



## White River Valley Electric Cooperative News Release

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**For immediate release: July 20, 2020**



## White River Valley Electric Cooperative to host 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting virtually

**Branson, Missouri** – White River Valley Electric Cooperative’s concern for community extends to the health and welfare of each member, neighboring friends, traveling visitors, and all those they do business with

each day. Many hours were spent evaluating best alternatives to conduct White River’s 2020 Annual Meeting considering possible restrictions and health orders surrounding the COVID-19 Pandemic. WRVEC will join other cooperatives and utilities around the nation and move to a virtual meeting for this year. The business meeting will occur on September 12 at 9a.m. and will be live streamed online.

Due to outbreak, the Missouri Governor authorized a waiver of statutory requirements related to cooperative annual meetings found at Section 394.120 (2) and (7). This waiver allows cooperatives to hold and conduct annual meetings and voting in a means and timeframe, as determined by their boards of directors, to be in the best interest of the cooperative and its members.

This year, members will tune-in to the closed-captioned meeting at [WhiteRiverMeeting.com](http://WhiteRiverMeeting.com). A call-in option is provided for those who do not use or have access to the internet. The toll-free number is (833)491-0328. Only WRVEC staff participating in the meeting, the Board, Board nominees, and the Cooperative’s attorney will be in physical attendance and socially distanced.

Voting options have been modified to accommodate all members since the meeting will not take place in-person. The voting window will open August 1 and run through the 31. This means members will have one whole month to cast their ballots for board candidates and bylaw amendments. Ballots can be cast on-line at [whiteriver.amecvote.com](http://whiteriver.amecvote.com). Members can also request a mail-in ballot from the same website or by calling (800) 949-2591. For the security of the election, voters will verify the name on the account, address, and unique membership account number. The Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives, a third-party, will securely handle the election. They will tally all votes and deliver the live results during the virtual meeting.

“Even though we will not see you in person, your engagement is vital to the success of our cooperative”, said Cassie Cunningham, the Cooperative’s Manager of Communications & Member Engagement. “This is quite a change from how we usually operate so we want to give everyone plenty of time to make their voice heard.”

Voting members will earn a ten-dollar bill credit for their participation and those same members will be entered into a prize drawing that takes place during the meeting. The drawing includes prizes ranging up to 500 dollars in free electricity.

The Cooperative’s first annual report is to be sent directly to the homes and businesses of each member as an attachment to the August Rural Missouri publication. If there are questions for the staff that the report does not cover, members are encouraged to send questions to [bit.ly/SubmitQuestionstoWRVEC](http://bit.ly/SubmitQuestionstoWRVEC). Questions will be addressed with similar topics during the meeting.

Members can view 2019 documents and financials in the August Rural Missouri publication, on WRVEC’s website, and on the Members Only portal in the SmartHub application.

Many avenues were considered in the decision to host the meeting virtually, first and foremost the health and safety of WRVEC members and employees. In addition to safety, the Cooperative wants to promote convenient voting options that encourage participation from the entire membership. With the format change, the cost of a traditional meeting is cut significantly. White River is happy to pass that savings onto members while still delivering need-to-know information about the Cooperative.

Following WRVEC’s Facebook event for meeting updates: [bit.ly/WRVECAnnualMeeting2020](http://bit.ly/WRVECAnnualMeeting2020).

More information can also be found at [www.whiteriver.org](http://www.whiteriver.org).

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[White River Valley Electric Cooperative](http://www.whiteriver.org) is a [Touchstone Energy Cooperative](http://www.touchstoneenergy.com) dedicated to ensuring our members receive safe and reliable service in their homes and businesses across five southwest Missouri counties including Ozark, Taney, Stone, Christian and Douglas.