singular Membership to a Joint Membership, such Membership shall be deemed to have always been joint.

**SECTION 2.07 - Effect of Death, Legal Separation or Divorce upon a Joint Membership.**

Upon the death of either spouse of a Joint Membership, the surviving spouse shall continue to hold the membership as though it had been originally issued solely to the survivor. The estate of the deceased spouse shall not be released from any membership debts or liabilities to 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 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. The other spouse or former spouse shall not be released from any membership debts or liabilities to the Cooperative.

**SECTION 2.08 - Purchase of and Payment for Electric Service; 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. Except for Member-owned distributed generation operating in accordance with the Cooperative's Service Rules and Regulations and any other applicable state and/or federal laws, rules and regulations, each Member, for so long as such premises are owned or directly occupied or used by him, shall purchase from the Cooperative all electric service to be used on all premises that have been served by the Cooperative pursuant to the Member's Membership. The Member shall pay for all electric service in accordance with the rules, regulations, and rate schedules (including any monthly minimum amount that may be charged without regard to the amount of electric service actually used) established by the Board and, if in effect, in accordance with the provisions of any supplemental contract that may have been entered into as provided for in Section 2.02. Production or use of electric service on such premises, regardless of the source thereof, by means of facilities which shall be interconnected 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 the Member to the Cooperative as and when they become due and payable. As determined by the Board, Members shall pay interest, compounded periodically, and late payment fees for all amounts owed, but not timely paid, to the Cooperative. When the Member has more than one service connection from the Cooperative, any payment for service by the Member to the Cooperative may be deemed to be allocated and credited on a pro rata basis to the Member's outstanding accounts for all such service connections, notwithstanding that the Cooperative's actual accounting procedures do not reflect such allocation and proration. Each Member agrees that, after written notice and an opportunity to resolve any dispute as to amount, the Cooperative may charge the Member's current accounts with any debts or other obligations owed by the Member to the Cooperative due to any prior Membership, including a prior Joint Membership, or due to any contractual or other legal obligation to the Cooperative.

**SECTION 2.09 - Reduction in Electric Service.**

As required or allowed by Law, and as determined by the Board, if a Member substantially reduces or ceases the use, receipt or purchase of electricity from the Cooperative, then the Cooperative may charge the Member, and the Member shall pay to the Cooperative, the reasonable costs and expenses incurred by the Cooperative in reliance on prior assurances regarding the anticipated future use of electric service by the Member.

**SECTION 2.10 - Excess Payments to be Credited as Member-Furnished Capital.**

All amounts paid for electric service in excess of the cost thereof shall be furnished by Members as capital, and each Member shall be credited with the capital so furnished as provided in Article VIII of these Bylaws. Notwithstanding the forgoing, however, any amounts paid to the Cooperative due to overbilling by the Cooperative shall be promptly credited to the Member's Account as a payment on amounts currently due, or refunded to the Member.

**SECTION 2.11 - Wiring of Premises; Responsibility Therefor; Load Management Devices; 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 the Member's Membership to become and to remain wired in accordance with the specifications of the North Carolina 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 apparatus connected thereto or used thereon. Each Member may, by separate agreement with the Cooperative, permit the installation of load management devices on such appliances and equipment, as is jointly agreed to between the Cooperative and the Member. If the Member agrees to the installation of such devices, the devices may not be permanently disconnected or removed unless the Member in writing revokes the prior authorization, or (2) the Cooperative, its employees, agents, or contractor(s) disconnect or remove the devices. 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 free and safe access thereto for meter reading, bill collecting and for inspection, maintenance, 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 best efforts to prevent others from so doing. Each Member shall also provide such protective devices to the Member's 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 operation 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 or any error occurring in the Cooperative's billing procedure. In no event shall the responsibility of the Cooperative extend beyond the point of delivery as defined in the Cooperative's Service Rules and Regulations, except that the Cooperative shall, 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, and for any damage that may result from a malfunctioning of its load management devices.

No Member shall tamper or interfere with, damage, or impair any Cooperative Equipment. Unless otherwise determined by the Board, the Cooperative owns all Cooperative Equipment. As the Cooperative's bailee of such equipment, each Member shall protect all Cooperative Equipment, and shall install, implement, and maintain any protective device or procedure reasonably required by the Cooperative. Each Member shall comply with any procedure required by the Cooperative regarding the provision of any Cooperative Service to any Member or Person. After providing the Member reasonable notice and an opportunity to comment orally or in writing, the Cooperative may suspend or terminate provision of any Cooperative Services to any Member.

However, upon:

1. Determining that a Member has tampered or interfered with, damaged, or impaired any product, equipment, structure, or facility furnished or used by the Cooperative to provide, monitor, measure, or maintain any Cooperative Service ("Cooperative Equipment");
2. Discovering the unsafe condition of any Cooperative Equipment; or
3. Discovering any imminent hazard or danger posed by any Cooperative Equipment; then, without providing the Member notice or opportunity to comment, the Cooperative may suspend provision of Cooperative Services to the Member until such equipment is repaired or replaced.

**SECTION 2.12 - Member to Grant Easements to Cooperative and to Participate in, if Required, Cooperative Load Management Programs.**

Each Member shall, at any time requested by the Cooperative, execute and deliver to the Cooperative grants of easement or right-of-way over, on and under such lands owned or leased by or mortgaged to the Member. Such grants shall be provided to facilitate the construction, operation, maintenance or relocation of the Cooperative's electric facilities, to provide service to the granting Member and/or to facilitate the Cooperative's efforts to provide requested or anticipated services to any other existing or future Member or Members. 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 service or to conduct load research.

**SECTION 2.13 - Dispute Resolution.**

By applying for service or accepting electric energy from the Cooperative, each Member agrees that any dispute the Member has against the Cooperative arising from or related to current or former Membership in the Cooperative or the receipt of electric energy from the Cooperative, or arising out of or related in any way to these Bylaws, or any agreements with or services provided by the Cooperative, if not resolved informally by the parties by discussion, negotiation or voluntary mediation, will be subject to mandatory and binding arbitration ("Arbitration") in any case where the entire amount in controversy exceeds the jurisdictional limits for District Court. The Arbitration of such a dispute will be commenced by the Member or former Member sending a demand for Arbitration to the registered office of the Cooperative. The Arbitration shall take place in the county of the Member's service address as listed in the records of the Cooperative. In the absence of other express agreement by the parties, the Arbitration shall be conducted pursuant to the Commercial Arbitration Rules and Arbitration Procedures of the American Arbitration Association in effect at the time of the demand for Arbitration, except in all cases the arbitrator may tax against the Cooperative the arbitrators' expenses and fees, together with other expenses

but not including counsel fees, incurred in the conduct of the Arbitration if the arbitrator enters a decision solely against the Cooperative. Each Member further agrees that no class action claim may be brought in such arbitration or in any court. Furthermore, the Cooperative and the Member each waive their respective right to a jury trial in any dispute.

### **Article III - Membership Suspension and Termination**

#### **SECTION 3.01 - Suspension by Non-Compliance; Reinstatement.**

Upon the Member's failure, after the expiration of the initial time limit prescribed either in a specific notice to the Member 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 Membership Obligations (collectively "Suspension Reason"), a person's Membership shall be suspended; and the person shall not during such suspension be entitled to receive electric service from the Cooperative or to cast a vote at any Member Meeting. Payment of all amounts due the Cooperative, including any additional charges required for such reinstatement, and/or cessation of any other noncompliance with 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 3.02 - Termination by Expulsion; Renewed Membership.**

Upon failure of a Member suspended for non-compliance to be automatically reinstated to Membership, as provided in Section 3.01, the Member may, without further notice, but only after due hearing if such is requested by him, be terminated by the affirmative votes of not less than a majority of the Directors in office at any subsequently held regular or Special Board Meeting. After termination, a Member may not again become a Member except upon new application therefor duly approved as provided in Sections 2.02, 2.03 and 2.04; but the Board, 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 Membership Obligations.

#### **SECTION 3.03 - Termination by Withdrawal or Resignation.**

A Member may withdraw from Membership upon such generally applicable conditions as the Board shall prescribe and upon either (a) ceasing to (or, with the approval of the Board, resigning the Membership in favor of a new Applicant who also shall) own, lease as lessor or lessee, or directly occupy or use all premises being furnished electric service pursuant to the Membership, or (b) abandoning totally and permanently the use of electric service on all such premises.

#### **SECTION 3.04 - Termination by Death or Cessation of Existence; Continuation of Membership in Remaining or New Partners; Limitations on Transfer of Interests.**

The death of a natural person Member shall automatically terminate the Membership. The cessation of the legal existence of any other type of Member shall automatically terminate such Membership: PROVIDED, that 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, lease as lessor or lessee, 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, that neither a withdrawing partner nor their estate shall be released from any debts then due the Cooperative by the partnership. No natural person's right or privilege associated with Cooperative Membership may be sold, purchased, assigned or otherwise transferred, except in conformity with Section 8.02(4) of these Bylaws. Except as otherwise provided herein, no legal entity's rights or privileges associated with the Cooperative may be sold, purchased or assigned unless requested in writing in connection with the sale or dissolution of the entity.

### **SECTION 3.05 - Effect of Termination.**

Upon the termination in any manner of a person's Membership, the person or their estate, as the case may be, shall be entitled to refund of security deposits, if any, the person has paid the Cooperative, less any amounts due the Cooperative; but neither the person nor their estate, as the case may be, shall be released from any debts or other obligations then remaining due the Cooperative. Notwithstanding the suspension or termination of a Member, as provided for in Section 3.01 and 3.02, such suspension or termination shall not, unless the Board shall expressly so elect, constitute a release of such person from Membership Obligations as to entitle the Member to purchase from any other person any electric service for use at the premises to which such service has theretofore been furnished by the Cooperative pursuant to such Membership.

### **SECTION 3.06 - Board Acknowledgment of Membership Termination; Acceptance of Members Retroactively.**

Upon the suspension or termination of a person's Membership for any reason, the Board, as soon as practicable after such event is made known to it, shall by appropriate resolution formally acknowledge Membership 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 Membership and does become a Member 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.

### **SECTION 3.07 - Membership List.**

The Cooperative, or the Cooperative's agent, shall maintain a record of current Members in a form permitting the Cooperative to alphabetically list the names and main addresses of all Members. ("Membership List").

## **Article IV - Meeting of Members**

### **SECTION 4.01 - Annual Member Meetings.**

For the purposes 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 Member Meeting ("Annual Member Meeting") shall be held first Saturday of the month of May of each year as may be determined by the Board, at such place in one of the counties in which the Cooperative operates in the State of North Carolina or Tennessee as shall be designated



in the notice of the meeting: PROVIDED, that, for cause sufficient to it, the Board may fix a different date for such Annual Member Meeting not more than sixty (60) days prior or subsequent to the day otherwise established for such meeting in this Section. Failure to hold the Annual Member Meeting at the designated time and place shall not work a forfeiture or dissolution of the Cooperative.

**SECTION 4.02 - Special Meetings.**

A Special Member Meeting may be called by resolution of the Board (“Special Member Meeting”). The Board shall call such a meeting upon written request signed by at least a majority of the Directors or by written request signed by not less than ten percent (10%) of the Cooperative’s total non-suspended Members (“Total Membership”) requesting, and describing the purpose of, a Special Member Meeting (“Member Demand”). The Board shall be solely responsible for determining the place, date and time for any such special meeting; PROVIDED, however, that such a Special Member Meeting shall be held within one of the counties being served by the Cooperative. Upon the adoption of such a resolution calling a Special Member Meeting, it shall be the duty of the Secretary to cause notice of such meeting to be given as provided in Section 4.03.

**SECTION 4.03 - Notice of Member Meetings.**

As directed by the President, Secretary, or any Officer or Member properly calling an Annual Member Meeting or Special Member Meeting (collectively “Member Meeting”), the Cooperative shall deliver written notice of the Member Meeting:

1. Personally or by mail;
2. To all Members entitled to vote at the Member Meeting;
3. Indicating the date, time, and location of the Member Meeting;
4. At least ten (10), or, if notice is mailed by other than first class, registered or certified mail, at least 30, but not more than 60 days prior to the Member meeting; and
5. Describing any matter to be considered, or voted or acted upon, under N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 55A-11-04 (Articles of Merger), 55A-12- 02 (Sale of Assets), or 55A-14-02 (Dissolution); and
6. For any Special Member Meeting, stating the purpose of, and describing any matter to be considered, or voted or acted upon, at the Special Member Meeting.

If mailed, notice of a Member Meeting is delivered when deposited in the United States Mail with prepaid postage affixed and addressed to a Member at the Member’s address shown on the Membership List. Publication of the notice in *Carolina Country*, or other such Member publications, and timely delivery of the same to the Member shall be an acceptable means of providing notice.

The inadvertent and unintended failure to send, or of any Member to receive, notice of any Member Meeting shall not affect any action taken at the Member Meeting.

When notifying Members of any Member Meeting, the Cooperative shall include notice of any matter which a Member may raise or discuss, and intends to raise or discuss, at the Member Meeting if:

1. Requested, in writing, by a percentage of the Total Membership entitled to call a Special Member Meeting; and
2. The Cooperative receives the written request at least thirty (30) days prior to delivering notice of the Member Meeting.

Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Cooperative shall notify Members of a Member Meeting adjourned to another date, time, or location unless:

1. The Member Meeting is adjourned to another date occurring within one hundred and twenty (120) days following the Record Date for the original Member Meeting; and
2. The new date, time, or location is announced at the Member Meeting prior to adjournment.

Members may only vote upon matters described in the notice of the Member Meeting.

#### **SECTION 4.04 - Record Date.**

1. The Record Date for the purpose of determining the Members entitled to notice of a Member meeting shall not exceed 45 days preceding the day on which notice of such meeting is given.
2. The Record Date for the purpose of determining the Members entitled to vote at a Member Meeting shall be the Cooperative's last business day preceding the date of the Member Meeting.
3. A determination of Members entitled to notice of or to vote at a Member Meeting is effective for any adjournment of the meeting unless the Board fixes a new date for determining the right to notice or the right to vote, which it shall do if the meeting is adjourned to a date more than 120 days after the date fixed for the original meeting.

#### **SECTION 4.05 - Member Meeting List.**

After fixing the Record Date for determining the Members entitled to notice of a Member Meeting, and through the duration of the Member Meeting or any adjournment, the Cooperative shall prepare, update, and maintain an alphabetical list ("Member Meeting List") indicating the name and address of each Member entitled to notice of, and to vote at, the Member Meeting.

In order to facilitate communications among Members concerning the Member Meeting, the Cooperative shall make the Member Meeting List available for inspection by any Member:

1. Beginning two (2) business days after the Cooperative provides notice of the Member Meeting as outlined in Section 4.03, and continuing through the duration of the Member Meeting or any adjournment; and
2. At the Cooperative's principal office, or at a reasonable place identified in the notice of the Member Meeting and located in the city in which the Member Meeting will be held; and

Upon written demand and at a reasonable time during the period a Member Meeting List is available for inspection:

1. A Member, Member's agent, or Member's attorney may inspect the Member Meeting List and copy the Member Meeting List at the Member's expense; or

2. If reasonable, as determined by the Cooperative, and upon paying the Cooperative a reasonable charge determined by the Cooperative covering the Cooperative's labor and material cost of copying the Member Meeting List, the Cooperative shall provide a copy of the Member Meeting List to the Member, Member's agent, or Member's attorney if:
  - a. The written demand is made in good faith; and
  - b. The Member Meeting List is not used to solicit money or property unless the money or property is used solely to solicit Member votes at the Member Meeting; and
  - c. The Member Meeting List is not used for any commercial purpose, or sold to, or purchased by, any Person.

The Cooperative shall also make the Member Meeting List available at the Member Meeting. Any Member, Member's agent, or Member's attorney may inspect the Meeting List at any time during the Member Meeting or any adjournment thereof.

Before acting as allowed under this Bylaw, a Member's agent or attorney must provide written evidence satisfactory to the Cooperative that the Member properly authorized the agent or attorney to act on the Member's behalf.

Refusal or failure to prepare or make available the Member Meeting List does not affect the validity of action taken at the meeting.

#### **SECTION 4.06 - Member Action by Written Consent.**

Any action required or permitted to be taken or approved by Members may be taken without a Member Meeting if the action is taken by all Members entitled to vote on the action. The action shall be evidenced by one (1) or more written consents:

1. Containing the printed names and original dated signatures of all Members entitled to vote on the action; and
2. Describing the action in detail; and
3. Delivered to the Cooperative for inclusion in the minutes or filing with the corporate records.

("Member Written Consent"). Any material soliciting approval of any action by Member Written Consent must contain, or be accompanied by, a copy or summary of the proposed action.

A Member may withdraw the Member's consent any time prior to the Cooperative receiving the Member Written Consent. A Member's consent may not be procured through fraud or other improper means, and any Member consent procured through fraud or other improper means is invalid. A Member Written Consent has the effect of a vote taken at a Member Meeting, and may be so described in any document.

#### **SECTION 4.07 - Member Quorum.**

Attendance in person or by proxy of at least 100 Members of the total members of the Cooperative shall be required for the transaction of business at any meeting of the members. If less than a quorum is present at any meeting, a majority of those present in person may adjourn the meeting to another time and date not less than thirty (30) days later and to any place within one of the counties referred to in Section 4.01: PROVIDED, that the Secretary shall notify any absent

members of the new time, date and place of such adjourned meeting by delivering notice thereof as provided in Section 4.03. At all meetings of the members, whether a quorum be present or not, the Secretary shall annex to the meeting minutes, or incorporate therein by reference, a list of those who were present in person and by proxy.

#### **SECTION 4.08 - Voting.**

1. Each Member or their spouse who is not suspended or terminated, as provided for in Article III, shall be entitled to one vote and no more upon each matter submitted to a vote at any Member Meeting. A non-Member spouse will be required to present satisfactory proof of the marital relationship (*e.g.*, same last name and same address on a valid ID) prior to voting the Membership interest. The Member spouse's proxy is not required.
2. 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 a notarized and otherwise satisfactory resolution of the entity ("Member Voting Document") entitling the person presenting the same to vote. A person entitled to cast the vote of such an entity, who is also himself a Member, may vote their own Membership as well as that of the entity the person represents.
3. 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 Certificate of Incorporation or these Bylaws.

#### **SECTION 4.09 - Accepting and Rejecting Notarized Member Voting Documents.**

Regarding any Member Voting:

1. Acceptance. Member Voting Documents must be notarized by a Notary Public who is outside the employ of the Cooperative. The Cooperative may accept, and give effect to, the notarized Member Voting Document if the name signed on the Member Voting Document corresponds to a Member's name, and the Cooperative acts in good faith; or the Cooperative reasonably believes the Member Voting Document is valid and authorized.
2. Rejection. The Cooperative may reject, and not give effect to, the Member Voting Document if the Cooperative acts in good faith; and has reasonable basis for doubting the validity of the signature on the Member Voting Document; or the signatory's authority to sign on behalf of the Member.
3. Liability. Neither the Cooperative, nor any Cooperative Member, Director, Officer, employee, or agent, is liable to any Member for accepting or rejecting a Member Voting Document as provided in this Bylaw.

#### **SECTION 4.10 - Proxies.**

Any member, including members which are associations, corporations, businesses, trusts or political bodies may vote by proxy. Said proxy must be registered with the Secretary of the Cooperative, or his duly designated registrar, at the Cooperative's principal office in Marshall, or one of its branch offices during office hours, before the meeting, or during registration on the day of the meeting. A proxy will be accepted if a member has signed, dated and the customer identification number appears on the proxy, and has given same to another member, even if the

holder of the proxy's name is typed, written in another handwriting, printed, written with a different color ink, etc. Photostatic copies of Cooperative distributed proxies may be used if properly executed. The proxy must: (1) be executed by the member in writing and designate one and only one holder thereof, which may be the member's spouse, the designee of an association, corporation, business, trust or political body or any other individual member; (2) specify the meeting at which the proxy is to be exercised; (3) must be dated not more than sixty (60) days prior to the date of the meeting; however, any mailed proxies, otherwise properly completed, shall be deemed dated as postmarked, if the postmark is clear as to the date of the mailing. A valid proxy shall be valid at any adjournment of the meeting for which it was given. If a member advises the Cooperative's Secretary or his designee, that he wishes to withdraw a preregistered proxy, he may do so prior to the close of business on Friday. Once a proxy has been preregistered, or registered on the day of the annual meeting, that proxy is thereafter irrevocable. If a member advises the Cooperative Secretary, or his designee, on the day of the meeting that he has given a proxy, which has neither been preregistered, or registered up to that point in time, on the day of the annual meeting, he may revoke that proxy and vote. Should a proxy be submitted on the day of the annual meeting, and the giver of that proxy has already voted in person, or a proxy has been registered in the name of that person, the individual presenting the proxy will be denied the right to vote for that member. A proxy may be unlimited, authorizing its holder to vote on any and all issues presented at a meeting, or it may be limited, restricting the holder to voting on a limited number of issues. A member is not entitled to vote an unlimited number of proxies. An individual member may cast his vote and that of up to five (5) members whose proxies he holds, for a maximum of six (6) votes. However, the designee of an association, corporation, business, trust or political body, who is not a member of the Cooperative may only cast the vote of that body who designated him as its authorized representative and one proxy, for a maximum of two (2) votes. A spouse of an individual member, in attendance at the meeting, shall have, as a matter of right, the ability to cast his or her spouse's vote, unless the member's spouse is present and objects to same.

#### **SECTION 4.11 - Order of Business.**

The order of business at the Annual Member Meeting 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 or by proxy in order to determine the existence of a Member Quorum;
2. reading of the notice of the meeting and proof of the due delivery 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 and taking of any necessary action thereon;
4. presentation and consideration of report 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 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, that no business other than adjournment of the meeting to another time and place may be transacted until and unless the existence of a Member Quorum is first established.

**SECTION 4.12 - Credentials and Election Committee.**

The Board shall, at least sixty (60) days but no more than ninety (90) days before any Annual Member Meeting, appoint a Credentials and Election Committee (“C & E Committee”) consisting of an uneven number of Cooperative Members that is sufficient in number, but at least five (5), to carry out the responsibilities of the Committee. Committee members shall not be members of the Nominating Committee or existing Cooperative or subsidiary employees, agents, officers, Directors or known candidates for Director, or the Close Relatives (as defined elsewhere in these Bylaws) or members of the same household of persons in the excluded categories. The Committee shall elect its own President and Secretary prior to the Annual Member Meeting. Acting within the parameters of these Bylaws, it shall be the responsibility of the Committee:

1. to review and approve the manner of conducting Member registration and any ballot or other voting by the Members;
2. to pass upon all questions that may arise with respect to the registration of Members;
3. to pass upon all questions regarding a Member’s or Member spouse’s identification;
4. to pass upon all questions that may arise with respect to the eligibility of a nominee for election to the Board of Directors;
5. to supervise vote recounts when a request for recount is made and authorized as set out in this section, or in the case votes were originally counted by a third-party service or firm, to provide for a recount which may be conducted at any office or customary business location of said third-party service or firm;
6. to rule upon the effect of any ballots or other vote irregularly or indecisively marked or cast;
7. 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 protests and objections as allowed below); and in the event that a candidate files a request for a recount, such filing must be made by the candidate in the office of the Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of the Cooperative within three (3) business days following the adjournment of the meeting in which the voting was conducted. Upon such filing, the Committee shall be reconvened, not less than seven (7) days or more than thirty (30) days after such request is filed, for the purpose of supervising the recount of votes.

Candidates may only request a re-count of the specific race in which their candidacy was at issue and then only if (a) the margin of the contested race was less than 2% of the sum of the total number of valid ballots cast in the challenging candidate’s race, and (b) a re-count has not already occurred at the direction of the Committee. Re-counts at a remote location shall be permitted if an independent third party was retained to count ballots. The Committee’s decision, as reflected by a majority of at least three (3) Committee members actually present and voting, shall be final on all recount matters covered by this Section.

In the event that a candidate files a protest or objection to the conduct of the election (“Candidate Challenge”), such filing must be made by the candidate in the office of the Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of the Cooperative within three (3) business days following the adjournment of the subject meeting. Candidates may only file protests and objections on their own behalf and may not protest or object to the results of any other candidates’ races. The concerns of any candidate who does not file protests and objections as provided for herein shall be deemed waived. The Committee shall be reconvened, not less than seven (7) days or more than thirty (30) days after such protest or objection is filed. It shall be the duty of the Committee to rule upon any protest or objection filed with respect to any election. The Committee shall hear such evidence as is presented by the protesting or objecting candidate(s), their counsel, or both. The Cooperative shall provide legal counsel for the Committee, if requested. The Committee, by a majority of those actually present and voting, shall within a reasonable time but not later than thirty (30) days after such hearing, issue a decision on whether to:

1. affirm the results of the election;
2. correct the results of the election; or
3. set aside the election if the Committee determines that there exists a reasonable likelihood that the results of the election could be different, that a re-run election would likely be a better reflection of the Membership’s interest, and that a re-run election is otherwise consistent with the best interests of the Membership in its entirety.

The decision of the Committee shall be final.

As determined by the Board, and as allowed by the Governing Documents, the Cooperative may reasonably compensate or reimburse Credentials and Election Committee Members.

## **Article V - Directors**

### **SECTION 5.01 - Number and General Powers.**

The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be governed by a Board of eleven (11) Directors (“Directors”), which shall exercise all of the powers of the Cooperative except such as are by law or by the Cooperative’s Certificate of Incorporation or these Bylaws conferred upon or reserved to the Members or otherwise delegated.

### **SECTION 5.02 - Qualifications.**

Any Director or Director candidate must comply with this Bylaw.

1. **General Director Qualifications.** A Director or Director candidate must:
  - a. Be a natural person;
  - b. Have the capacity to enter legally binding contracts;
  - c. While a Director and during the 180 days immediately preceding the Director election, maintain their primary residential abode within the boundaries of the applicable residential Directorate District;
  - d. While a Director, and during the twenty-five (25) years immediately prior to becoming a Director, not:

- i. Be, nor have been, convicted of a felony; or
    - ii. Plead, nor have pled, guilty to a felony;
2. Membership Qualifications. While a Director, and during the 180 days immediately prior to becoming a Director, a Director or Director candidate must:
  - a. Be a Member using, receiving, and purchasing electric service from the Cooperative at the Director's or Director candidate's primary residence; and
  - b. Be current in all respects regarding payment to the Cooperative of Additional Payments and obligations, and not be subject to disconnection for non-payment of electric service at the Director or Director candidate's primary residence.
3. Conflict of Interest Disqualification. A Director or Director candidate must not be or have been:
  - a. A spouse or other Close Relative of any existing Director, Cooperative employee, or Cooperative subsidiary employee;
  - b. Employed by, materially affiliated with, or share a material financial interest with, any other Director;
  - c. Engaged in, nor employed by, materially affiliated with, or have a material financial interest in, any individual or entity:
    - i. Directly and substantially competing with the Cooperative or any Cooperative subsidiary; or
    - ii. Possessing a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative or any Cooperative subsidiary;
  - d. Previously subject to an involuntary separation of employment from the Cooperative or any Cooperative subsidiary; or
  - e. While a Director or during the ten (10) years immediately prior to becoming a Director, employed by the Cooperative or any Cooperative subsidiary, or engaged contractually (as an employee, principal, owner, partner, or shareholder, except through passive investment) with a firm that contracts with the Cooperative or any Cooperative subsidiary as a prime or sub-contractor.
4. Continuing Qualifications. Only natural persons complying with the General Director Qualifications and the Membership Qualifications, and not disqualified due to a Conflict of Interest Disqualification may serve, or continue to serve, as a Director.
  - a. Within a reasonable period of time after becoming a Director, and unless excused by the Board for good cause, a Director is expected to receive a Director's Certificate or similar certification of education and training as specified by the Board;
  - b. Unless excused for good cause by the Board or Members, a Director shall attend at least two-thirds (2/3) of all Board Meetings during any calendar year;
  - c. Directors shall maintain the physical and mental capacity to perform the essential functions of the role of Director, with or without reasonable accommodation; and



- d. Directors shall comply with any other reasonable qualifications determined by the Board.

### **SECTION 5.03 - Election.**

At each Annual Member Meeting, Directors shall be elected by secret written or electronic ballot by the Members; PROVIDED, that when the number of Section 5.05 nominees from a given District equals the number of open seats for that District, secret balloting shall be dispensed with for the particular election(s) and voting shall instead be conducted by acclamation. Directors shall be elected by a plurality vote of the Members. Drawing by lot shall resolve, where necessary, any tie votes.

### **SECTION 5.04 - Tenure.**

Directors shall be nominated and elected that, beginning with the annual meeting of the members of 1960, three (3) directors shall serve a term of one (1) year, four (4) shall serve a term of two (2) years, and four (4) shall serve a term of three (3) years: and beginning with the next annual meeting of the members, and at each such meeting thereafter, the same number of directors that corresponds with the number whose terms are expiring shall be elected to serve a term of three (3) consecutive years. 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 term expires 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 meeting of the members

### **SECTION 5.05 - Nominations.**

1. Nominations by Committee. It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to appoint, not less than ninety (90), nor more than one hundred fifty (150) days prior to the date of a meeting of the Members at which Directors are to be elected, an eleven member a Nominating Committee. The Committee shall include individuals from each of the districts, and each district shall be entitled to the same number of individuals on the Nominating Committee as are elected to the Board of Directors from that District. The members of the Committee must be members of the Cooperative, and must not be incumbent Directors, a Close Relative to any incumbent Directors or a Close Relative to any known candidate for Director. The Committee shall prepare and post at the principal and branch offices of the Cooperative, at least sixty (60) days before the Annual Member Meeting, a list of nominations for Directors, listing separately the nominee or nominees with respect to each seat from which a Director must, pursuant to this Article, be elected at the Annual Member Meeting. The Committee may nominate multiple nominees for the same seat. As determined by the Board, and as allowed by the Governing Documents, the Cooperative may reasonably compensate or reimburse Nominating Committee Members.
2. Member Petition Nominations. Without regard to the actions of the Nominating Committee, Cooperative Members are also entitled to nominate additional individuals to run for election for any Director position for which Members are scheduled to vote at any Annual Member Meeting (“Member Petition Nominations”). The Cooperative shall announce a deadline for Member Petition Nominations that is at least forty-five (45) days

but no more than ninety (90) days prior to the Annual Member Meeting. Members make such Member Petition Nominations by delivering to the Cooperative headquarters (3043 Highway 213, Marshall, North Carolina) a written petition (“Member Petition”) for each Member Petition Nomination:

- a. Listing the name of the Member Petition Nominee;
- b. Indicating the Directorate District from which the Member Petition Nominee will run; and
- c. Containing the printed names, main service addresses (as they appear on the Members’ account), telephone numbers, and original dated signatures, of at least fifty (50) Members. Each Member’s signature must be presented in the same name as the Member is billed by the Cooperative. The signature must be dated within 90 days of the election.

After verifying that a Member Petition complies with this Bylaw, the Cooperative shall post the Member Petition Nominations in approximately the same location as the Nominating Committee Nominations.

Nominations for Directors shall be made only by the Nominating Committee or by written Member nominations as set forth herein. All nominations, however made, shall specify the nominee’s district. Write in candidates and/or floor nominees are not eligible for election to the Board.

The Secretary shall mail to the Members, either with the notice of the meeting or separately but at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting, a statement of the number of Directors to be elected and the names and addresses of all nominees. The statement shall separately list nominations made by the Committee from any nominations made by petition.

Failure to comply with the provisions of this Section shall not affect the validity of any action taken by the Board after its election.

#### **SECTION 5.06 - Directorate Districts.**

The Board shall be comprised of eleven (11) members from four districts. The districts and the number of seats from each district shall be as follows: Madison County (4) Yancey County (3) Mitchell County (2) Buncombe county (1) and Tennessee (1). The Seat in each District will be assigned a number, and henceforth, shall appear on the ballot by that number.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board of directors.

#### **SECTION 5.07 - Voting for Directors.**

In the election of Directors, all Director elections and all Member voting are held and conducted on a Cooperative-wide basis. Members are entitled, but, not required, to vote for as many candidates in each election as there are contested seats in that race. The candidate(s) obtaining the highest number of votes shall prevail. Cumulative voting is not allowed; attempts to attribute more than one vote to a single candidate shall be counted as a single vote for that candidate but shall not otherwise spoil the ballot.

**SECTION 5.08 - Removal of Directors by Members.**

1. Any Member may seek the removal of a Director for cause by filing with the Secretary a petition setting forth the grounds for removal signed by at least fifteen percent (15%) of the Cooperative's Members ("Director Removal Petition"). The petition shall also request the Board to call a Special Member Meeting by resolution under Section 4.02 for the purpose of considering the stated charges. A separate petition shall be filed for each Director sought to be removed. Such Director shall be informed in writing of the request for removal and stated charges at least thirty (30) days prior to the Member Meeting at which the charges are to be considered. Such Director shall have an opportunity at the meeting to be heard in person and be represented by counsel, and to present evidence in respect of the charges; the Member or Members bringing the charges against such Director shall have the same opportunity. The question of the removal of such Director shall be considered and voted upon at such meeting. The removal of such Director requires the vote in favor of removal by a majority of the Members present at such meeting. Any vacancy created by such removal may be filled by the vote of a majority of the Members present at such meeting without compliance with the provisions of Section 5.05 regarding nominations;

PROVIDED, that the newly elected Director shall be a resident of the same District as was the Director whose office the Director succeeds, shall meet all Director Qualifications under Section 5.02, and unless thereafter elected, shall serve only for the remaining term of the Director being replaced.

2. As used in the foregoing subsection (1), the term "for cause" shall mean:
  - a. Substantive violation of the Cooperative's Certificate of Incorporation or these Bylaws;
  - b. Final conviction of a felony;
  - c. Voting on matters coming before the Board in which the Director has a financial interest adverse to that of the Cooperative; or
  - d. Gross abuse of authority or discretion in the discharge of a Director's duties to the Cooperative upon a determination of such by a final judgment in a declaratory judgment action of the Superior Court in the Judicial District wherein the Cooperative has its principal office.

**SECTION 5.09 - Removal of Directors by Board.**

Upon a Director's loss of Membership status under Article III of these Bylaws or loss of eligibility under Section 5.02, such Director's seat shall be declared vacant by the remaining Members of the Board and such vacancy shall be filled in accordance with Section 5.10.

**SECTION 5.10 - 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 may be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining Directors within 180 days of the vacancy, or alternatively, the vacant seat may be eliminated by the affirmative vote of the remaining Directors and the number of Directors authorized under Section 5.01 shall be thereby reduced. If the Board

declines to take action to fill or eliminate the seat within 180 days of the vacancy, then any qualified Member may submit a timely Member Petition Nomination to stand for election at the next Annual Member Meeting to serve for the remainder of the term, or if the seat is otherwise scheduled for election, the subsequent term.

A vacancy exists under this Section upon the death or resignation of a Director, upon a Director's ceasing to be a Member of the Cooperative, upon a loss of eligibility under Section 5.02, upon removal under the provisions of Section 5.09, or upon an increase in the number of Directors.

Directors who are appointed or elected under this Section must satisfy all qualification standards under Section 5.02.

#### **SECTION 5.11 - Director Compensation.**

The Board shall determine the manner and method of any reasonable Director reimbursement and compensation. Such compensation may include paying Directors a stipend and/or a fixed per diem fee, plus documented business expenses, as determined in the Board's reasonable discretion, for attending or attending to:

1. The ongoing needs of the Cooperative, duties of the position, and communications with Members;
2. Board Meeting;
3. Function involving the Cooperative;
4. Meeting of State, National or other Cooperative or industry organization, or
5. Function reasonably enhancing the Director's ability to serve as a Director.

No Director shall receive compensation for serving the Cooperative in any other capacity, nor shall any Close Relative of a Director receive compensation for serving the Cooperative, unless the payment and amount of compensation shall be specifically authorized by a vote of the Members or such payment and amount shall be specifically authorized by the remaining Directors upon their certification of such as an emergency measure. However, a Director who is also an Officer of the Board, and who as such 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 remaining Directors.

No payments shall be made to former Directors.

#### **SECTION 5.12 - Director Conduct.**

Unless modified or prohibited by Law:

1. Director Standard of Conduct. A Director shall discharge the Director's duties, including duties as a Board Committee Member:
  - a. In good faith;
  - b. With the care an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances; and
  - c. In a manner the Director reasonably believes to be in the Cooperative's best interests.

2. Director Reliance on Others. Unless a Director possesses knowledge concerning a matter making reliance unwarranted, then in discharging a Director's duties, including duties as a Board Committee Member, a Director may rely upon information, opinions, reports, or statements, including financial statements and other financial data, prepared or presented by:
  - a. One (1) or more Cooperative Officers or employees whom the Director reasonably believes to be reliable and competent in the matters prepared or presented;
  - b. Legal counsel, public accountants, or other individuals regarding matters the Director reasonably believes are within the individual's professional or expert competence; and
  - c. If the Director reasonably believes a Board Committee of which the Director is not a Member merits confidence, then the Board Committee regarding matters within the Board Committee's jurisdiction.
3. Non-Interference with Cooperative Management and Operations. Directors shall specifically refrain from:
  - a. interfering with, or endeavoring to exercise undue influence upon, the Chief Executive Officer and General Manager or any other employee or agent of the Cooperative in the performance of duties;
  - b. comporting themselves in any manner as to encourage or promote insubordination on the part of employees of the Cooperative or to undermine proper support of, and respect for, the Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, or any other employee or agent of the Cooperative;
  - c. directing or attempting to direct employees or contractors, or otherwise interfering in operational matters;
  - d. interfering in or attempting to interfere in personnel matters (including hiring, firing, disciplinary or individual compensation issues);
  - e. attempting to adjust individual member concerns on behalf of the Cooperative;
  - f. reviewing individualized confidential member data or individual confidential account information; or
  - g. attempting to influence vendor selections or interfere with equipment specifications and bidding procedures.
4. Director Liability. If a Director complies with this Bylaw, then the Director is not liable to the Cooperative, any Member, or any other individual or entity for action taken, or not taken, as a Director. No Director is deemed a trustee regarding the Cooperative or any property held or administered by the Cooperative, including without limit, property potentially subject to restrictions imposed by the property's donor or transferor.

### **SECTION 5.13 - Policies, Rules, Regulations, Rate Schedules and Contracts.**

The Board shall have power to make, adopt, amend, abolish and promulgate such policies, rules, regulations, rate classifications, rate schedules, contracts, security deposits and any other types of deposits, payments or charges, including contributions in aid of construction, not inconsistent with

law or the Cooperative's Certificate of Incorporation or Bylaws, as it may deem advisable for the management, administration and regulation of the business and affairs of the Cooperative.

**SECTION 5.14 - Accounting System and Reports.**

The Board 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 full and accurate summary of such audit reports shall be published to the Members as soon after their completion as practicable. The Board may authorize special audits, complete or partial, at any time and for any specified period of time.

**SECTION 5.15 - "Close Relative" Defined.**

As used in these Bylaws, the term "Close Relative" means an individual who is a spouse, parent (including step and in-law), grandparent (including step and in-law), child (including step and in-law), grandchild (including step and in-law), sibling (including step and in-law), aunt, uncle, nephew, or niece of the principal person. The term also includes any individual who resides in the same household as the principal person, regardless of relationship. ("Close Relative").

**SECTION 5.16 - Indemnification of Directors, Officers and Employees.**

As allowed by Law and the Certificate, and as determined by the Board:

1. Indemnification Director or Officer. The Cooperative shall indemnify:
  - a. an individual who is or was a Director or Officer;
  - b. an individual who, while a Director or Officer is or was serving, at the Cooperative's request, as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic business or nonprofit corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise; or
  - c. the estate or personal representative of such an individual (collectively, "Indemnification Director or Officer")

who was wholly successful, on the merits or otherwise, in defending any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, and whether formal or informal ("Indemnification Proceeding") to which the Indemnification Director or Officer was, is, or is threatened to be made a named defendant or respondent ("Indemnification Party") because the Indemnification Director or Officer is or was a Director or Officer.

This indemnification is against reasonable expenses, including counsel fees, ("Indemnification Expenses") actually incurred by the Indemnification Director or Officer in connection with the Indemnification Proceeding.

2. Indemnification Individual.
  - a. The Cooperative shall indemnify an individual who is or was a Cooperative

employee or agent (“Indemnification Individual”), and was made, because the Indemnification Individual is or was a Cooperative employee or agent, an Indemnification Party to any Indemnification Proceeding other than an Indemnification Proceeding:

- i. By or in the right of the Cooperative in which the Indemnification Individual was adjudged liable to the Cooperative; or
    - ii. Charging, and in which the Indemnification Individual was adjudged liable for receiving improper personal benefit to the Indemnification Individual, whether or not involving action in the Indemnification Individual’s official capacity.
  - b. This indemnification is against reasonable Indemnification Expenses incurred in connection with an Indemnification Proceeding by or in the right of the Cooperative, or against the obligation to pay a judgment, settlement, penalty, fine or reasonable expense, including counsel fees, actually incurred in connection with any other Indemnification Proceeding, if the Indemnification Individual:
    - i. acted in good faith;
    - ii. reasonably believed:
      1. for conduct as a Cooperative Director, Officer, employee or agent, that the Indemnification Individual’s conduct was in the Cooperative’s best interest; and
      2. for all other conduct, that the Indemnification Individual’s conduct was not opposed to the Cooperative’s best interests; and
    - iii. in the case of any criminal Indemnification Proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe the Indemnification Individual’s conduct was unlawful (collectively, “Indemnification Standard of Conduct”).
  - c. To provide this indemnification, a majority vote of the Director Quorum, excluding Directors currently Indemnification Parties to the Indemnification Proceeding (“Indemnification Director Quorum”), must determine:
    - i. that the Indemnification Individual met the Indemnification Standard of Conduct; and
    - ii. incurred reasonable Indemnification Expenses.
3. Advance for Expenses. Prior to the final disposition of an Indemnification Proceeding, the Cooperative may pay for or reimburse the reasonable Indemnification Expenses incurred by an Indemnification Individual who is an Indemnification Party to the Indemnification Proceeding (“Indemnification Advance”) if:
  - a. the Indemnification Individual furnishes the Cooperative a written:
    - i. affirmation of the Indemnification Individual’s good faith belief that the Indemnification Individual has met the Indemnification Standard of Conduct; and
    - ii. unlimited general obligation of the Indemnification Individual which need

not be secured, may be accepted without reference to financial ability to repay, may be executed personally or on the Indemnification Individual's behalf, and obligates the Indemnification Individual to repay the Indemnification Advance if a majority of the Indemnification Director Quorum ultimately determines that the Indemnification Individual did not meet the Indemnification Standard of Conduct; and

- b. a majority of the Indemnification Director Quorum determines that the facts then known to them would not preclude Indemnification for the Indemnification Individual under this Bylaw.

#### **SECTION 5.17 - Insurance.**

Regardless of any indemnification authority or requirements, the Cooperative may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any individual who is, or was, a Cooperative Director, Officer, employee, agent or representative against any:

1. Liability, including judgment, settlement, or otherwise; or
2. Reasonable expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees, asserted against, or incurred by, the individual in the individual's capacity, or arising from the individual's status, as a Cooperative Director, Officer, employee, agent, or representative.

#### **SECTION 5.18 - Conflict of Interest Transaction.**

A Conflict of Interest Transaction is a transaction with the Cooperative in which a Director has a direct or indirect interest ("Conflict of Interest Transaction").

1. Indirect Interest. A Director has an indirect interest in a Conflict of Interest Transaction if at least one (1) party to the transaction is another entity:
  - a. In which the Director or Close Relative of a Director has a material financial interest or is a general partner; or
  - b. Of which the Director or Close Relative is a Director, officer, or trustee.
2. Approval of Conflict of Interest Transaction. Regardless of the presence or vote of a Director interested in a Conflict of Interest Transaction, a Conflict of Interest Transaction may be approved, and any Director Quorum satisfied, if the Conflict of Interest Transaction's material facts, and the Director's interest, are:
  - a. Disclosed or known to the Board or Board Committee, and a majority of more than one (1) Director or Board Committee Member with no interest in the Conflict of Interest Transaction votes to approve the Conflict of Interest Transaction; or
  - b. Disclosed or known to the Members, and a majority of votes cast by Members not voting under the control of a Director or entity interested in the Conflict of Interest Transaction approves the Conflict of Interest Transaction.
3. Fair Conflict of Interest Transaction. A Conflict of Interest Transaction that is fair when entered is neither:
  - a. Voidable; nor



- b. The basis for imposing liability on a Director interested in the Conflict of Interest Transaction.

## **Article VI - Meetings of Directors**

### **SECTION 6.01 - Regular Meetings.**

A regular meeting of the Board (“Regular Board Meeting”) shall be held, without notice, immediately after, and at the same place as, the Annual Member Meeting; PROVIDED, however, that upon unanimous consent of all the Directors present, the meeting may be moved to another place, 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 Board Meeting shall also be held not less frequently than every other month at such date, time and place within the Cooperative’s service territory as the Board may provide by resolution. Except when business to be transacted thereat shall require special notice, such regular meetings may be held without notice other than such resolution fixing the date, time and place thereof; PROVIDED, any Director absent from any meeting of the Board at which such a resolution initially determines or makes any change in the date, time or place of a regular meeting shall be entitled to receive written notice of such determination or change at least five (5) days prior to the next meeting of the Board.

### **SECTION 6.02 - Special Meetings.**

Special meetings of the Board (“Special Board Meeting”) 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 6.03. The Board, the President or Directors calling the meeting shall fix the date, time and place for the meeting, which shall be held in one of the counties in which the Cooperative operates unless all Directors consent to its being held in some other place in North Carolina or elsewhere. Special Board Meetings may also be held via telephone conference call or other electronic means, without regard to the actual location of the Directors at the time of such a meeting, if all the Directors consent thereto.

### **SECTION 6.03 - Notice of Directors’ Meetings.**

Written notice of the date, time, place (or telephone conference call numbers) and purpose or purposes of any Special Board Meeting of the Board, and, when the business to be transacted thereat shall require such, any Regular Board Meeting, shall be delivered to each Director at least five (5) days prior thereto, either personally or by mail, or email, by or at the direction of the Secretary or, upon default in this duty, by those calling it in the case of a Special Board Meeting or by any other Director or officer in the case of any meeting whose date, time and place have already been fixed by Board resolution. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail, addressed to the Director at the Director’s address as it appears on the records of the Cooperative, with first class postage thereon prepaid, 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 6.04 - Waiver of Board Meeting Notice.**

At any time, a Director may waive notice of any Board Meeting by delivering to the Cooperative a written waiver of notice signed by the Director and later filed with the Board Meeting minutes or the Cooperative's records. Unless a Director:

1. Upon arriving at a Board Meeting or prior to the vote on a particular matter, objects to lack of, or defective, notice of the Board Meeting or a matter being considered at the Board Meeting; and
2. Does not vote for, or assent to, an objected matter;

then the Director's attendance at, or participation in, a Board Meeting waives notice of the Board Meeting and any matter considered at the Board Meeting.

**SECTION 6.05 - Director Quorum.**

The presence in person of a majority of the Directors in office shall be required for the transaction of business ("Director Quorum") and the affirmative votes of a majority of the Directors in office present and voting shall be required for any action to be taken except that any action by the Directors under Article IX of these Bylaws shall require three-fourths (3/4) affirmative votes of the Directors in office present and voting; PROVIDED, a Director who by law or these Bylaws is disqualified from voting on a particular matter shall not, with respect to consideration of and action upon that matter, be counted in determining the number of Directors in office or present; AND PROVIDED FURTHER, if less than a Director 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 date, time and place of such adjourned meeting.

For purposes of this Section 6.05, Directors may be deemed present in person if participating through any means of communication by which all Directors participating in the Board Meeting may simultaneously hear each other during the Board Meeting.

**SECTION 6.06 - Board Action by Written Consent.**

Without a Board Meeting, the Board may take any action required, or permitted, to be taken at a Board Meeting if the action is:

1. Taken by all Directors; and
2. Evidenced by one (1), or more, written consents ("Director Written Consent"):
  - a. Describing the action taken;
  - b. Signed by each Director; and
  - c. Included with the Cooperative's Board Meeting minutes. Unless the Director Written Consent specifies a different effective date, action taken by Director Written Consent is effective when the last Director signs the Director Written Consent. A Director Written Consent has the effect of, and may be described as, a Board Meeting vote.

## **Article VII - Officers; Miscellaneous**

### **SECTION 7.01 - Number and Title.**

The officers of the Cooperative shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer (“Required Officer”), and such other officers (“Other Officer”) as may from time to time be determined by the Board. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same person. The Board may also elect an Assistant Secretary and an Assistant Treasurer. Such assistant offices may likewise be held by the same person.

### **SECTION 7.02 - Election and Term of Office.**

The officers named in Section 7.01 shall be elected by secret written ballot, annually and without prior nomination, by and from the Board at the first meeting of the Board held after the Annual Member Meeting. 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 Member Meeting or until the officer’s successor shall have been duly elected and shall have qualified, subject to the provisions of the Bylaws with respect to the removal of Directors by the Members and to the removal of officers by the Board. Any Other Officers may be elected by the Board from among such persons, and with such title, tenure, responsibilities and authorities, as the Board may from time to time deem advisable. When necessary, tie votes for any election shall be resolved by drawing of lots.

### **SECTION 7.03 - Removal.**

Any officer, agent or employee elected or appointed by the Board may be removed by the Board whenever in its judgment the best interests of the Cooperative will thereby be served; PROVIDED, however, the Board shall be obligated to honor the terms of any employment contract previously entered into by the existing or a prior Board.

### **SECTION 7.04 - Vacancies.**

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

### **SECTION 7.05 - President and Chairman of the Board.**

The President:

1. Shall be the principal executive officer of the Cooperative;
2. Preside as Chairman at all meetings of the Board, and unless determined otherwise by the Board, at all meetings of the Members;
3. May sign any deeds, mortgages, deeds of trust, notes, bonds, contracts or other instruments authorized by the Board to be executed, except in cases in which the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board or by these Bylaws to some Other Officer or agent of the Cooperative, or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed; and
4. In general, shall perform all duties incident to the office of President and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board from time to time.

**SECTION 7.06 - Vice President.**

In the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's 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 by the Board.

**SECTION 7.07 - Secretary and Assistant Secretary.**

The Secretary shall:

1. keep, or cause to be kept, the minutes of meetings of the Members and of the Board in one or more books provided for that purpose;
2. see that all notices are duly given in accordance with these Bylaws or as required by law;
3. have charge 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;
4. 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;
5. have general charge of the books of the Cooperative in which a record of the Members is kept;
6. keep on file at all times a complete copy of the Cooperative's Certificate 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 of all amendments thereto upon request to any Member; and
7. in general, perform all duties incident to the office of the Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Board.

The Assistant Secretary shall, in the absence of the Secretary, or in the event of their death, inability or refusal to act, unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors, perform the duties of the Secretary, and when so acting shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Secretary.

**SECTION 7.08 - Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer.**

The Treasurer shall:

1. have charge of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Cooperative;
2. 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 securities as shall be selected or approved in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws; and
3. perform all the duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Board.

The Assistant Treasurer shall, in the absence of the Treasurer, or in the event of their death, inability or refusal to act, unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors, perform the duties of the Treasurer, and when so acting shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Treasurer.

**SECTION 7.09 - 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 7.07 and 7.08, the Board 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, and to Other Officers or employees of the Cooperative who are not Directors. To the extent the Board does so delegate with respect to either such officer, that officer as such shall be released from such duties, responsibilities and authorities.

**SECTION 7.10 - Chief Executive Officer and General Manager.**

The Board shall appoint a Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, and 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 may from time to time require and shall have such authority as the Board may from time to time vest in him. General management of the Cooperative's affairs is expressly delegated to the Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, subject to policies established from time to time by the Board.

**SECTION 7.11 - Committees.**

The President may create committees of the Board ("Board Committees") and appoint Directors to serve on the Board Committees. Each Board Committee must consist of two or more Directors and serves at the President's discretion. The Board may create committees of the Members ("Member Committees") and appoint Members, including Directors, to serve on the Member Committees.

1. Conduct of Committee Meetings. To the same extent as the meetings of the Board of Directors, these Bylaws addressing Regular Board Meetings, Special Board Meetings, Waiver of Board Meeting Notice, Board Action by Written Consent, and Director Quorum and Voting apply to Board Committees and Directors serving on Board Committees, and to Member Committees and Members serving on Member Committees.
2. Committee Authority. Except as prohibited or limited by Law, the Certificate, or this Bylaw, the Board may authorize a Board Committee to exercise Board authority. Although a Board Committee may recommend, a Board Committee may not act, to:
  - a. Retire and refund Capital Credits and Affiliated Capital Credits;
  - b. Recommend to Members or approve the Cooperative's dissolution or merger, or the sale, pledge, or Transfer of all, or substantially all, Cooperative Assets;
  - c. Elect, appoint, or remove Directors, or fill any Board or Board Committee vacancy;  
or
  - d. Adopt, amend, or repeal these Bylaws or the Certificate of Incorporation.

Member Committees may act as specified by the Board, but may not exercise Board authority.

**SECTION 7.12 - Executive Committee.**

Unless otherwise determined by the Board, and if so engaged:

1. An Executive Committee is comprised of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer (“Executive Committee”); and
2. When impracticable or inconvenient for the Board to timely meet to consider a matter, and except as prohibited by Law, the Certificate, or these Bylaws, the Executive Committee may exercise all Board authority regarding a matter, if granted by the Board.

The Executive Committee:

1. Is a Board Committee;
2. May exercise all Board authority granted by the Board and permitted by Law, the Certificate, and these Bylaws; and
3. At the next Board Meeting following any exercise of Board authority, shall report to the Board regarding the Executive Committee’s exercise of Board authority.

**SECTION 7.13 - Bonds.**

The Board shall require the Treasurer and any Other Officer, agent or employee of the Cooperative charged with responsibility of any of its funds or property be bonded under a liability policy or other surety in such sum as the Board shall determine. The Board in its discretion may also require that any Other Officer, agent or employee of the Cooperative be bonded in such amount and with such surety as it shall determine. The costs of all such bonds shall be borne by the Cooperative.

**SECTION 7.14 - Compensation.**

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 5.11 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.

**SECTION 7.15 - Reports.**

The officers of the Cooperative shall submit at each Annual Member Meeting 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 VIII - Cooperative Operation and Capital**

**SECTION 8.01 – Definitions.**

As used in this article:

1. “Capital Credit” shall mean the amounts allocated to and contributed by the Patron to the Cooperative as capital.
2. “Cooperative Service” shall means the provision of electric service. Such term shall also include the provision of other utility type goods and services to the extent the provision of such goods and services qualify an organization for exemption from federal income

taxation under Section 501(c)(12) of the Internal Revenue Code and for which the Cooperative has a pre-existing legal obligation to provide on a Patronage basis through the allocation of Capital Credits. Such pre-existing legal obligation shall be provided for by Board policies, Board resolutions, an affirmative vote of the members, or other contractual authority (collectively, "binding authority"). At the Board's discretion, this binding authority may be for members only or both members and non-members alike. Also at the Board's discretion, the binding authority may include the sale or provision of a good or service qualifying as a Cooperative Service and provided by a subsidiary company treated as a disregarded entity for federal income tax purposes. Notwithstanding any provision of these Bylaws to the contrary, except a subsidiary company treated as a disregarded entity for federal income tax purposes, Cooperative Service does not include any good or service provided by an affiliate of the Cooperative to its customers.

3. "Non-patronage Earnings" shall mean, during the fiscal year, the amount by which revenue, income and gains, which are derived from the sale of a good or service or other sources not from or directly related to a Cooperative Service and for which the Cooperative is not obligated to provide or sale on a Patronage basis (hereinafter referred to as "non-patronage sourced"), exceed the non-patronage sourced expenses and losses, all as determined under federal cooperative tax law.
4. "Non-patronage Loss" shall mean, for any fiscal year, the amount by which non-patronage sourced expenses and losses exceed the non-patronage sourced revenue, income and gains, all as determined under federal cooperative tax law.
5. "Patron" shall mean, during a fiscal year: (1) a Member purchasing electric service and (2) any other Person or entity, whether a Member or non-member, using a Cooperative Service to whom the Cooperative is obligated to provide on a Patronage basis and allocate Capital Credits as evidenced by applicable binding authority
6. "Patronage" shall mean the quantity or value of the goods or services purchased and/or used by the Patrons during the fiscal year. An allocation "on the basis of Patronage" shall mean an allocation based on the quantity or value of such goods or services provided to, and timely paid for by, a Patron in a proportionate manner based on the total quantity or value of such goods or services for all Patrons.
7. "Patronage Earnings" shall mean, for any fiscal year, the amount by which the Cooperative's revenues, income, and gains from and directly related to, including amounts done for or with Patrons (hereinafter referred to as "patronage sourced"), providing the Cooperative Service to the Patrons exceed the Cooperative's patronage sourced expenses and losses of providing the Cooperative Service, all as determined under federal cooperative tax law. Such amounts may be net of Patronage and Non-patronage Losses as provided elsewhere in this article.
8. "Patronage Loss" shall mean, for any fiscal year, the amount by which patronage sourced expenses and losses of a Cooperative Service exceed the patronage sourced revenue,

income, and gain from and directly related to providing the Cooperative Service, all as determined und federal cooperative tax law.

9. "Retirement" shall mean the redemption and payment in cash or other property of Capital Credits to the Patrons or former Patrons to whom such amounts were previously allocated.

### **SECTION 8.02 - Nonprofit and Cooperative Operation.**

The Cooperative:

1. shall operate on a nonprofit and Cooperative basis for the mutual benefit of all Members; and
2. may not pay interest or dividends on capital furnished by Patrons.

### **SECTION 8.03 - Allocating Capital Credits.**

The Cooperative shall allocate Capital Credits as provided in this Bylaw. Capital Credits will be allocated in a Patron's name as shown in the Cooperative's records, regardless of the Patron's marital status.

1. Allocating Earnings.
  - a. Patronage Earnings. For each Cooperative Service provided by the Cooperative during a fiscal year and subject to the loss recovery provisions of this Bylaw, the Cooperative shall equitably allocate the Patronage Earnings for the fiscal year to each Patron on the basis of Patronage.
  - b. Non-Patronage Earnings. Subject to the loss recovery provisions of this Bylaw, and insofar as permitted by law, Non-patronage Earnings may be used by the Cooperative to offset any losses incurred during the current or any prior year, to retain as capital not distributable to the Patrons except in the event of dissolution of the Cooperative and to the extent not needed for these purposes, allocated to the Patrons on a Patronage basis at the discretion of the Board.
2. Recovering Losses.
  - a. Patronage Losses. To the extent the Cooperative incurs a Patronage Loss for a Cooperative Service during the fiscal year, the Board shall have the authority under accepted accounting practices, loan covenants and federal cooperative tax law to prescribe the manner in which such Patronage Loss shall be handled.
  - b. Non-patronage Losses. To the extent the Cooperative incurs a Non-patronage loss, then the Cooperative may offset such loss with its unallocated and retained equity, or offset Patronage Earnings of the year; provided, however, the Non-patronage loss does not exceed the amount of patronage earnings. The excess of any non-patronage loss over patronage earnings may be utilized in a manner consistent with accepted accounting practices, loan covenants and federal cooperative tax law.
3. Capital Credits. For each amount allocated to a Patron, the Patron is deemed to have contributed a corresponding amount to the Cooperative as capital. The Cooperative must credit all capital contributions from a Patron to a capital account for the Patron. The Cooperative shall maintain books and records reflecting the capital contributed by each



Patron. At the time of receipt by the Cooperative, each capital contribution is treated as though the Cooperative paid the amount allocated to the Patron in cash pursuant to a pre-existing legal obligation and the Patron contributed the corresponding amount to the Cooperative as capital.

4. Method of Allocation. Notwithstanding other provisions of this Bylaw, the Board, acting through policy, has the authority to determine the kind, timing, method and type of allocation; provided however, that such methods are fair and equitable on the basis of Patronage. This applies separately to each Cooperative Service and includes, but is not limited to, the authority to determine the items of revenue included in the definition of Patronage; provided, however:
  - a. As reasonable and fair for recognizing any difference in the contribution to the patronage earnings of rate and revenue classes of a Cooperative Service, the Cooperative may allocate Capital Credits to classes of similarly situated Patrons under different manners, methods, and timing, provided the Cooperative allocates Capital Credits to similarly situated Patrons under the same manner, method, and timing.
  - b. If the Cooperative is a Member, patron, or owner of an entity from which the Cooperative uses a good or service in providing a Cooperative Service and from which the Cooperative is allocated a capital credit or similar amount, then, as determined by the Board and consistent with this Bylaw, the Cooperative may separately identify and allocate to the Cooperative's Patrons this capital credit or similar amount allocated by the entity.
  - c. The Board, acting through policy, shall also determine the process for annually calculating Patronage Earnings and Patronage Losses; provided, however, such annual determination is consistent with federal cooperative tax law.
  - d. Insofar as permitted by law, the Board may consider the netting of Patronage Earnings of one Cooperative Service with the Patronage Losses of another Cooperative Service for a combined allocation of Capital Credits; provided however, the Patrons are notified of the impact of such netting.
5. Notification of Allocation. Within a reasonable time after the end of each fiscal year, the Cooperative shall publish or deliver to the Patron, in writing or electronically, the stated dollar amount of Capital Credits or the formula for calculating the dollar amount of Capital Credits allocated to the Patron for the preceding fiscal year. Such notice shall not impair allocation of losses, as provided herein.

#### **SECTION 8.04 - Assignment of Capital Credits.**

Subject to the right of offset for any amounts owed the Cooperative, Capital Credits of a Patron or former Patron are assignable only on the books and records of the Cooperative.

1. Except as otherwise provided by the Board or these, to assign or transfer a Patron's Capital Credits:
  - a. the Cooperative must receive a written request signed by the Patron to assign or transfer the Capital Credits;
  - b. the Patron and the assignee or transferee must comply with all reasonable

- c. requirements specified by the Cooperative; and the Board must approve the assignment or transfer. Such approval by the Board may be pursuant to Board approved policies of general application.
2. Current and former Patrons may at any time irrevocably assign and contribute their unretired Capital Credits balance to the Cooperative as a contribution to capital and net savings. Such irrevocable assignment and contribution of capital shall not be allocated to the Patrons and is distributable only upon dissolution of the Cooperative pursuant to property rights of members. The Board of Directors is authorized, but not required, to negotiate capital credit settlement arrangements with estates of deceased natural person, and/or inactive patrons.

### **SECTION 8.05 - Retiring Capital Credits.**

The Cooperative may retire and pay Capital Credits allocated to Patrons and former Patrons as provided in this Bylaw. If the Cooperative retires and pays Capital Credits, then the Cooperative must retire and pay Capital Credits in a Patron's name as shown in the Cooperative's records, regardless of the Patron's marital status. If the Cooperative mails a payment for retired Capital Credits, then the Cooperative shall mail the payment to the Patron or former Patron's address as shown in the Cooperative's records.

1. General Capital Credit Retirement. At any time before the Cooperative's dissolution, liquidation or cessation of existence, the Cooperative may generally retire and pay in cash, or such other property as the Board may determine, some or all Capital Credits allocated to Patrons and former Patrons as provided in this Bylaw. Subject to financial conditions of the Cooperative and business judgment, the Board shall determine the timing, amount, method, basis, priority and order of Retirement, if any.
2. Special Retirement and Discounted Capital Credit Payments. The Board, acting under policies of general application to situations of like kind or as may be negotiated from time to time, may specially retire and pay Capital Credits prior to when such Capital Credits would generally be retired; provided, however:
  - a. that the financial condition of the Cooperative will not be impaired thereby;
  - b. the payment portion of such early retirement shall be on a discounted and net present value basis in order to reflect the time value of money due to the early retirement of said Capital Credits;
  - c. such policies shall establish the criteria used in determining the discounted and net present value of early retirements and shall take into considerations market based discount rates; and
  - d. the difference between the total amount of Capital Credits retired and the cash payment of such early retirement shall be considered a contribution of capital to and part of the net savings of the Cooperative or subject to Board action that legally binds the Cooperative to maintain records of this difference by Patron or former Patron, shall be a form of retained but allocated capital for purposes of distributing the cumulative amount of all such differences to the respective Patron or former Patron upon dissolution and liquidation of the Cooperative.

3. Special Capital Credit Retirements - Estates. The Cooperative may specially retire and pay on a discounted basis some or all Capital Credits allocated to the estate of a deceased former Patron:
  - a. after the death of the individual;
  - b. after receiving a written request from the deceased individual's representative; and
  - c. according to the terms and conditions agreed upon by the Cooperative and the deceased individual's representative.
4. Minimum Balance. The Board, acting under policies of general application, may establish a fixed sum at or below which the Capital Credits of any former Patron may be retired in full as de minimis; provided, however, such retirements of de minimis Capital Credits balances shall be made only in conjunction with a general retirement to the Patrons and former Patrons and if the financial condition of the Cooperative will not be impaired thereby. However, if the Capital Credits balance of any former Patron is less than \$1, the former Patron is deemed to have assigned and contributed such Capital Credits to the net savings of the Cooperative.
5. Method of Paying Amounts Retired. When retirements of Capital Credits are made to the Patrons, the Cooperative shall be obligated to pay to each Patron or former Patron his share of Capital Credits so retired in accordance with this Bylaw in whatsoever manner (i.e. cash, check or bill credit) that the Board determines most efficient and convenient. The Board may also establish a nominal fixed amount below which a check shall not be issued and the amount of such retired but unpaid Capital Credits will be paid in the first following year when the total amount of Capital Credits qualifying for Retirement exceeds that nominal amount set by the Board, including the amount carried over. However, a check shall be issued to a former Patron if all such retirements fully retire the Capital Credits balance of such former Patron and the total of which is \$1 or more.
6. Capital Credit Recoupment and Offset. Regardless of a statute of limitation or other time limitation, after retiring Capital Credits allocated to a Patron or former Patron, the Cooperative may recoup, offset, or setoff an amount owed to the Cooperative by the Patron or former Patron, including any compounded interest and late payment fee, by reducing the amount retired and approved for payment. If such retirement is on a discounted and net present value basis, the right of recoupment and offset applies to the discounted amount approved for payment.
7. Capital Credit Retirement Discretion. Consistent with this Bylaw, the retirement and payment of Capital Credits are in the sole discretion of the Board and are not affected by previous retirements and payments.
8. Different and Separate Capital Credit Retirements. The timing, amount, method, basis, priority and order of Capital Credit Retirements shall be determined for each Cooperative Service and/or separate allocation of Capital Credits based on the operational and financial needs of each. For each Cooperative Service and/or separate allocation:

- a. As reasonable and fair, the Cooperative may retire and pay Capital Credits to classes of similarly situated Patrons and former Patrons under different manners, methods, and timing, provided the Cooperative retires and pays Capital Credits to similarly situated Patrons and former Patrons under the same manner, method, and timing.
  - b. If the Cooperative separately identified and allocated Capital Credits representing Capital Credits or similar amounts allocated to the Cooperative by an entity in which the Cooperative is or was a Member, patron, or owner, then the Cooperative may retire and pay these Capital Credits only after the entity retires and pays the Capital Credits or similar amounts to the Cooperative.
  - c. The Board may also determine whether or not such Capital Credits are eligible for special Retirements.
9. Unclaimed Capital Credits. The Cooperative may regularly impose a reasonable dormancy or service charge for each month or year a Patron or former Patron fails to claim Capital Credits retired and paid to the Patron or former Patron.

#### **SECTION 8.06 – Interest in Separate Business Entities.**

The Cooperative may, by action of its Board, form, organize, acquire, hold, dispose of, and operate any interest in a separate business entity to the fullest extent permitted by, and in accordance with, the law as in effect from time to time, including without limitation as provided by and in accordance with N.C.G.S. 117-18.1 as it may be subsequently amended or by any successor statute.

#### **SECTION 8.07 – Net Savings.**

Unless otherwise determined by the Board, unallocated reserves and retained capital are not currently distributable to the Patrons as Capital Credits, However, all such amounts are subject to property rights of members and are subject to use by the Cooperative consistent with its obligations of prudent financial management and business judgment. Notwithstanding other provisions of these Bylaws and insofar as permitted by law, such amounts are available to offset any current or future loss of the Cooperative and may be comprised of, but not limited to:

1. Capital arising from assignments or other contributions of capital made by a Patron or former Patron;
2. The difference between the amount of Capital Credits retired early on a discounted and net present value basis and the cash payment portion of such discounted Retirements;
3. The net earnings from non-patronage business; and
4. Other amounts as may be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors.

#### **SECTION 8.08 - Reasonable Reserves.**

Notwithstanding other provisions of these bylaws, and to meet the Cooperative's reasonable needs,

the Cooperative may accumulate and retain amounts exceeding those needed to meet current losses and expenses (“Reasonable Reserves”). The Cooperative must keep records necessary to determine, at any time, each Patron’s rights and interest in Reasonable Reserves.

**SECTION 8.09 - Patron Agreement.**

Each Patron and former Patron agrees that:

1. Capital Credits are not securities under state or federal Law;
2. The Patron’s right to Capital Credits vests, accrues, becomes redeemable, and becomes payable only upon the Cooperative retiring the Capital Credits as provided in these Bylaws, and not upon the Cooperative allocating the Capital Credits; and
3. As required by Law, each Patron will:
  - a. report to the appropriate entity all allocated or retired Capital Credits; and
  - b. pay the appropriate entity any tax or similar amount on allocated or retired Capital Credits.

**SECTION 8.10 - Non-Member Patrons and Non-Patrons.**

As a condition of Using a Cooperative Service, and except as otherwise provided by the Board:

1. To the same extent as a Member, a Patron who is not a Member (“Non-Member Patron”) and a Person Using a Cooperative Service who is not a Member or Patron (“Non-Member Non-Patron”) must abide by and be bound to the duties, obligations, liabilities, and responsibilities imposed by the Governing Documents upon Members;
2. A Non-Member Patron or Non-Member former Patron has none of the rights granted by the Governing Documents to Members, other than the rights to:
  - a. be allocated Capital Credits; and
  - b. be paid retired Capital Credits; and
3. A Non-Patron has none of the rights granted by the Governing Documents to Members.

**Article IX - Disposition of Cooperative Assets**

**SECTION 9.01 - Transfer of Cooperative Assets.**

The Cooperative shall not sell, mortgage, lease or otherwise encumber or dispose (collectively “Transfer”) of any Cooperative property or Assets (other than merchandise and property which lie within the limits of an incorporated city or town, or which shall represent not in excess of ten percent (10%) of the total value of the Cooperative’s Assets (“Assets”), or which in the judgment of the Board are not necessary or useful in operating the Cooperative) unless:

1. The Superior Court Resident Judge for the Judicial District in North Carolina in which the Cooperative’s headquarters are located, or if such judge refuses to make such designations, the Board, appoints three (3) independent appraisers, each of whom, within a reasonable

time, evaluates the Cooperative's Assets and renders an Appraisal valuing the Cooperative's Assets ("Appraisal");

2. The Board approves the Transfer;
3. At least two-thirds (2/3) of the Total Membership, without proxies, approves the Transfer;
4. At least seventy-five percent (75%) of the holders of bonds of the Cooperative approves the Transfer;
5. Notice of any Member Meeting at which Members will consider the Transfer states that one (1) of the purposes of the Member Meeting is to consider the Transfer, and includes a copy or summary of the Transfer; and
6. In proportion to the value or quantity of Cooperative Services used, received, or purchased by Members during the period in which the Cooperative owned a Cooperative Asset, the Cooperative allocates and credits to Members as Capital Credits any consideration received for the Cooperative's Assets that exceeds the Cooperative's debts, obligations, and liabilities.

Unless otherwise determined by the Members, after the Members approve a Transfer, the Board may abandon the Transfer.

The Board may (1) borrow money from any source and in such amounts as the Board may from time to time determine, (2) mortgage or otherwise pledge or encumber any or all of the Cooperative's property or Assets as security therefor, and (3) sell and lease back any of the Cooperative's property or Assets, if the Members by an affirmative majority of votes cast in person at any Member Meeting, has delegated to the Board such power and authority.

#### **SECTION 9.02 - Merger or Consolidation.**

In a manner determined by the Board that is consistent with this Bylaw, the Cooperative may consolidate or merge with any other entity incorporated under the same act as the Cooperative that provides electric power ("Consolidate or Merge").

1. Board Approval. The Board must approve an agreement or plan to Consolidate or Merge ("Consolidation or Merger Agreement") stating the:
  - a. Terms and conditions of the Consolidation or Merger and the mode of carrying the same into effect;
  - b. Name and address of the principal office of each entity Consolidating or Merging;
  - c. Name and address of the principal office of the new or surviving Consolidated or Merged entity ("New Entity");
  - d. Manner and basis, if any, of converting Memberships, or ownership rights, of each Consolidating or Merging entity into Memberships or ownership rights of, or payments from, the New Entity;
  - e. A statement that each Cooperative agrees to the Consolidation or Merger;
  - f. Names and addresses of New Entity Directors who will serve until the New Entity's first annual meeting; and

- g. Any other information required by Law or necessary or advisable for the conduct of the business of the New Entity.
2. Member Approval. After the Board approves a Consolidation or Merger Agreement, two-thirds (2/3) of the Members present and voting in person must approve the Consolidation or Merger Agreement, at a meeting held thereon.
3. Notice. The Cooperative shall notify Directors of any Board Meeting, and Members of any Member Meeting, at which Directors or Members may consider a Consolidation or Merger Agreement. This notice must contain, or be accompanied by, a copy of the Consolidation or Merger Agreement.
4. Other Requirements. The New Entity Directors named in the Consolidation or Merger Agreement must sign and file articles of Consolidation or Merger in a manner, and stating the information, required by Law. The Cooperative shall comply with all other requirements for Consolidation or Merger specified by Law.

### **SECTION 9.03 - Distribution of Cooperative Assets Upon Dissolution.**

Upon the Cooperative's dissolution:

1. The Cooperative shall pay, satisfy, or discharge all Cooperative debts, obligations, and liabilities;
2. The Cooperative shall retire and pay, without priority on a pro rata basis, all unretired Capital Credits to the respective Patrons and former Patrons; and
3. After paying, satisfying, or discharging all Cooperative debts, obligations, and liabilities, and after retiring and paying all Capital Credits:
  - a. To the extent practical, the Cooperative shall first distribute gains from selling any appreciated Cooperative Asset to Members and former Members who used, received, or purchased Cooperative Services during the period in which the Cooperative owned the Cooperative Asset in proportion to the value or quantity of Cooperative Services used, received, or purchased by the Member or former Member during the period the Cooperative owned the Cooperative Asset; and
  - b. To the extent practical, the Cooperative shall then pay or distribute any remaining Cooperative Assets, and any amounts received from selling any remaining Cooperative Assets, to:
    - i. The Members in proportion to the value or quantity of Cooperative Services used, received, or purchased by each Member during the six (6) years prior to the Cooperative's dissolution; or
    - ii. Any nonprofit charitable or educational entity or organization exempt from paying Federal income tax.

## **Article X - Miscellaneous**

### **SECTION 10.01 - Bylaw Amendments.**

Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, these Bylaws may be adopted, amended, or repealed (“Amended”) by the affirmative vote of a majority of current Directors.

Notice of any Board Meeting at which the Board will consider a proposed Bylaw Amendment must:

1. State that the purpose, or one (1) of the purposes, of the Board Meeting is to consider the proposed Bylaw Amendment; and
2. Contain, or be accompanied by, a copy or summary of the proposed Bylaw Amendment.

Upon resolution of a majority of those present and voting at an Annual or Special Member Meeting, at which a Member Quorum is present, recommending that the Board amend the Bylaws in a particular way, the Board will consider and study the recommendation of the Members and either adopt the Bylaw proposal, bring a recommendation back to the Membership at its next Member Meeting, or publish a response in a newsletter or other correspondence to the Membership on action proposed by the Directors in response to the resolution.

### **SECTION 10.02 - Rules of Order.**

Unless the Board determines otherwise, and to the extent consistent with Law, the Certificate of Incorporation, and these Bylaws, all:

1. Member Meetings;
2. Board Meetings;
3. Member Committee meetings; and
4. Board Committee meetings;

are intended to be governed by the latest edition of Robert’s Rules of Order.

### **SECTION 10.03 - Fiscal Year.**

The Cooperative’s fiscal year shall begin on the first day of the month of October of each year and end on the last day of the month of September following.

### **SECTION 10.04 - Notice.**

In these Bylaws:

1. Notice Type. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, notice may be:
  - a. Oral or written; and
  - b. Communicated:
    - i. In person;
    - ii. By telephone, telegraph, teletype, facsimile, electronic communication, or other form of wire or wireless communication;
    - iii. By mail or private carrier; or



- iv. If the above-listed forms of communicating notice are impractical, then by:
  - 1. Newspaper of general circulation in the area where published; or
  - 2. Radio, television, or other form of public broadcast communication.

If addressed, or delivered, to an address shown in the Membership List, then a written notice or report delivered as part of a newsletter, magazine, or other publication regularly sent to Members constitutes a written notice or report to all Members:

- 1. Residing at the address; or
  - 2. Having the same address shown in the Membership List.
- 2. Notice Effective Date. If communicated in a comprehensible manner, then unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws:
  - a. Oral notice is effective when communicated; and
  - b. Written notice is effective upon the earliest of:
    - i. When received;
    - ii. With the postmark evidencing deposit in the United States Mail, if correctly addressed:
      - 1. Mailed with first class postage affixed, then five (5) days after deposit in the United States Mail; or
      - 2. Mailed with other than first class, registered, or certified postage affixed, then thirty (30) days after deposit in the United States Mail; or
  - c. If sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, and if the return receipt is signed by, or on behalf of, the addressee, then on the date indicated on the return receipt.

Written notice is correctly addressed to a Member if addressed to the Member's address shown in the Membership List.

#### **SECTION 10.05 - Governing Law.**

These Bylaws must be governed by, and interpreted under, the laws of the State of North Carolina.

#### **SECTION 10.06 - Titles and Headings.**

All titles and headings of Bylaw articles, sections, and sub-sections are for convenience and reference only, and do not affect the interpretation of any Bylaw article, section, or sub-section.

#### **SECTION 10.07 - Partial Invalidity.**

When reasonably possible, every Bylaw article, section, sub-section, paragraph, sentence, clause, or provision (collectively, "Bylaw Provision") must be interpreted in a manner by which the Bylaw Provision is valid. The invalidation of any Bylaw Provision by any entity possessing proper jurisdiction and authority, which does not alter the fundamental rights, duties, and relationship between the Cooperative and Members, does not invalidate the remaining Bylaw Provisions.

**SECTION 10.08 - Cumulative Remedies.**

The rights and remedies provided in these Bylaws are cumulative. The Cooperative or any Member asserting any right or remedy provided in these Bylaws does not preclude the Cooperative or Member from asserting other rights or remedies provided in these Bylaws.

**SECTION 10.09 - Entire Agreement.**

Between the Cooperative and any Member, the Governing Documents:

1. Constitute the entire agreement; and
2. Supersede and replace any prior or contemporaneous oral or written communication or representation.

**SECTION 10.10 - Successors and Assigns.**

To the extent allowed by Law:

1. The duties, obligations, and liabilities imposed upon the Cooperative or any Member by these Bylaws are binding upon the successors and assigns of the Cooperative or Member; and
2. The rights granted to the Cooperative by these Bylaws inure to the benefit of the Cooperative's successors and assigns.

The binding nature of the duties, obligations, and liabilities imposed by these Bylaws upon the successors and assigns of the Cooperative and any Member does not relieve the Cooperative or Member of the duties, obligations, and liabilities imposed by these Bylaws upon the Cooperative or Member.

**SECTION 10.11 - Waiver.**

The failure of the Cooperative to assert any right or remedy provided in these Bylaws does not waive the right or remedy provided in these Bylaws.

**SECTION 10.12 - Lack of Notice.**

To the extent allowed by Law and the Certificate, the failure of any Member or Director to receive notice of any Meeting, action, or vote does not affect, or invalidate, any action or vote taken by the Members or Board.

## **ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed by the affirmative vote of not less than a majority of the Board of Directors in office at any regular or special meeting of the Board, but only if the notice of such meeting shall have contained a copy of the proposed alteration, amendment or repeal, or an accurate summary explanation thereof.

**Adopted April 20, 1976**  
**Amended March 26, 2002**  
**Amended June 27, 2006**  
**Amended June 20, 2013**  
**Amended December 23, 2014**  
**Amended April 23, 2019**  
**Amended December 21, 2021**

## **APPENDIX**

### **COOPERATIVE SERVICE AREA**