



For immediate release – April 22, 2024

## **Annual Meeting and Health Fair Set for this Saturday, April 27th.**

Grants, N.M. – Continental Divide’s annual membership meeting is this Saturday (April 27) at Grants High School. This year’s attractions are a health fair, free hot dogs and a chance to win a trip to Las Vegas or \$1,500. Even Elmo from Sesame Street will be there to hand out books and take photos with the children.

Continental Divide Board President Keith Gottlieb will call the meeting to order at 8 a.m., and member registration will begin immediately, along with Cibola General Hospital’s annual health fair. Registration and the health fair end at 11 a.m.

Activities will take place in the high school’s new gymnasium, except for the annual business meeting, which will convene at 11:15 a.m., inside the GHS auditorium. The number of registered co-op members needed to satisfy this year’s business meeting quorum is 539, said Mac Juarez, the co-op’s member services manager.

“Continental Divide’s annual meeting remains a vital opportunity to learn about the cooperative’s business. As members, we have the power to help shape the co-op’s future by voting in the annual director elections,” Juarez said.

Even though three governing board seats are up for election, only one – District 5 – has trustee candidates. District 5, south of Grants city limits, follows state highways 117 and 53 South. It includes San Rafael, El Morro, the Bluewater Lake area, Prewitt and northwest of Milan. In the order they appear on the ballot are candidates Ben Chavez, Cody Chavez and Tyrra Saavedra, all of San Rafael. Co-op members can locate their district on the Certificate of Membership they received earlier this month by U.S. mail. “If you forget it the day of the annual meeting, we will look it up when you register,” Juarez said.

The other seats up for election are Districts 6 and 8. Current District 6 Director Blanche Clawson of Ramah is unopposed. District 8 has no candidates. The chair has been vacant since the passing of its former representative, Lyle Adair, in late 2020.

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All registered co-op members will vote on two proposed bylaw amendments. “Now and again, high-level changes require revisions to our bylaws, a legally binding document that sets forth key rules and regulations that require a membership vote,” Juarez said.

One proposed bylaw amendment would allow the co-op’s governing board to periodically update voting districts to ensure they equitably represent the membership based on geography, region, population, membership, subdivision, economic development, or other equitable considerations.

The other proposed bylaw amendment would change the threshold for a quorum for conducting a business meeting of record at the annual membership meeting. Currently, 3% of the membership is required. The proposed amendment seeks to change that amount to 2.5% of the co-op’s membership.

“When Continental Divide is unable to register the number of members needed for a general quorum, board of trustee elections can still proceed if 3% of members from that district are registered,” Juarez said, adding that the co-op’s bylaws can be found online at [cdec.coop](http://cdec.coop) under the “About Us” tab.

Continental Divide has yet to achieve a quorum since its 2016 business meeting. That year, 592 members registered and voted in favor of a bylaw amendment to allow the co-op to work in conjunction with other entities to develop high-speed, fiber-optic internet throughout its service territory. Today, the co-op’s Red Bolt Broadband has 5,400 subscribers and continues to expand.

In addition to elections, the co-op’s business meeting provides a chance for co-op members to be briefed on business activities during the past year, challenges and plans for the year ahead. Continental Divide’s auditing firm will present the financials, and the chief financial officer of the co-op’s power provider, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, will address the membership. “We also recognize the winners of our annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour contest for high school juniors and discuss other educational opportunities available through the co-op,” Juarez said.

Prize drawings will be conducted throughout the business meeting. Co-op members will receive a numbered ticket at registration and be entered into the prize drawings when they enter the auditorium. Just before adjourning, two lucky, registered co-op members will draw for \$1,500 or a trip to Las Vegas. Co-op members must be present to win prizes. No food or drink is allowed inside the auditorium.

**IF YOU GO:** Arrive early! Park in front of the gym and auditorium, or behind the auditorium off Mountain Road. The Roosevelt Avenue parking lot will be closed to the general public for a track meet.

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