

COOPERATIVE STRUCTURE: A STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE



NRECA Board Leadership #919 | **Oct. 17, 2026**

The Cooperative Center | NDAREC headquarters | 3201 Nygren Drive NW | Mandan, N.D

BOARD LEADERSHIP (BL) CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

To earn the certificate, directors must complete 10 credits from the 900-level courses. The BL courses are grouped according to eight specialty areas: grassroots, power supply, cooperative business model, governance, finance, communications, technology and risk management. Each course is one day unless otherwise noted.

COURSE OVERVIEW

The cooperative business model provides unique advantages to electric co-ops in today's challenging and shifting energy environment. Electric cooperatives that live their purpose and operate in accordance with the cooperative business model, empower their members to improve their quality of life. This course is designed to help directors tap into the strategic advantage of the cooperative structure through greater understanding and use of the cooperative principles and values.

KEY TOPICS

- Understanding the meaning of a "cooperative culture" and the board's role in shaping it
- Using a cooperative culture as a key component in your co-op's member engagement strategy
- Moving from a monopoly mindset to a competitive one through the advantages of the cooperative structure
- Leveraging the cooperative structure to attract and retain the next generation of co-op employees and leaders
- Using cooperative structure as a key driver of economic development in co-op service territory

MEET THE INSTRUCTOR

Beth Knudson has been working in the electric utility industry and with electric cooperatives for more than 15 years. The mission of her company, BeThEnergy Consulting, is to help cooperatives



Beth Knudson

and related organizations succeed by developing curriculum and teaching leadership courses for co-op managers and board members.

Beth served for eight years as the Youth Programs and Training Manager at NRECA, where she was the national director of the Youth Tour and Youth Leadership Council programs. Prior to that, she managed youth programs, developed courses, and was the marketing coordinator for the Minnesota

Rural Electric Association and Cooperative Network, an association representing cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Her areas of expertise include communications and public relations, the cooperative business model, supervisory and management leadership.

SCHEDULE FOR SATURDAY, OCT. 17

All times listed are Central Time.

8:30 a.m.	Hot breakfast buffet
9 a.m.	Cooperative Structure: A Strategic Advantage
12 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 p.m.	Cooperative Structure: A Strategic Advantage - continued
3:45 p.m.	Adjournment

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

To register for this NRECA board-governance program, please go to www.ndarec.com/ndarec-education-programs. The registration deadline is Oct. 2.

For NDAREC members with a 2026 prepaid education plan, there is no registration fee/person. For members who do not have a prepaid education plan, the registration fee is \$595/person. No advance payment is necessary. NDAREC will send an invoice for the registration fee (if applicable) following the program. The cost for breakfast, two refreshment breaks and lunch will be billed back to participating cooperatives.

CANCELLATIONS

If you need to cancel your registration, please notify Pamela Clark-Stein at pstein@ndarec.com 14 days in advance of the program. If notice is provided 14 days or more in advance, there is no cancellation fee. If notice is provided less than 14 days in advance, a cancellation fee of \$70/day will be charged. Please note: Substitutions are permitted at no extra charge if NDAREC is notified of the substitution prior to the program date.

NRECA'S CANCELLATION POLICY

NRECA charges a 50-percent cancellation fee if one of their courses is canceled 15 or fewer business days prior to the start of a scheduled course. Therefore, NDAREC reserves the right to cancel due to a lack of registrations.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

For your convenience, a block of sleeping rooms is reserved for Friday, Oct. 16, at the Comfort Inn & Suites, 1516 27th St. N, Mandan. Phone number: (701) 204-6712

- The reserved room block is under "REC Board Leadership."
- The room rate/night is \$109.
- Release date for the reserved room block is Oct. 2.
- To make your room reservation, use the link provided below.

Online Link:

<https://www.choicehotels.com/reservations/groups/OU4102>

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS AND OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

Please notify Pamela at pstein@ndarec.com of any dietary restrictions such as food allergies, gluten-free options and other special accommodations needed. A minimum of 72 hours' advance notice is required.