LA PLATA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
Member Engagement Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 10, 2026
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Member Engagement Committee | La Plata Electric Association

CALL TO ORDER (10:01 a.m.)

The Member Engagement Committee of the La Plata Electric Association Board of Directors was held on Monday, August 10, 2026, via Zoom webinar. Committee Chair Mars called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. The following committee members were in attendance:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Director Dusty Mars, Board Vice President & Committee Chair
Director Jennifer Jenkins
Director Nicole Pitcher, Board President
Director Tim Wheeler, Board Treasurer
Chris Hansen, Chief Executive Officer
Laura Schepis, VP Government and Community Relations

LPEA STAFF

Jessica Dunbar, Administrative Assistant
Graham Smith, General Counsel

EXCUSED ABSENCE

NONE

WEBINAR ATTENDEES

Erika Brown
Director Joe Lewandowski, Board Secretary

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA (10:01 a.m.)

Committee Chair Mars addressed the agenda for the August 10, 2026, Member Engagement Committee (MEC) meeting.

Motion: Committee Member Pitcher moved to approve the August 10, 2026, Member Engagement Committee (MEC) meeting agenda. Motion seconded and carried without dissent.

REVIEW OF COMMITTEE PURPOSE AND CHARTER (10:08 a.m.)

The Committee reviewed its purpose and charter. The Member Engagement Committee was established under Policy 110 as a special advisory committee. Its purpose is to strengthen two-way communication, transparency, participation, and trust between LPEA and its members, consistent with the cooperative principles and democratic member control.

The Committee is responsible for:

(a) reviewing member communications and feedback programs, mechanisms, and methodologies, and recommending to the Board related strategic enhancements or alterations;
(b) reviewing member engagement Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and providing relevant recommendations to the Board for alteration or adoption;
(c) analyzing nationwide cooperative member engagement best practices to utilize for possible benchmarking in enhancement recommendations made to the Board;
(d) reviewing "loop-closing" practices and methodologies arising from member engagement/member input and programs; and
(e) making recommendations to the Board of Directors for approval of strategic member engagement policies, programs, budgets, communications, or other member engagement items related to the Cooperative and to upholding the Cooperative Principles.
It was noted that the Committee is advisory in nature and does not take binding action at the committee level. Recommendations are brought forward to the full Board for consideration.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITY SETTING (10:10 a.m.)

The Committee discussed the current state of member engagement and identified opportunities to develop a more systematic approach to member engagement, feedback collection, reporting, and communication. Participants recognized that LPEA staff are actively engaging members through a variety of channels.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT KPIS (10:12 a.m.)

Laura Schepis, VP of Government and Community Relations, reviewed member engagement information and existing "empowering community" KPIs for June 2026.
Staff discussed current engagement activities, including energy rebate open houses, youth programs, key-account outreach, community events, county fairs, STEM booths, digital engagement through Facebook, email and the website, and outage communications.
The Committee recognized that overall engagement performance is strong and that staff are generally "meeting members where they are" through a variety of communication and outreach methods.
Key accounts were discussed as primarily larger commercial and industrial customers, along with important local-government stakeholders. The key-account group currently includes approximately 20–25 accounts.

CURRENT STATE OVERVIEW (10:22 a.m.)

The Committee discussed the current member engagement landscape and the need for greater visibility into how member feedback is gathered and used.

Members noted that input currently comes through numerous channels, including community events, digital communications, direct member correspondence, interactions with Member Service Representatives (MSRs), and direct contacts with directors. However, there is limited visibility into how this information is consistently collected, categorized, reported to the Board, incorporated into decisions, and communicated back to members.
The Committee identified the need for improved "loop-closing" practices so that members can better understand how their feedback is considered and how it influences LPEA activities and decisions.
The Committee also discussed the importance of providing the Board with a forward-looking view of upcoming community events, partners, and engagement opportunities in addition to reporting on completed activities.
Declining member loyalty and trust scores from prior surveys were discussed as an important signal that member engagement and feedback processes should continue to be strengthened, particularly as LPEA assumes greater independence and responsibility related to power-supply strategy.

ANALYZING NATIONWIDE COOPERATIVE MEMBER ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES FOR BENCHMARKING

The Committee discussed the value of reviewing member engagement practices used by other electric cooperatives and utilizing available NRECA resources and best practices for benchmarking.
Members expressed interest in resources related to member-survey design, engagement strategies, director training, and methods for measuring and strengthening member participation and accountability.
The Committee discussed the possibility of developing a strategic communication and engagement framework aligned with the Board-adopted vision, mission, and strategy from October 2025. Members indicated that a process-flow model or strategic framework may be more useful than simply maintaining a list of individual engagement activities or tactics.

REVIEWING "LOOP CLOSING" PRACTICES

The Committee discussed the need for a streamlined process for collecting, analyzing, and reporting member correspondence and feedback received by directors and staff.
One potential approach discussed was having directors forward relevant member emails or notes to Jessica Dunbar, with themes and volumes cataloged and reported to the Board on a regular basis. The process could potentially be combined with MSR and other staff inquiries to provide a more comprehensive picture of member concerns and interests.
The Committee discussed keeping the process simple and practical, potentially utilizing email forwarding, the Board portal, or other existing tools. Members also noted that AI tools may provide opportunities to assist with aggregating and identifying themes in member feedback.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION (10:53 a.m.)

The Committee discussed how directors can participate in member engagement while recognizing that directors have different districts, strengths, interests, and preferred methods of communication. Members emphasized that directors are not paid staff and should not necessarily be expected to use identical engagement tactics.

Potential approaches included providing directors with a menu of engagement options based on district, target audience, and individual skill set. Options could include attending community events, conducting one-on-one outreach, using social media or LinkedIn, promoting CEO and staff activities, and participating in other community-facing opportunities.

The Committee discussed providing directors with practical tools and support, including event calendars, pre-written social media posts, talking points on significant LPEA issues and decisions, and training opportunities.

Members also discussed the importance of connecting member engagement activities to the Cooperative's broader strategic goals and decision-making, particularly power-supply strategy.

The Committee agreed that a more systematic approach should include clear feedback loops, meaningful KPIs, defined timelines, and appropriate Board-level visibility while remaining flexible enough to accommodate different director roles and strengths.

The possibility of reviving or evaluating the previous "Co-op 101 / director engagement" pilot concept, originally associated with Rachel Landis, was also discussed.

NEXT STEPS AND ACTION ITEMS (11:37 a.m.)

Chris Hansen / Staff:

- Provide the current key accounts list, including relevant metrics, to the full Board, with particular attention to newer Board members.
- Develop a streamlined process for collecting and analyzing member correspondence received by directors and staff.
- Explore simple mechanisms such as email forwarding or use of the Board portal to collect member feedback.
- Consider combining directors' correspondence with MSR and staff inquiries so that themes and volumes can be cataloged and reported regularly.
- Explore appropriate use of AI tools to assist with aggregation and identification of themes.

Laura Schepis / Communications Team:

- Extract and share a clear list of recurring engagement partners and stakeholders, including 4CORE, the Chamber, 4-H, schools, and local governments, using the events calendar as a source for the next Committee meeting.
- Continue supporting Board members with practical engagement tools, including pre-prepared social media posts, LinkedIn guidance and training, and talking points on key issues and decisions.
- Re-engage with NRECA regarding member engagement best practices, member-survey design and approaches, and director-training materials related to engagement and accountability.
- Note the currently scheduled member survey for fall 2027 and remain open to evaluating alternative vendors if appropriate.
- Explore traditional media engagement opportunities, such as banners and signs, as part of the budget process.

Dusty Mars, Committee Chair:

- Summarize the meeting discussion and circulate notes and outcomes to Committee members to support continued dialogue between meetings.
- Provide a high-level verbal report on the Committee's first meeting at the next full Board meeting, under director reports or a new standing report.
- Begin incorporating a formal Member Engagement Committee report into future Board agendas, alongside the Finance and Audit Committee (FAC) and other committees, once the MEC has substantive recommendations to present.
- Draft a simple process-flow diagram or framework illustrating member-input channels → collection/analysis → Board awareness → incorporation into strategy and decisions → communication back to members and share it with the Committee for refinement.

Committee / Board:

- Discuss options for supporting directors "where they are," including a menu of engagement approaches based on district, skill set, or preference.
- Explore potential director-level metrics or accountability mechanisms that are flexible, meaningful, and appropriate to the director role.
- Further discuss how member engagement activities feed into strategic goals and decision-making, particularly power supply.
- Consider developing or refining a strategic communication and engagement process aligned with the existing Board strategy document and incorporating clear feedback loops, KPIs, and timelines.
- Present recommendations to the full Board when the Committee determines they are ready.
- Revive or evaluate the prior "Co-op 101 / director engagement" pilot idea if the Committee determines that it would provide value.

The Committee recognized that this inaugural meeting was necessarily exploratory. Discussion was collaborative and constructive, with members expressing a shared interest in developing a more structured, strategic, and transparent approach to member engagement.

ADJOURN (11:47 a.m.)

There being no further business, this meeting of the Member Engagement Committee of the La Plata Electric Association Board of Directors adjourned at 11:47 a.m. Recorded by J. Dunbar and approved by:

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Dusty Mars, Committee Chair