



Member Newsletter – March 2022

(From time-to-time, the Board and Management of Meota Gas Co-Operative Association Ltd. will circulate this newsletter to members, as a way of informing the membership of the happenings involving the Co-Op)

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Opening Comments

The staff and the Board of the Meota Gas Co-Operative Association Ltd. have been busy over the past several months setting the co-op up for a successful 2022 so it was thought to be wise to share a few important details with the membership.

2022 Operating and Capital Budget

In general, work begins in the 4th quarter of the year to prepare a budget for the coming year. This process involves a year-end forecast, which gives us the expected year-end results for comparison to prior years and the first draft of the budget. As one might expect the draft is then reviewed, refined and ultimately, approved for the staff to execute against.

Your co-op is not exempt from the financial pressures of the current state of the economy. This has made the budget process a little more arduous as Meota Gas strives to continue to provide the best possible service and value to members and customers.

One of the things that became abundantly clear during the budget preparation was that the Board needs to do a better job of regularly reviewing rates and fees so that years of status quo followed by a large increase, can be avoided. There was also a stark reminder that a major portion of the costs to customers, Meota has no control over. The cost of gas consumed is a flow-through to the consumer, so Meota must cover the cost of delivery, operation and maintenance from service fees and customer requested additional services.

After much review and deliberation, it was determined that the Meota gas delivery fee needs to increase by \$0.20 to \$1.60 / GJ and the Fixed Rate Fee needs to increase by \$1.00 to \$33.00 / month.

The Board recognizes that these increases are yet another hit to everyone's personal budgets but as a Board, we felt it irresponsible to run a deficit budget.



TC Energy Pipeline Expansion

The staff have also been busy dealing with the myriad of issues associated with TC Energy (formerly Trans Canada Pipelines Ltd.) approved expansion of the lines that pass through the Meota franchise area and supply the co-op's natural gas.

A number of Meota members or customers are affected by enlarged or new right-of-way discussions and as a Board we know this is upsetting for those affected.

Unfortunately, our forefathers at Meota and those at Trans Canada didn't adequately plan for future expansion when the pipeline and the Meota distribution lines went into the ground. As a result, a number of Meota lines need to be relocated because they are parallel to the TC lines and are too close. Other Meota pipe crosses the TC Pipeline and these need to be moved or adjusted to avoid loss of service to customers served by those lines. This work will be done at TC Energy's cost.

The Meota staff is working diligently to represent the concerns of the customers and landowners affected, in discussions with TC Energy.

Change to the Billing Cycle

A little over 2 years ago, the Meota Board of the time was approached by the staff with a concern over the timing of the billing cycle. At issue was the fact that Meota's billing cycle did not line up with that of Gas Alberta, from whom Meota purchases its natural gas. In addition, Meota had completed the conversion to automatic meter reading and the turn-around on reading-to-billing could be under 2 days, instead of (hopefully) 8 days.

The Board approved a change to the billing cycle moving everything ahead by 8 days.

Unfortunately, and undiscovered by the Board, the billing due date was not changed along with billing date, as was intended, and approved by the Board.

As a result, there is no improvement to the issue that was first raised.

Recently, the Board approved restoring the billing cycle as it was intended 2 years ago, and will move towards a billing due date of the 25th of the month in a lower gas use month in the summer of this year (2022).

2022 AGM

The Board and the staff have been planning the 2022 AGM.

The meeting will be in April of 2022.

The date will be announced, in accordance with the By-Laws, after the Board has approved the Notice of Meeting and other relevant documents, no later than 10 days before the meeting date.



Bill Towsley, Chair