

Questions for Getting Started in Co-op Reform

(Not Quite a Flow-Chart)

Starting the conversation....

Who is your co-op district director?

- Will he or she meet with you individually or with a small group?
 - What are his / her thoughts on:
 - energy efficiency?
 - on-bill financing / How\$martKY?
 - renewable energy?
 - using member equity to lobby against environmental protections or clean energy legislation?
 - member participation in the co-op?
 - a Members' Bill of Rights: open meetings, open records, fair and accessible elections?
 - Other co-op personnel for consideration of meeting with on the same issues:
 - chair of the board?
 - representative to EKPC?
 - representative on the Clean Energy Collaborative?
 - CEO or general manager?
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Making progress toward energy efficiency...

Does your co-op offer the How\$martKY energy efficiency program?

- If so: Who is the administrator for the program?
 - Will he or she meet with you?
 - If so, and the co-op is a participant: how is the program going? what are ways active members can collaborate with the co-op to help promote the program? what is the process for a member to participate in the program?
 - If not, why not? Can you attend a board meeting to [See section on board meetings.]

- If the co-op is not a How\$martKY participant: Who *would* be the administrator? Member services? Operations?
 - Will he or she or the co-op CEO/manager meet with you?
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Getting access to information...

Does your co-op list key information (bylaws, 990s, co-op directors, districts, annual meeting & board meeting info, etc.) on its website?

Does your co-op post the board meeting minutes on its website?

- If so, are they redacted? Do they include all attachments?

Does your co-op have open board meetings?

- If so, can you attend them?
 - If not, can you make a presentation before the board? [See “Working toward changes...”]
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Working toward changes...

What does it take for your board of directors to adopt a new policy and/or change the bylaws? [See the bylaws for this answer]

- Will your board of directors officially adopt a policy in support of clean energy, such as:
 - supporting the KY Clean Energy Opportunity Act?
 - pledging to participate in the How\$martKY program once it's out of the pilot phase and is able to be fully implemented by any co-op?
 - resolving to let federal legislators know of the co-op's support of the Rural Star bill?
- Will your board of directors adopt a Members Bill of Rights?

Does your co-op allow member participation during the annual meeting?

- Can you make a statement asking the co-op to support clean, affordable energy?

- If yes, there is time allowed for member input at the meeting: what specifically might you ask?
 - If not, according to your bylaws, what is the process for submitting an agenda item for the annual meeting? [See bylaws]
 - Are signatures needed? How many? What's the deadline?
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Getting on the board...

Do you or does someone you know want to run for the board of directors?

- Are your co-ops' by-laws current and accessible?
 - What do the bylaws say about the qualifications for running for the board?
 - What year is your district up for election?
 - What is the process for running for the board?
 - How many signatures does it take to get on the ballot? In what timeframe?

Is the voting fair and accessible?

- Is proxy voting prohibited during board elections?
- Are mail-in ballots allowed?
- Is voting in-district only, rather than at-large voting for a district director?
- Is the amount of petition signatures reasonable?
 - If no to any of the above:
 - Will the board adopt a Members' Bill of Rights that addresses these obstacles?
[See section on "Working Toward Changes"]
 - If yes to all of the above: What's it going to take to have a successful campaign? What will your organizing strategies be?