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December 11, 2023

Luly E. Massaro, Clerk
Public Utilities Commission
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, RI 02888

**Re: PUC 23-43-EL / Block Island Utility District's Annual
Recalculation of Last Resort and Transmission Charges**

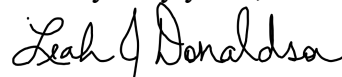
Dear Luly,

As you know, our office represents Block Island Utility District ("BIUD").

Enclosed for filing, please find BIUD's responses to the remaining data requests issued by the Commission on November 29, 2023, including 1-4, 1-9, 1-10, 1-13, 1-16, 1-17, 1-18, 1-19, as well as BIUD's amended response to 1-12.

If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,



Leah J. Donaldson

Cc: Service list (via electronic mail)

**Docket No. 23-43-EL Block Island Utility District – Annual Recalculation Tariff Filing
Service List as of 11/27/2023**

Name/Address	Email	Phone
Block Island Utility District (BIUD) Michael McElroy, Esq. Leah Donaldson, Esq. McElroy & Donaldson 3 Cedar Meadows Drive Smithfield, RI 02917	leah@mcelroydonaldson.com ;	401-351-4100
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Craig Kieny	ckieny@isoanalysis.com ;	
Christina Beaudry	cbeaudry@ene.org ;	
Jeffery Wright, President Block Island Utility District Barbara MacMullan	jwright@blockislandutilitydistrict.com ;	401-466-5851
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File an original & nine (9) copies w/: Luly E. Massaro, Commission Clerk Cynthia Wilson Frias, Counsel Public Utilities Commission 89 Jefferson Blvd. Warwick, RI 02888	Luly.massaro@puc.ri.gov ;	401-780-2107
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	MMcGinnes@new-shoreham.com ;	

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Office of Energy Resources Christopher Kearns Albert Vitali, OER	Christopher.Kearns@energy.ri.gov ;	
	Albert.Vitali@doa.ri.gov ;	

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**IN RE: BLOCK ISLAND UTILITY DISTRICT :
ANNUAL RECALCULATION – LAST RESORT : DOCKET NO. 23-43-EL
SERVICE AND TRANSMISSION CHARGES :**

**BLOCK ISLAND UTILITY DISTRICT’S RESPONSES TO
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION’S FIRST SET OF DATA REQUESTS
DIRECTED TO BLOCK ISLAND UTILITY DISTRICT
(Issued November 29, 2023)**

1-4. Referencing Mr. Kieny’s testimony on Page 5, Lines 1 to 2, please explain if Block Island Solar Initiative’s relationship to BIUD Solar.

Response:

The Solar Initiative (“TSI”) subsidized the roof-mounted solar installation at the BIUD facility. This installation is referred to as “BIUD Solar” in our power supply portfolio. There are four separately metered arrays located on BIUD’s office and three of BIUD’s plant buildings.

Attachment JMW-1 is the Solar Initiative Project Agreement that details the treatment of energy and RECs.

The BIUD Solar project specifications are shown below:

System Metrics	
Design	TOTAL DESIGN
Module DC Nameplate	94.1 kW
Inverter AC Nameplate	81.0 kW Load Ratio: 1.16
Annual Production	102.0 MWh
Performance Ratio	83.2%
kWh/kWp	1,084.4
Weather Dataset	TMY, BLOCK ISLAND STATE ARPT, NSRDB (tmy3, II)
Simulator Version	e597e0d104-f5c925990a-93b3fab770-3840632e51

Prepared by: Jeffery Wright

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1-9. Please confirm:

- a. Block Island Solar Initiative will not reimburse costs to meet the applicable RES.
- b. Block Island Solar Initiative will reimburse costs to purchase Existing RECs to meet a 100% renewable standard beyond the RES in a given Compliance Year (e.g., Block Island Solar Initiative will reimburse for the cost of Existing RECs up to 72% of actual consumption in Compliance Year 2024).
- c. Any Existing RECs from Cabot/Turner Falls that could not be used to satisfy the RES in a given Compliance Year because the 2% cap had been met will be used toward meeting a 100% renewable standard beyond the RES in a given Compliance Year.
- d. Regarding the Existing RECs described in part c above, Block Island Solar Initiative will not reimburse for the value of Existing RECs from Cabot/Turner Falls applied to meeting a 100% renewable standard that are beyond the applicable RES in a given Compliance Year (e.g., the 353 Existing RECs described in Mr. Kieny’s testimony on Page 5, Lines 17 to 18).

Response:

- (a) Confirmed.
- (b) Confirmed.
- (c) Confirmed.
- (d) Confirmed.

Prepared by: Jeffery Wright and Craig Kieny

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- 1-10. Referencing Mr. Wright’s testimony on Page 5, Lines 8 to 10, please confirm that the incremental cost for Compliance Year 2024 of \$161,134 is included in the \$1,292,698 Total Energy Cost line of Attachment 1 to Mr. Bebyn’s testimony and is thus included in the proposed \$0.1203/kWh Standard Offer rate.
- a. Would this proposal result in a net metering credit inclusive of the cost to comply with the voluntary renewable standard?
 - b. Did BIUD consider a separate billing charge for the cost to comply with the voluntary renewable standard? If not, why not? If so, why was that option rejected?

Response:

Yes. The incremental cost for Compliance Year 2024 is included in the \$1,292,698 Total Energy Cost line of Attachment 1. The incremental cost is \$161,634, not \$161,134. However, the Total Energy Cost of \$1,292,698 is correct.

(a) Yes.

(b) No. BIUD includes it as part of its energy costs.

Prepared by: Jeffery Wright and David Bebyn

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1-12. The PUC is familiar with administrative procedures necessary for Obligated Entities to comply annually with the RES, including identifying how much load was served, exclusive retirement of RECs, banking of RECs for future periods, and payment of Alternative Compliance Payments for shortfalls. Please provide BIUD’s analogous processes as applicable to the voluntary renewable standard.

Amended Response:
(Changes or additions are highlighted below.)

In general, BIUD’s intent is to mimic the rules and administrative procedures required of Obligated Entities to comply with the RES to the extent possible.

Specifically, BIUD intends to:

1. Retire RECs equal to: (A) BIUD’s real time load obligation in its settlement with ISO-NE, plus (B) BIUD’s diesel generation, plus (C) generation produced by BIUD Solar.
2. Establish an account with NEPOOL GIS and retire RECs in its account to ensure exclusive retirement of such RECs.
3. Bank any extra New RECs for future use.
4. Purchase New or Existing RECs as necessary. BIUD does not intend to make alternative compliance payments to the renewable energy development fund for shortfalls.

Prepared by: Jeffery Wright and Craig Kieny

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1-13. How many members responded to the survey referenced on page 4 of Mr. Wright’s testimony?

Response:

A total of 239 residential members responded to the survey.

Attachment JMW-2 is the 2023 Residential Member Survey Report prepared by NRECA Market Research Services. An excerpt from the report summarizing data collection methods is below.

Data was collected online through a number of methods:

1. An email invitation was sent on July 17 to the 823 members for whom Block Island Utility District has an email address, with 35 returned as being undeliverable. A total of 169 surveys were completed using the link in this email, resulting in a response rate of 21%.
2. Block Island made a link to the survey available through a notification letter to all members and two community bulletin board posts. Sixty surveys were completed through this method.
3. A reminder postcard was sent on August 4 to all members who did not receive an email. This postcard included a QR code that took members to the survey. A total of 10 surveys were completed.

In the cases where a member filled out the survey through more than one of these methods, the survey that was completed first is included in the results.

The margin of error at the 95% confidence level for the entire sample is plus or minus 5.9 percentage points. This means that a result of 50% in the survey may range between 44.1% and 55.9% in an infinite number of residential samples this size.

Prepared by: Jeffery Wright

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1-16. Is BIUD aware of the legal prohibition from counting voluntary RECs toward the calculation of whether the State has met the Renewable Energy Standard?

Response:

BIUD is aware of statutory language related to the voluntary purchase of renewable energy by end-use customers. Specifically, R.I.G.L. § 39-26-4(c) states in part:

“The minimum renewable energy percentages set forth in subsection (a) shall be met for each electrical energy product offered to end-use customers, in a manner that ensures that the amount of renewable energy of end-use customers voluntarily purchasing renewable energy is not counted toward meeting such percentages.”

BIUD does not believe this prohibition applies here. BIUD is not relying on end-use customers voluntarily purchasing renewable energy.

Prepared by: Jeffery Wright and Craig Kieny with assistance from counsel

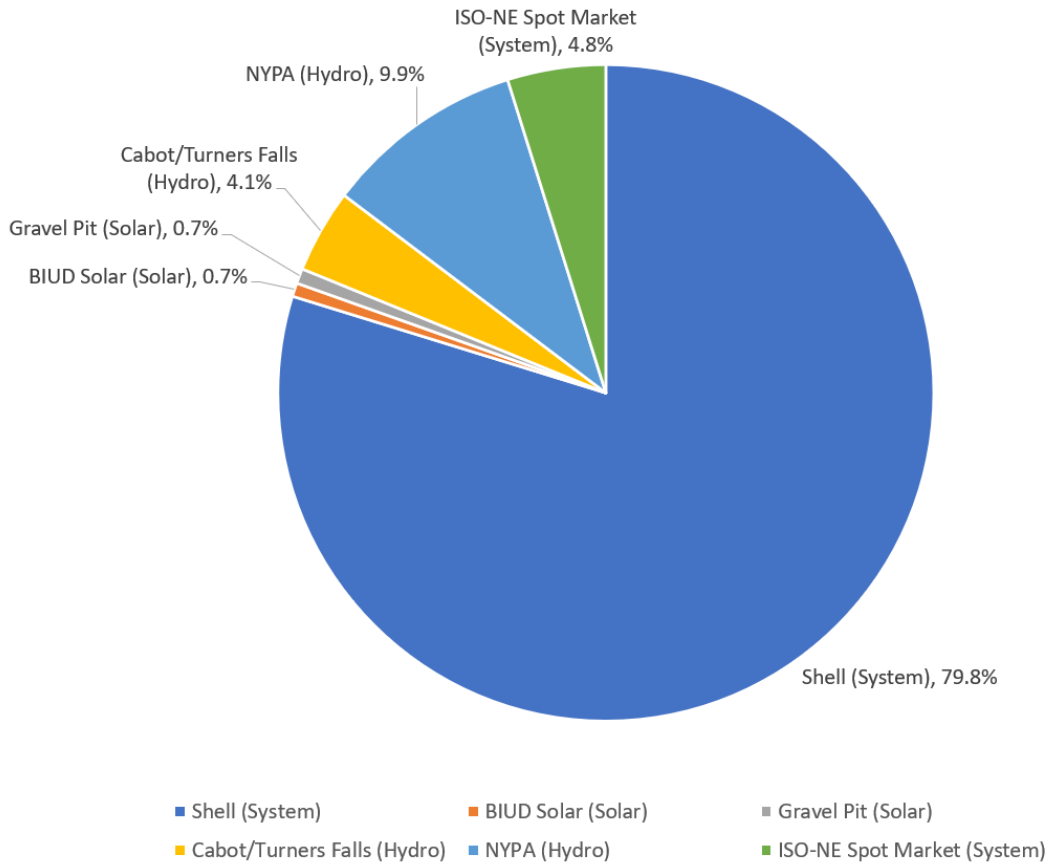
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1-17. Please provide a pie chart of BIUD’s procurement portfolio discussed by Mr. Kieny on pages 3-4 of his testimony, by contract and by fuel source where known (please include percentages).

Response:



Prepared by: Craig Kieny

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1-18. Referencing Mr. Bebyn’s testimony on page 4, please explain what it means that BIUD will not be exercising the RECs from Gravel Pit Solar II, LLC, Cabot/Turners hydro project in 2024. Compare this to Mr. Kieny’s testimony on pages 4-5.

Response:

This meant that BIUD will not sell the RECs from Gravel Pit Solar II and Cabot/Turners hydro project in 2024.

An amendment to Mr. Bebyn's direct testimony will be filed to correct this issue.

Prepared by: David Bebyn

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1-19. Please provide a copy and any links to presentations, meeting minutes, or agendas with correspondence that were part of a public meeting on the topic of BIUD’s decision to voluntarily purchase sufficient RECs to match its usage up to 100%.

Response:

Attachment JMW 3 and JMW 4 are materials provided at the November 2, 2023 board meeting at which the BIUD Board of Utility Commissioners approved the 2024 reconciliation filing and procurement plan unanimously. The draft filing was also included in the materials.

Attachment JMW 5 is the BIUD President’s message to the membership presented at the annual meeting in August 2023. The portion related voluntarily meeting the renewable energy standard is highlighted on page 7.

Attachment JMW-6, JMW-7, JMW-8 are the agenda and minutes from the annual meeting on August 26, 2023 and the agenda from the board meeting on November 2, 2023. The approved minutes from the November 2, 2023 board meeting are not yet completed.

Prepared by: Jeffery Wright

SOLAR INITIATIVE PROJECT AGREEMENT

This Solar Initiative Project Agreement ("Agreement") is made and entered into by and between HBC Affordable Apartments, Inc ("HBCAA") and the Block Island Utility District d/b/a The Block Island Power Company ("BIUD") (each a "Party," and collectively the "Parties").

WHEREAS, HBCAA is a not for profit corporation operating on Block Island which has a business address of P.O. Box 484, Block Island, RI 02807.

WHEREAS, BIUD is a not for profit quasi-municipal corporation which operates as a member-owned public utility engaged in the business of providing safe, reliable and affordable utility products and services to customers on Block Island and has a business address of 100 Ocean Avenue, P.O. Box 518, Block Island, RI 02807.

WHEREAS, HBCAA intends to fund the purchase and installation of solar photovoltaic panels on Block Island in order to increase the use of clean, local solar energy on Block Island and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

WHEREAS, BIUD supports the use of clean, local solar energy on Block Island and wishes to install solar photovoltaic panels and related equipment on BIUD property.

WHEREAS, the Parties desire to set forth in this Agreement the terms and conditions upon which HBCAA intends to fully fund the purchase and installation of solar photovoltaic panels and related equipment on BIUD property.

WHEREAS, the Parties desire that ownership of the solar photovoltaic panels and all related equipment shall be granted to BIUD at no cost to BIUD.

NOW THEREFORE, for valuable consideration and intending to be legally bound hereby, the Parties agree as follows:

1. HBCAA and BIUD shall jointly select the solar photovoltaic panels and related equipment (“Solar PV Equipment”) to be installed on BIUD property.
2. HBCAA shall purchase the Solar PV Equipment.
3. HBCAA and BIUD shall jointly select a qualified solar installation company to install the Solar PV Equipment.
4. HBCAA and BIUD shall jointly negotiate and execute an agreement with the solar installation company to set forth all terms related to the installation of the Solar PV Equipment, including but not limited to site access, insurance coverage, and other matters.
5. All costs directly related to the installation of the Solar PV Equipment on BIUD property shall be paid by HBCAA.
6. During installation, the Solar PV Equipment shall remain the personal property of HBCAA.
7. The Commercial Operation Date (“COD”) for the BIUD Solar Initiative Project shall be the date on which the Solar PV Equipment is mechanically complete, operational, and capable of delivering solar generation as certified by an engineer employed by the solar installation company at the expense of HBCAA. This certification shall be recorded in the land evidence records of the Town of New Shoreham.
8. Effective as of the COD, ownership of the Solar PV Equipment shall automatically transfer from HBCAA to BIUD.
9. Thereafter, BIUD shall own all Solar PV Equipment, all generation produced by the Solar PV Equipment, and all renewable energy certificates (“RECs”) associated with all renewable energy produced by the Solar PV Equipment.

10. BIUD is a regulated public utility and this Agreement is therefore subject to the review and approval of the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (“RIPUC”).

11. Operation of the Solar PV Equipment by BIUD shall be subject to the following conditions, if approved by the RIPUC: (a) the Solar PV Equipment shall be separately metered, (b) generation produced by the Solar PV Equipment shall be valued at the prior year’s Net Metering Rate as approved by the RIPUC in BIUD’s Annual Standard Offer and Transmission Reconciliation Filing, (c) any value attributable to generation produced by the Solar PV Equipment shall be paid into a restricted account (“Solar Restricted Fund”), and (d) monies in the Solar Restricted Fund shall be used as directed by the BIUD Board of Commissioners (i) to create a decommissioning fund for the Solar PV Equipment, (ii) for maintenance of the Solar PV Equipment, and (iii) for BIUD capital projects related to BIUD’s distribution system. Operation of the Solar PV Equipment shall not be subject to the above conditions unless and until the RIPUC approves them.

12. HBCAA and BIUD shall coordinate and cooperate with each other when making public announcements regarding the BIUD Solar Initiative Project.

13. This Agreement may be amended, modified, or supplemented only by written instrument executed by all Parties.

14. This Agreement shall automatically apply and be binding upon the successors and assigns of the parties. No transaction resulting in a succession or assignment shall release any Party from its duties and obligations under this Agreement.

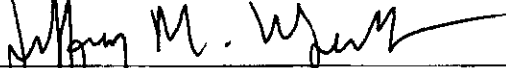
15. All questions or disputes arising out of or under this Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Rhode Island.

16. If any provision of this Agreement is deemed invalid or unenforceable, the balance of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

17. This Agreement may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be deemed to be an original, and all of which together shall be deemed to be one and the same agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have caused this Agreement to be signed by their authorized representatives as of July 27, 2020.

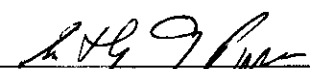
Block Island Utility District d/b/a The Block Island Power Company

Signature: 

Name: JEFFERY M. WRIGHT

Title: PRESIDENT

HBC Affordable Apartments, Inc:

Signature: 

Name: ANTHONY G. PAPPAS

Title: PROGRAM DIRECTOR, the Solar Initiative

2023 Residential Member Satisfaction Study

Block Island Utility District

PREPARED BY:

NRECA Market Research Services



August 31, 2023

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY, & ANALYSIS.....	2
Objectives	2
Methodology	3
Analysis	3
KEY FINDINGS	4
Overall Satisfaction and ACSI	4
Performance Quality Attributes.....	6
Performance Quality Benchmarks.....	7
Prioritizing Improvement and Maintenance Efforts	8
Member Service.....	9
Electric Rates.....	11
Electric Service.....	12
Outage Communication.....	12
Employees and Easy to Reach.....	13
Payments and Bills	13
Member Loyalty	14
Renewable Energy.....	17
Member Demographics and Segmentation.....	21
Verbatim Comments.....	22
APPENDIX A: KEY DRIVER/FACTOR EXPLANATION	23
Factor Analysis.....	23
Key Driver Analysis.....	24
APPENDIX B: VERBATIM RESPONSES	25
APPENDIX C: ACSI – AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX	49
APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE	51

Executive Summary

Following are the top-line findings based on the results of an online survey of 239 residential members of Block Island Utility District conducted in July and August of 2023:

- Overall satisfaction with Block Island Utility District is very good, with a mean rating of 8.89. This is almost identical to the Co-op Norms. Ratings of the other American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) measures are also consistent with or higher than the Co-op Norms.
- The co-op's ACSI is 85 and the retention estimate is 81%. These are higher than the Cooperative Energy Utilities scores of 75 and 71%, respectively, as well as the scores for IOU industry leaders.
- The mean ratings for 16 of the 20 service attributes are evaluated above 4.00 on a 5-point scale, which is considered “good”. Fifteen attributes receive mean ratings that are approximately 4.50 or higher, the “excellent” threshold.
 - Block Island Utility District receives the highest ratings for *having friendly, courteous employees*.
 - Not surprisingly, the lowest rated attributes are those related to cost – *the monthly customer charge, charging reasonable rates, and helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity*.
 - Most of the mean ratings are higher than the Co-op Norms although the lowest rated attributes, mentioned above, are lower along with *delivering good value for the money and providing accurate and easy to understand bills*.
- By far the strongest driver of overall satisfaction is **Member Service**. This means that increases/decreases in the mean ratings of the six attributes included in this driver should cause a corresponding increase/decrease in overall satisfaction ratings. Five of the six attributes have a mean rating of approximately 4.50 or higher, making this an area that members perceive as being excellent. The one exception is *helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity*. With a mean rating well below 4.0 and lower than the Co-op Norms, this is an area of improvement and could help to increase overall satisfaction.
- The next two drivers are almost identical in their impact on overall satisfaction:
 - **Electric Rates:** Both attributes that make up this driver have mean ratings well below 4.0. There is also room for improvement in the value members feel they get for their money, with a mean rating of 3.94. All three attributes are lower than the Co-op Norms.
 - **Electric Service:** Two of the three attributes in this area are among the highest rated in the study. All three are evaluated above 4.50 and higher than the Co-op Norms.
- **Outage Communication** is the next driver of overall satisfaction. Again, this is an area which members perceive Block Island Utility District as being excellent with mean ratings above 4.50 for the two attributes that make up this driver.
- The last two drivers of overall satisfaction are **Employees and Easy to Reach** and **Payments and Bills**. Mean ratings for the attributes that make up these drivers are very good to excellent.

- Nearly two-thirds have exceptional member loyalty, having a Member Loyalty Index (MLI) score of 90 or higher. Block Island Utility District's overall MLI is 85 which is a healthy level of loyalty and identical to the Co-op Norms.
- Members have high agreement for the statements *I trust Block Island Utility District to make sound decisions to balance reliability, environmental impact, and affordability* and *Block Island Utility District is doing all they can to reduce reliance on fossil fuels*.
- A majority of members feel that both the increased use of renewables and a lower electric rate are important, being unable to say which is more important.
- Support for the State of Rhode Island's goal of 100% renewable electricity by 2032 is strong with 44% saying they strongly support it and an additional 30% saying they somewhat support it.
- One in ten currently own or lease a plug-in electric vehicle and three in ten are likely to purchase or lease one in the next 3 to 5 years. Fewer are likely to install a level 2 EV charger at their home (26% are very or somewhat likely) or already have one (3%).

Objectives, Methodology, & Analysis

Objectives

This residential member survey addresses but is not limited to the following informational objectives:

- **Overall Satisfaction and ACSI:** Assess how satisfied members are with Block Island Utility District and determine their American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) and retention percentage.
- **Performance Quality Attributes:** Evaluate residential member perceptions of service quality on a variety of attributes (e.g., rates, billing, outages, problem resolution, etc.).
- **Performance Quality Benchmarks:** Benchmark the results against co-ops nationwide using NRECA's Co-op Norms Database.
- **Prioritizing Improvement and Maintenance Efforts:** Derive the key drivers of overall satisfaction and the degree to which consumer needs are being met to help Block Island Utility District prioritize any improvement efforts.
- **Member Loyalty:** Calculate the co-op's member loyalty index.
- **Renewable Energy:** Determine the proportion of members who support Block Island Utility District moving to all renewable energy even though it would cost more and the State of Rhode Island's goal of 100% renewable electricity generated by 2032.
- **Electric Vehicles:** Estimate the proportion of members who are likely to purchase a plug-in electric vehicle and/or level 2 charger in the next 3 to 5 years.
- **Member Demographics:** Provide demographics of the residential member base and identify differences in attitudes between demographic groups.

Methodology

Data was collected online through a number of methods:

1. An email invitation was sent on July 17 to the 823 members for whom Block Island Utility District has an email address, with 35 returned as being undeliverable. A total of 169 surveys were completed using the link in this email, resulting in a response rate of 21%.
2. Block Island made a link to the survey available through a notification letter to all members and two community bulletin board posts. Sixty surveys were completed through this method.
3. A reminder postcard was sent on August 4 to all members who did not receive an email. This postcard included a QR code that took members to the survey. A total of 10 surveys were completed.

In the cases where a member filled out the survey through more than one of these methods, the survey that was completed first is included in the results.

The margin of error at the 95% confidence level for the entire sample is plus or minus 5.9 percentage points. This means that a result of 50% in the survey may range between 44.1% and 55.9% in an infinite number of residential samples this size.

Analysis

This is the first survey conducted since Block Island Utility District took over as the electric provider on the island. It is recommended that the utility district regularly survey their members as the results of tracking surveys provide value by demonstrating when results remain consistent and indicating where there has been significant change over time.

Comparisons are made to results from similar studies conducted by 90 co-ops among almost 120,000 residential members across the country between January 2020 and December 2022. These “Co-op Norms” can be viewed as an example of other co-ops’ scores, not a national benchmark as they are not taken from the universe of all cooperatives. Rather, these are co-ops for whom NRECA Market Research Services has conducted a study in that 3-year time period and whose ACSI scores tend to be higher than Touchstone Energy’s ACSI.

Differences between member segments, such as differences by age or service tenure, are either statistically significant or not. A “significant” difference refers to the certainty of a difference, not the magnitude or size of the difference. Unless otherwise specified, only significant comparisons will be mentioned throughout this report even if the word “significant” is not used. Significance is measured at the 95% confidence level, meaning that at least 95% of the time, using the same sampling procedure, this difference will occur; the difference is likely not a matter of chance.

When evaluating the mean ratings in this report, on a 5-point scale a mean of 4.50 or above should be considered “excellent” and a mean between 4.00 and 4.49 is considered “good”. Means below 4.00 may be cause for concern and those below 3.75 indicate a need for improvement.

Key Findings

Overall Satisfaction and ACSI

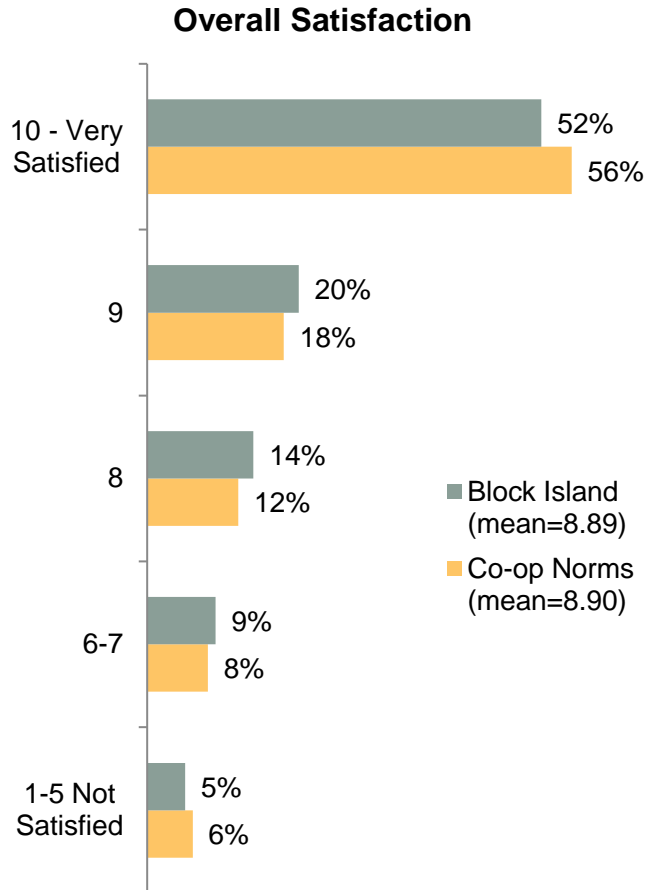
With a mean rating of 8.89, overall satisfaction among Block Island Utility District’s residential members is very good.

- Additionally, 72% give a top rating of “9” or “10”.
- Satisfaction is almost identical to the Co-op Norms.

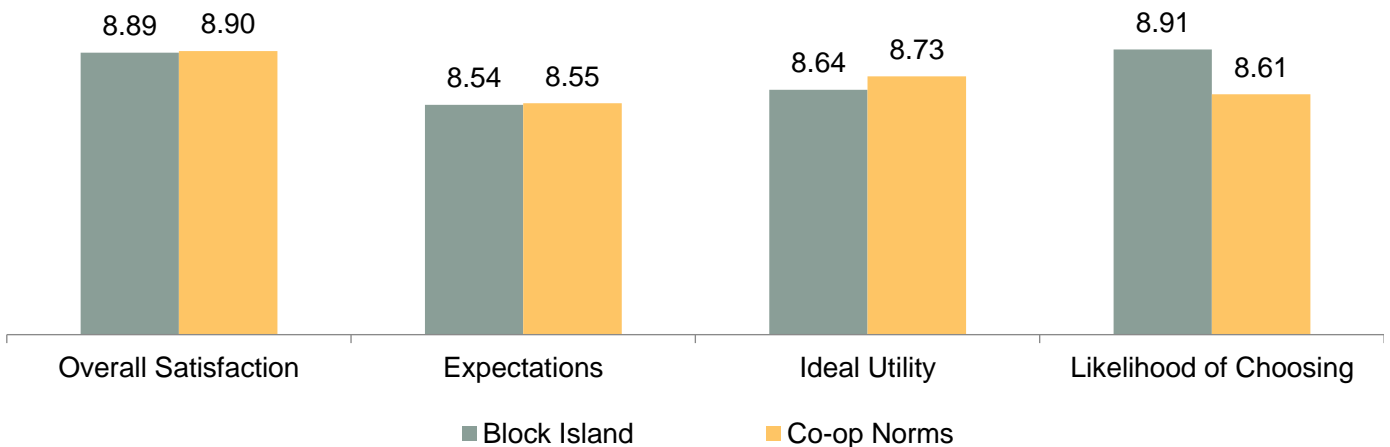
Member segments with higher satisfaction than their counterparts include:

- Older members
- Those paying lower monthly electric bills
- Year round residents

As with overall satisfaction, ratings for the other three ACSI measures are positive. The *extent the co-op meets expectations* and *comparison to the ideal utility* are similar to the Co-op Norms while *likelihood of choosing the co-op if given a choice* is higher among Block Island Utility District members.



ACSI Mean Ratings



Block Island Utility District's Touchstone Energy membership provides the co-op access to the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). The ACSI is the only national cross-industry measure of customer satisfaction in the U.S. In 2023, Block Island Utility District's ACSI is 85 and the retention estimate is 81%. That is, it is estimated that 81% of the members would stay with the utility district if given a choice.

Block Island Utility District's ACSI is the same as the 2022 Touchstone Energy ACSI. The Touchstone Energy score includes 326 scores from co-ops that surveyed their members in 2022. The highest score among those co-ops is 95 and the lowest is 62. Of the 326 scores, 159 are 85 or lower, which places Block Island Utility District's score in the 49th percentile.

In the table below are examples of ACSI scores obtained through online surveying of panels of U.S. citizens. This national industry data is for the second quarter of 2023. Block Island Utility District's ACSI and retention estimate are higher than industry leaders as well as the scores for Cooperative Energy Utilities.

Q2 2023 ACSI		Q2 2023 Retention %	
Atmos Energy	78	WEC Energy	77
Berkshire Hathaway Energy	78	Ameren	76
Dominion Energy	77	Dominion Energy	76
Xcel Energy	77	Southern Company	74
Southern Company	76	Investor-Owned Average	73
Cooperative Energy Utilities	75	NextEra Energy	73
Investor-Owned Average	75	Xcel Energy	73
Duke Energy	75	Duke Energy	72
NextEra Energy	75	Cooperative Energy Utilities	71
American Electric Power	72	FirstEnergy	70
FirstEnergy	72	American Electric Power	66
<p>Top ACSI and retention scores are listed above, along with the largest national companies and regional companies. ACSI scores for IOU and municipal utilities are for internal use only. Please see Touchstone Energy Cooperative's guidelines for using ACSI information in consumer-facing materials. A comprehensive list of energy industry scores and information about ACSI can be found in Appendix C.</p>			

Performance Quality Attributes

Members were asked to evaluate 20 performance quality attributes related to member service, electric service, and cost. On sixteen of the attributes measured, the mean ratings are above 4.00, a “good” rating on a 5-point scale.

Additionally, mean ratings for 15 attributes are approximately 4.50 or higher which is considered excellent. These include:

- Having friendly, courteous employees (4.74)
- Being easy to reach to report an outage (4.72)
- Keeping longer outages to a minimum (4.71)
- Restoring power after an outage (4.71)
- Notifying members before planned power outages (4.71)
- Having highly trained and professional employees (4.65)
- Supporting the local community (4.65)
- Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum (4.65)
- Keeping members informed on the status of outages (4.64)
- Resolving any issues or problems (4.61)
- Being easy to reach (4.61)
- Communicating with members and keeping them informed (4.56)
- Having members’ best interests at heart (4.52)
- Having convenient payment options (4.52)
- Operating with concern for the environment (4.48)

Conversely, the attributes on which Block Island Utility District is rated least well are *the monthly customer charge* (53% rating “4” or “5”), *charging reasonable rates* (54%), and *helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity* (55%). Although this is an area that is usually rated lower in member satisfaction surveys, with mean ratings of 3.50, 3.46, and 3.47, respectively, this may be of concern.

Performance Quality Benchmarks

On most of the comparable attributes, mean ratings among Block Island Utility District members are higher than the Co-op Norms. However, there are a number that are lower. Below are the attributes with the greatest differences for which Block Island Utility District is evaluated higher:

	Block Island Mean	Co-op Norms	Gap
<i>Keeping members informed on the status of outages</i>	4.64	4.22	+0.42
<i>Being easy to reach to report an outage</i>	4.72	4.41	+0.31
<i>Restoring power after an outage</i>	4.71	4.50	+0.21
<i>Keeping longer outages to a minimum</i>	4.71	4.52	+0.19
<i>Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum</i>	4.65	4.46	+0.19
<i>Having members' best interests at heart</i>	4.52	4.34	+0.18
<i>Supporting the local community</i>	4.65	4.50	+0.15
<i>Communicating with members and keeping them informed</i>	4.56	4.42	+0.14
<i>Resolving any issues or problems</i>	4.61	4.50	+0.11
<i>Being easy to reach</i>	4.61	4.51	+0.10

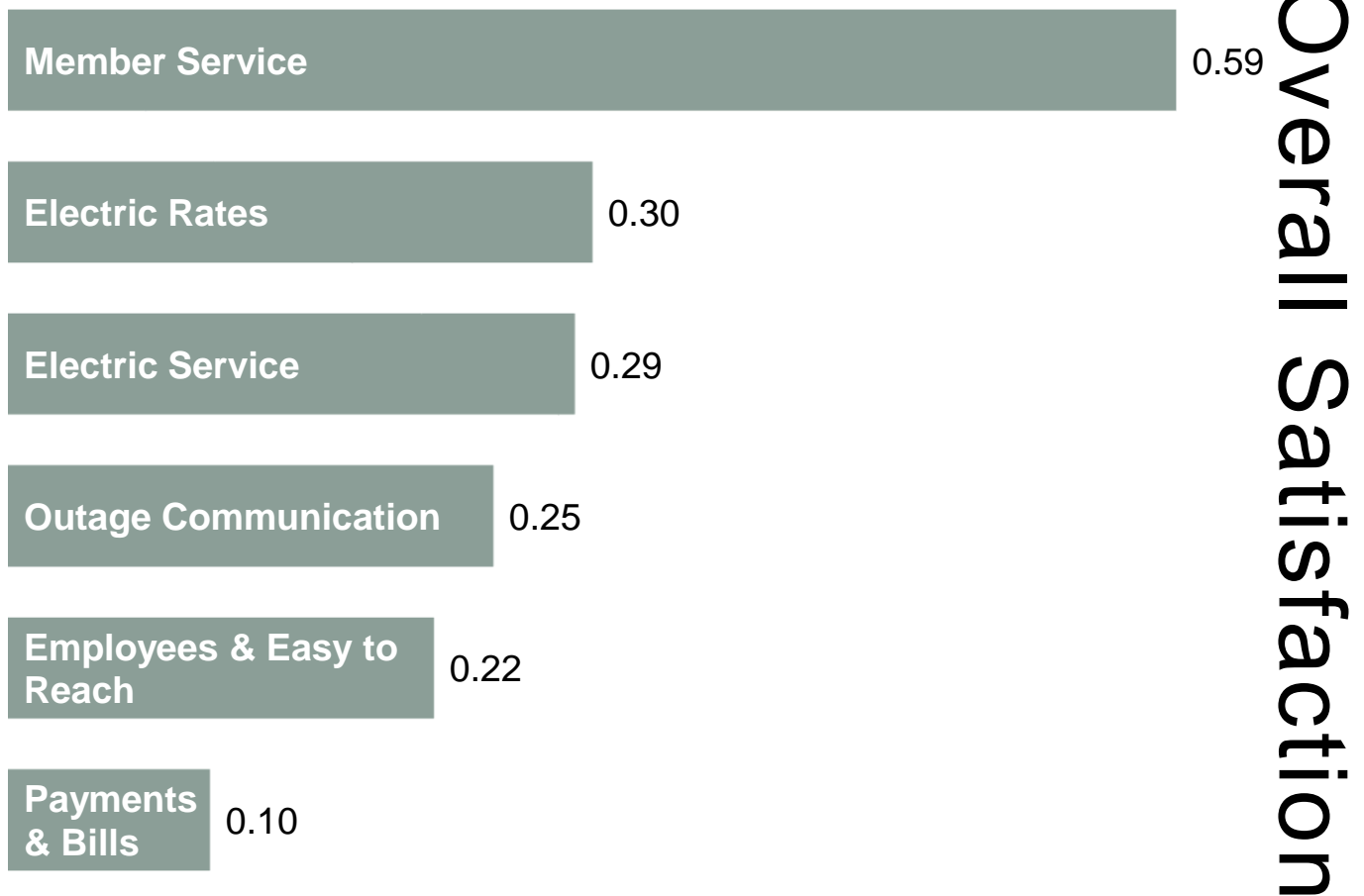
Conversely, below are the attributes with the greatest differences for which Block Island Utility District is evaluated lower:

	Block Island Mean	Co-op Norms	Gap
<i>Helping members to be more efficient in their electric use</i>	3.47	4.06	-0.59
<i>Charging reasonable rates</i>	3.46	3.89	-0.43
<i>Delivering good value for the money</i>	3.94	4.23	-0.29
<i>The monthly customer charge</i>	3.50	3.74	-0.24
<i>Providing accurate and easy to understand bills</i>	4.36	4.47	-0.11

Prioritizing Improvement and Maintenance Efforts

The key drivers of overall satisfaction among residential members are Member Service, Electric Rates, Electric Service, Outage Communication, Employees and Easy to Reach, and Payments and Bills. Going forward, these are the areas that Block Island Utility District should focus on most.

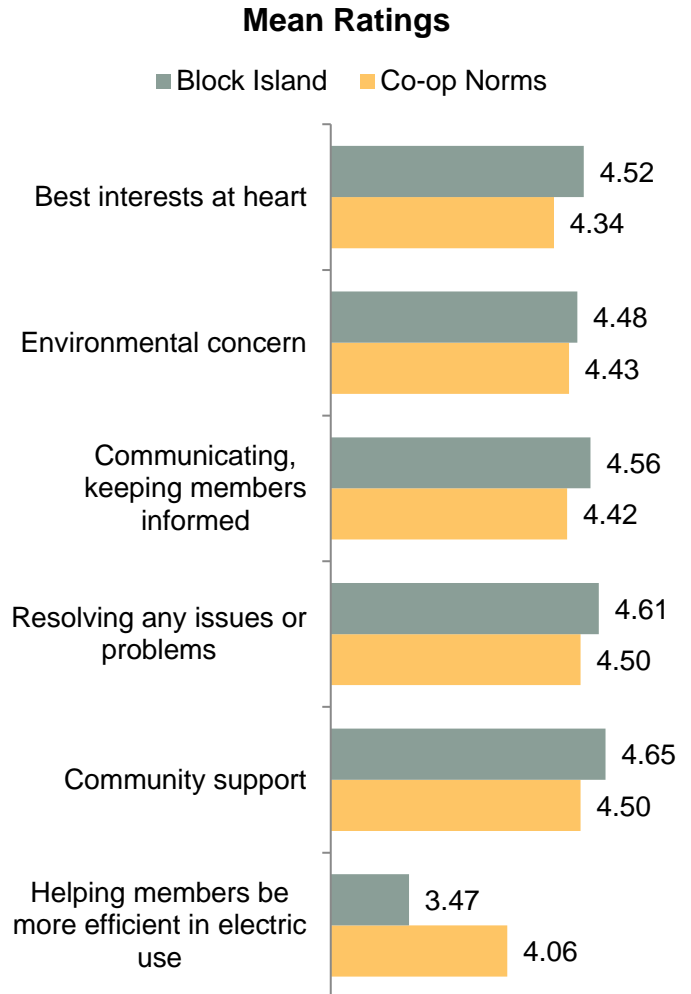
Regression analysis was used to determine the key drivers of overall satisfaction. The scores are to be interpreted relative to each other. For example, since *member service* has a score of 0.59 and *electric rates* has a score of 0.30, we can say that members' perceptions of the member service they receive has twice the impact on overall satisfaction as their perceptions of the rates they pay for their electricity. More information on how the factors were formed and importance scores derived can be found in Appendix A.



Member Service

Member Service is by far the strongest key driver of overall satisfaction.

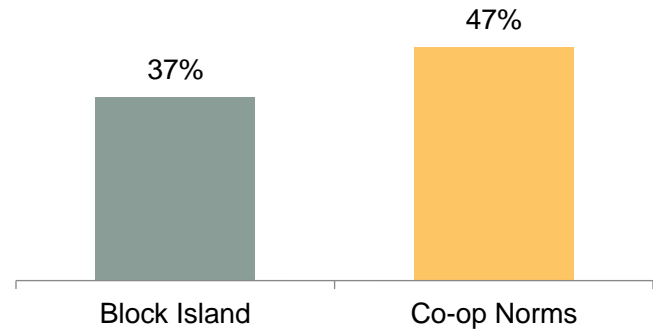
- The co-op is evaluated as being excellent on five of the six attributes included in this driver.
- These five attributes are similar to or higher than the Co-op Norms.
- *Helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity* is one of the lowest rated attributes in the study with a mean rating well below 4.0 and lower than the Co-op Norms.



Just over one-third of the members indicate they contacted Block Island Utility District in the past year.

- This is lower than the Co-op Norms.
- Those who primarily heat their home with electricity are more likely to have contacted the utility district than are those who use another source.

Contacted Co-op in Past Year

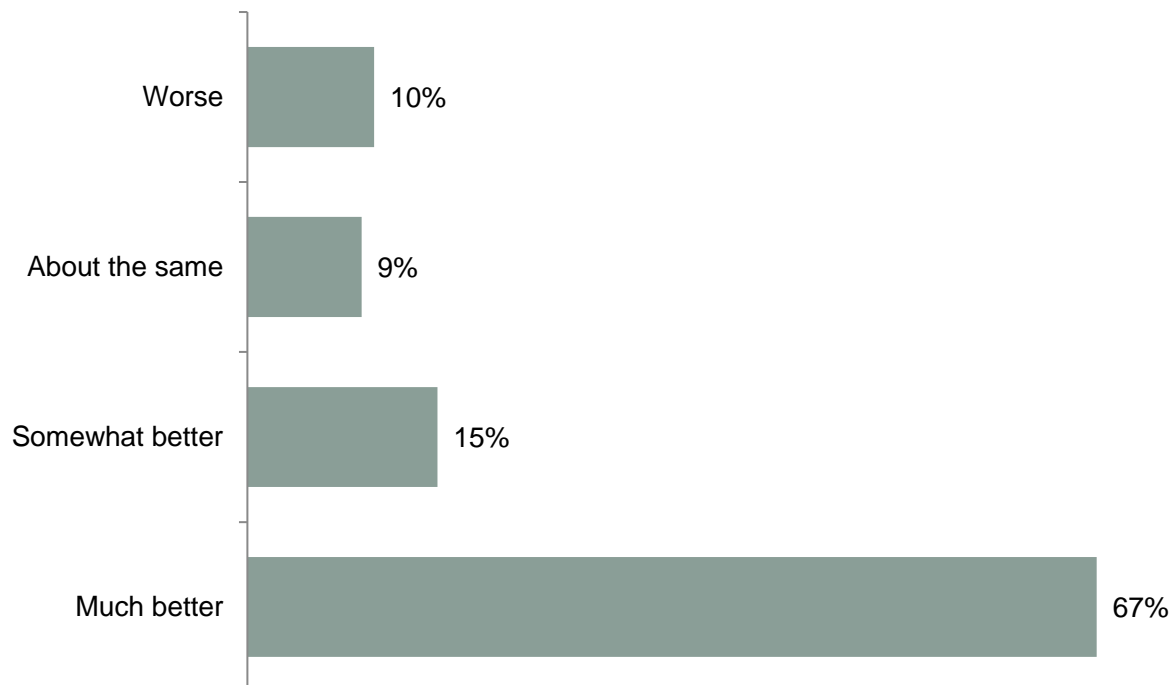


Almost all of those who contacted Block Island Utility District in the past year say their experience was at least about the same as other utility providers. Four in five say it was somewhat or much better.

Member groups that given higher evaluations of their contact with the utility district include:

- Those who are more satisfied with Block Island Utility District
- Older members

Comparison of Contact to Other Utility Companies



Electric Rates

The next two drivers are almost identical in their impact on member satisfaction. The first of these is **Electric Rates**.

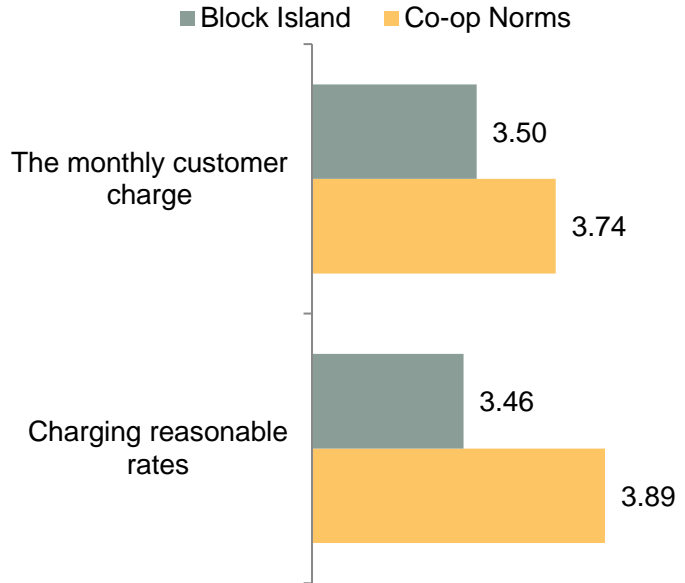
- The two attributes in this driver are two of the three lowest rated attributes in the study.
- Additionally, both are much lower than the Co-op Norms.

Member evaluations of *the value they receive for their money* are fair, with a mean rating of 3.94.

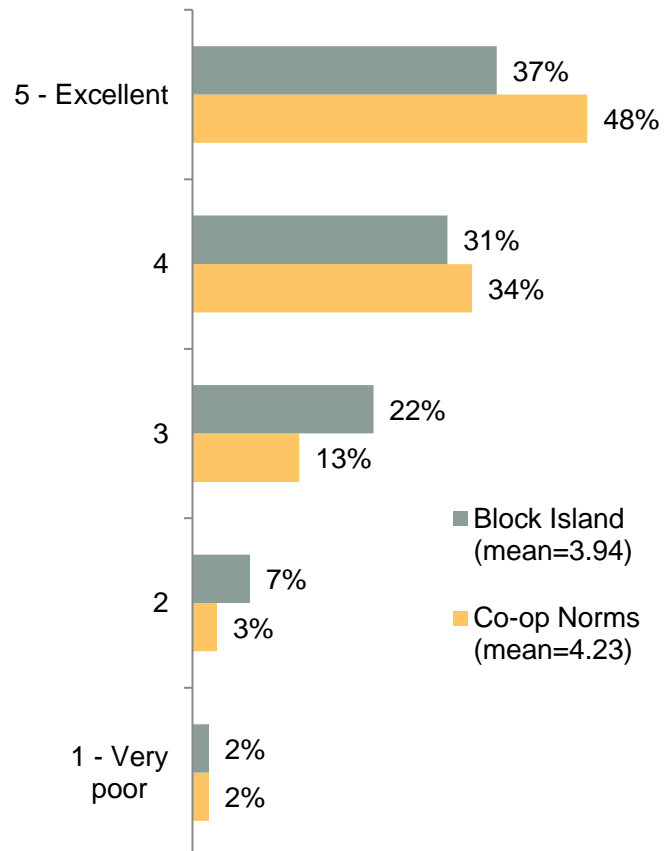
- This is lower than the Co-op Norms.
- While it is not surprising that **Electric Rates** is by far the strongest driver of value, it is not the only factor in members’ “value equation.”
- All six drivers of value are shown in the table below.

Key Drivers of Value	
Electric Rates	0.58
Electric Service	0.28
Member Service	0.28
Outage Communication	0.19
Employees and Easy to Reach	0.16
Payments and Bills	0.15

Mean Ratings



Value for the Money

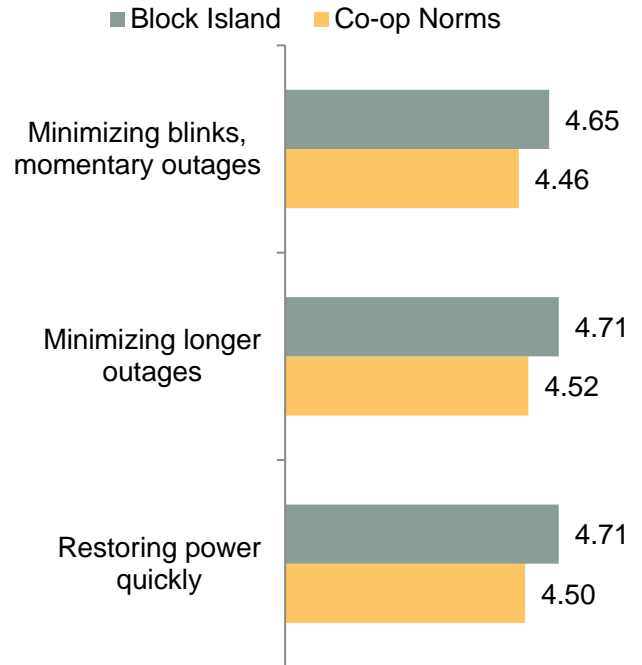


Electric Service

Electric Service is the other second-strongest driver of overall satisfaction.

- All three attributes in this driver are evaluated above 4.50.
- Additionally, they are higher than the Co-op Norms.

Mean Ratings

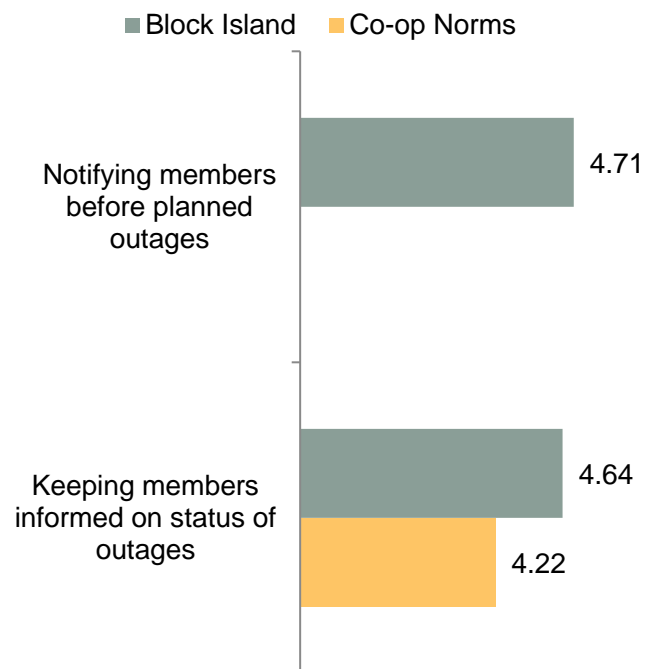


Outage Communication

The next driver of overall satisfaction is **Outage Communication**.

- Mean ratings for both attributes in this driver are above 4.50.
- *Keeping members informed on the status of outages* is also higher than the Co-op Norms.

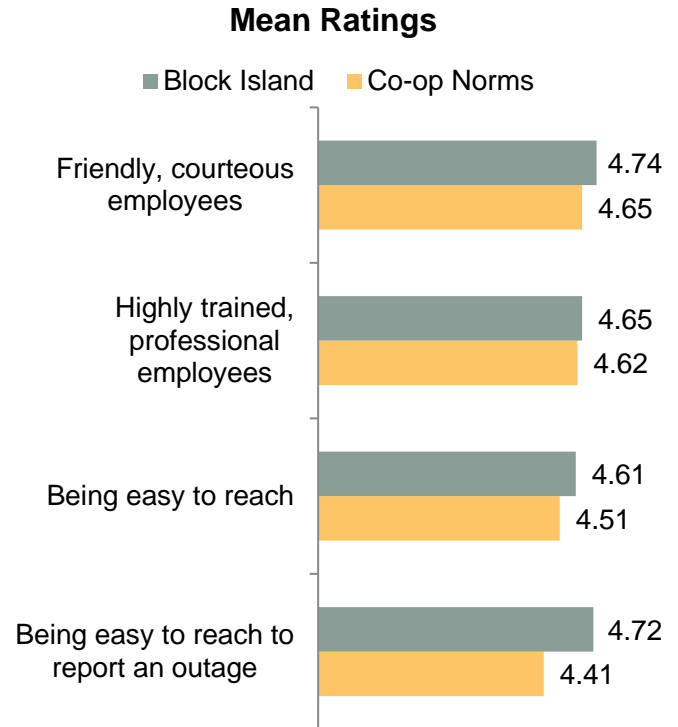
Mean Ratings



Employees and Easy to Reach

Employees and Easy to Reach is the next key driver of satisfaction.

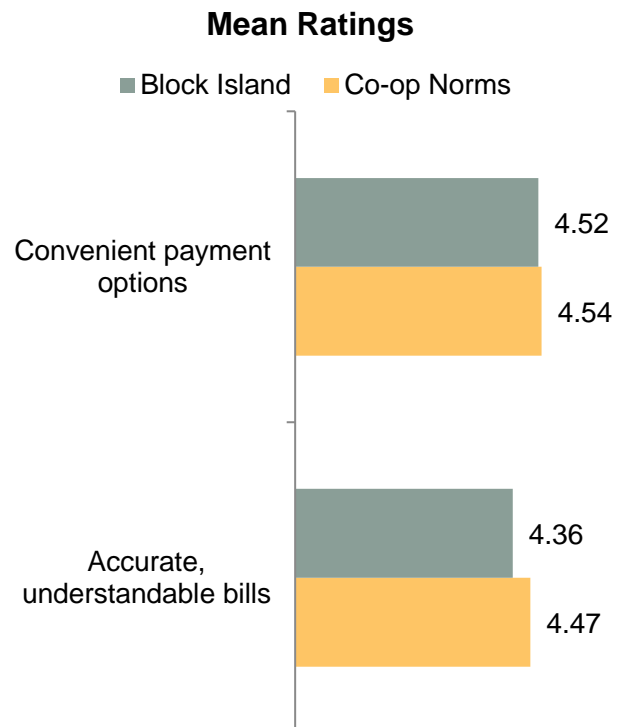
- Again, all four attributes in this driver are evaluated above 4.50.
- Employees being *friendly/courteous* and *highly trained/professional* are similar to the Co-op Norms.
- *Being easy to reach* and *being easy to reach to report an outage* are both higher than the Co-op Norms.



Payments and Bills

The final key driver of satisfaction is **Payments and Bills**.

- Both attributes in this driver are evaluated well above 4.0.
- *Having convenient payment options* is evaluated as being excellent and is almost identical to the Co-op Norms.
- Although the mean rating for *providing accurate and easy to understand bills* is very good, it is lower than the Co-op Norms.



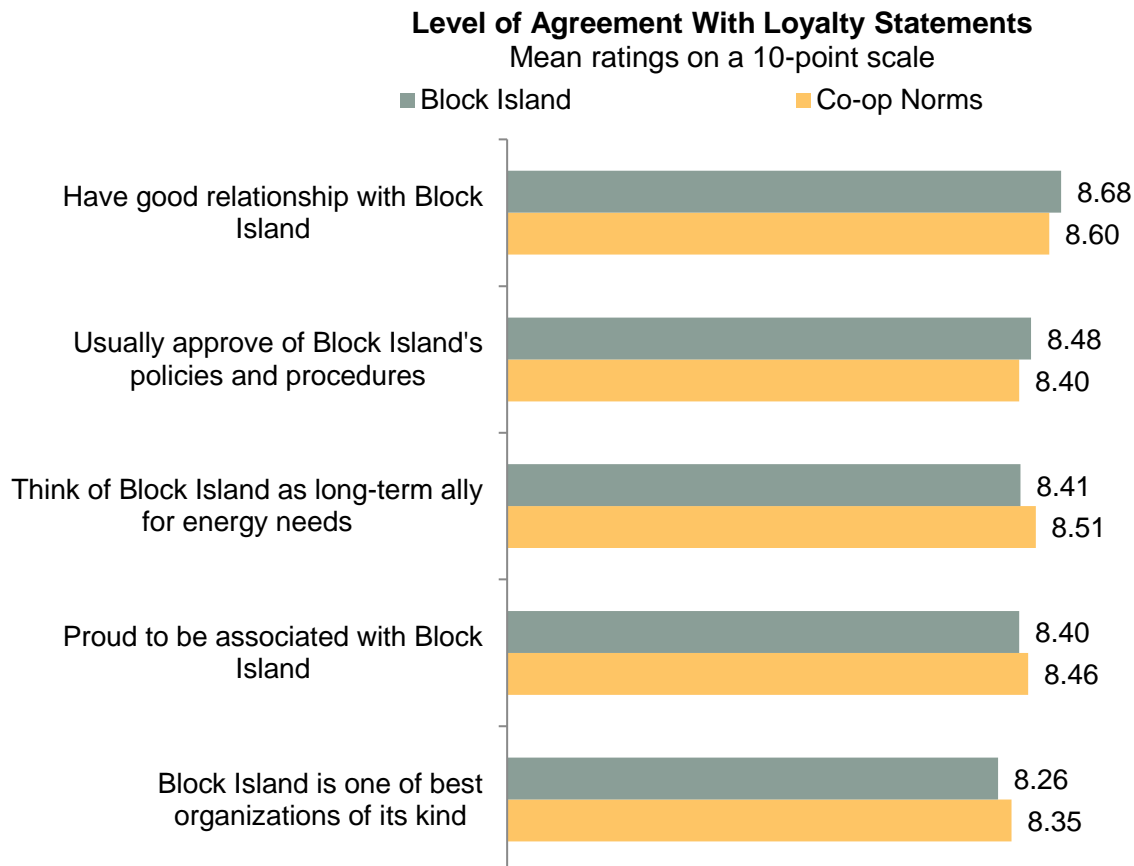
Member Loyalty

The Member Loyalty Index (MLI) is a statistically significant and reliable measure of customer engagement and loyalty. It measures a customer's emotional attachment to his/her co-op. Increasing emotional attachment is the key to increasing customer trust in the co-op and willingness to take grassroots action on their behalf. The Member Loyalty Index consists of the five measures shown on the graph below which survey participants are asked to evaluate on a 10-point Likert-type agreement scale.

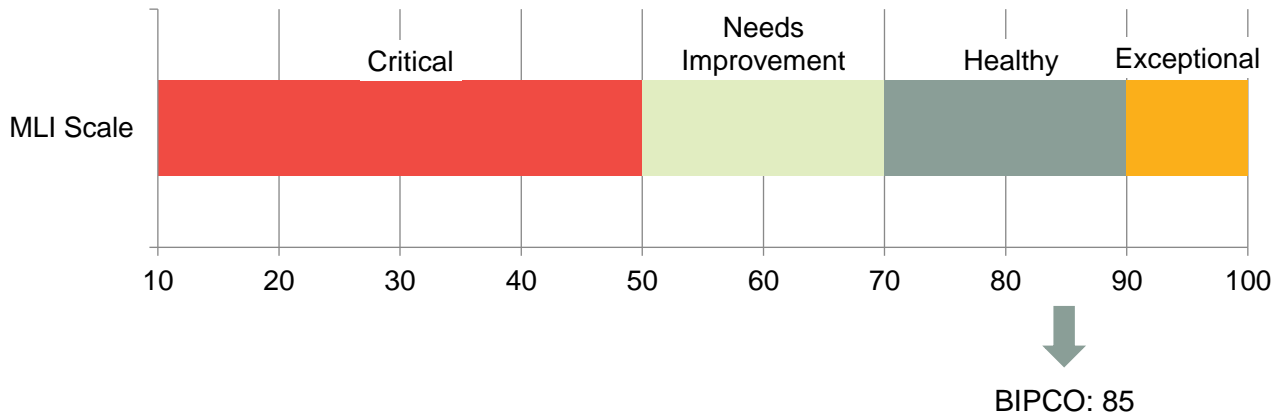
Block Island Utility District members express strong loyalty and commitment, with almost half or more strongly agreeing with all five loyalty statements and mean ratings well above 8.0. Additionally, agreement is similar to the Co-op Norms.

Members most strongly agree that they *have a good relationship with Block Island Utility District*. Agreement is lowest for the statement *Block Island Utility District is one of the best organizations of its kind*.

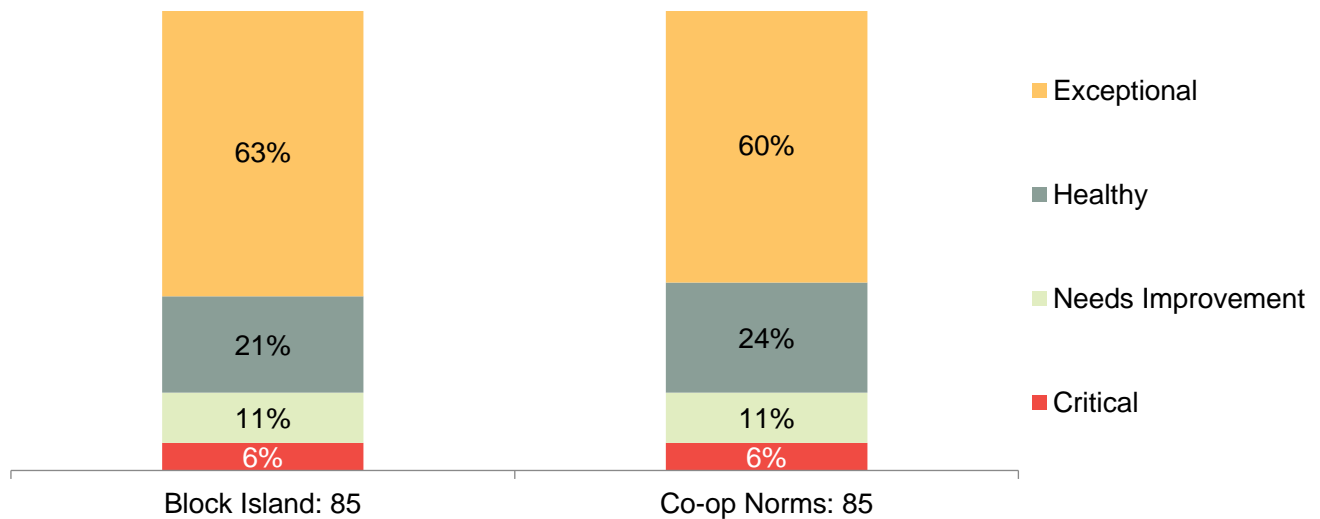
Agreement with these statements is highly correlated with satisfaction, therefore it is not surprising that those who are more satisfied with the utility district have stronger agreement with these statements than do those who are less satisfied. Agreement is also stronger among customers who are 65 or older with most of the differences being significant.



These five measures are then collated into one index on a 10 to 100 scale. As shown on the scale below, an index of 70 or higher indicates that members have a healthy or exceptional level of loyalty. Block Island Utility District’s indexed score is 85, revealing a healthy level of loyalty and engagement among members. This is identical to the Co-op Norms.



Nearly two-thirds of Block Island Utility District’s members are in the exceptional range (MLI between 90 and 100) including 40% who give the highest rating of “10” on all five of the MLI statements which results in an MLI of 100. An additional 21% are in the healthy range (MLI between 70 and 89).



On the following page is a profile of the members with exceptional member loyalty (MLI of 90 or higher) in contrast with those who fall into the range of needs improvement or critical (MLI below 70).

	Profile of Customers with MLI = 90-100 (n=107; average = 98)	Profile of Customers with MLI < 70 (n=29; average = 46)
Mean ratings for:		
Overall satisfaction	9.72	6.89
Meeting expectations	9.49	6.24
Comparison to the ideal utility	9.67	5.96
Likelihood of choosing	9.90	5.56
Performance attributes	Higher ratings on all	Lower ratings on all
Level of agreement: In a rapidly changing energy world, I trust Block Island Utility District to make sound decisions to balance reliability, environmental impact, and affordability	9.68	4.61
Level of agreement: Block Island Utility District is doing all it can to reduce reliance on fossil fuels	9.55	5.00
Which is more important:		
Lower electric bill	16%	45%
Increased use of renewable energy or both	83%	52%
Strongly/somewhat support State of Rhode Island's goal of 100% renewable electricity generated by 2032	81%*	69%*
Respondent age:		
Under 65	27%	48%
65 or older	73%	52%
Average monthly electric bill:		
\$100 or less	37%	14%
More than \$200	13%	36%
Resident type:		
Year round	59%	36%
Seasonal/Recreation	41%	64%
Gender:		
Male	47%*	64%*
Female	53%*	36%*

*Differences are not statistically significant

Members were asked for their level of agreement with two statements: In a rapidly changing energy world, I trust Block Island Utility District to make sound decisions to balance reliability, environmental impact, and affordability and Block Island Utility District is doing all it can to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Agreement with these two statements is similar with about half saying they strongly agree with each.

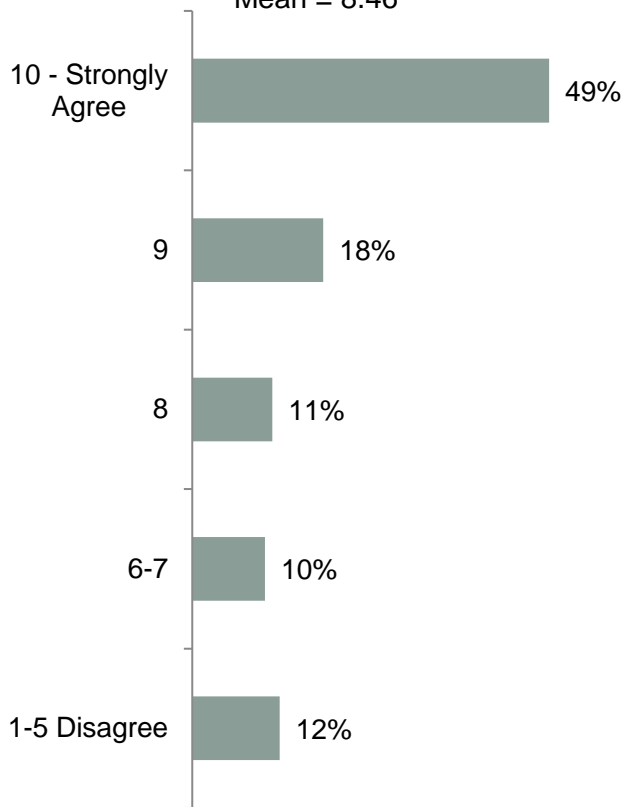
Member groups that are more likely than their counterparts to agree with the first statement include:

- Those more satisfied
- Older members
- Those paying lower electric bills
- Those primarily using electricity to heat their home
- Year round residents
- Those with higher member loyalty

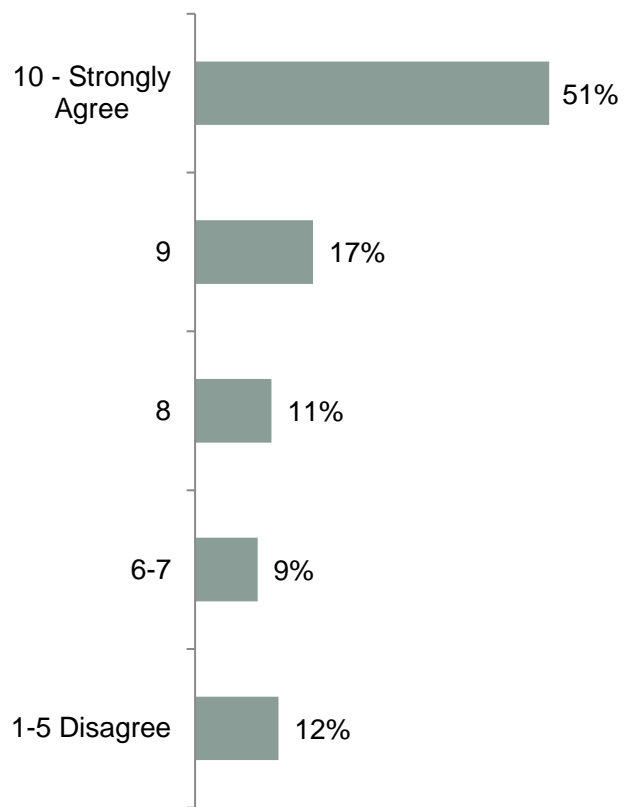
Those more likely than their counterparts to agree with the second statement include:

- Those more satisfied
- Older members
- Those with higher member loyalty
- Year round residents

I Trust Block Island Utility District to Make Sound Decisions to Balance Reliability, Environmental Impact, and Affordability
Mean = 8.46



Block Island Utility District is Doing All They Can to Reduce Reliance on Fossil Fuels
Mean = 8.53



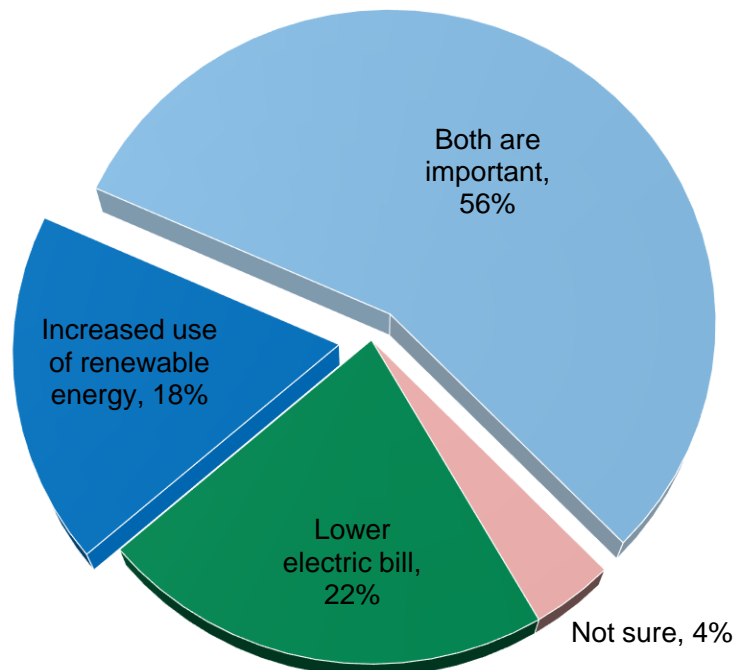
Renewable Energy

The majority of members say that both a lower electric bill and increased use of renewable energy are important, and not able to say which of those two is most important. However, note that one-fifth say that a lower electric bill is more important. Member groups that are more likely to be concerned with their bill include:

- Those less satisfied with Block Island Utility District
- Members between the ages of 55 and 64
- Seasonal/recreation residents
- Those with lower member loyalty
- Males

Among those who say the increased use of renewable energy or both are important, four in five indicate they strongly (36%) or somewhat (46%) support Block Island Utility District moving to all renewable energy even with a 5% rate increase. Of course these proportions decrease when looking at the full membership, but even so, a majority of members would support this.

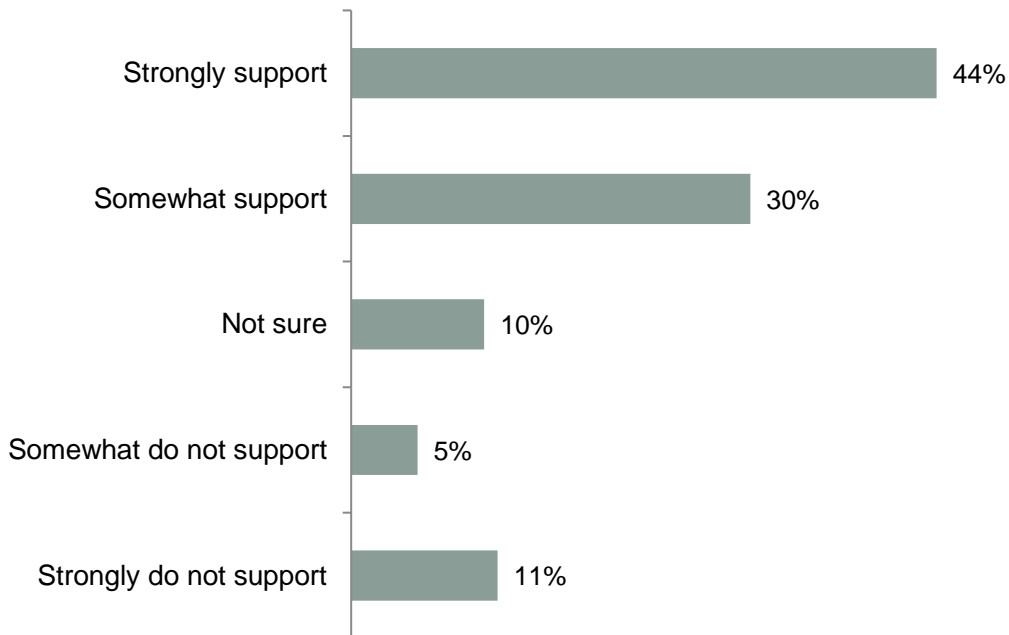
Which is More Important?



Three-quarters of the members support the State of Rhode Island's goal of 100% renewable electricity generated by 2032. Ten percent indicate they are unsure. Although not all of the differences are statistically significant, member groups that tend to support this goal include:

- Those more satisfied with Block Island Utility District
- Older members
- Year round residents
- Those with higher member loyalty
- Females

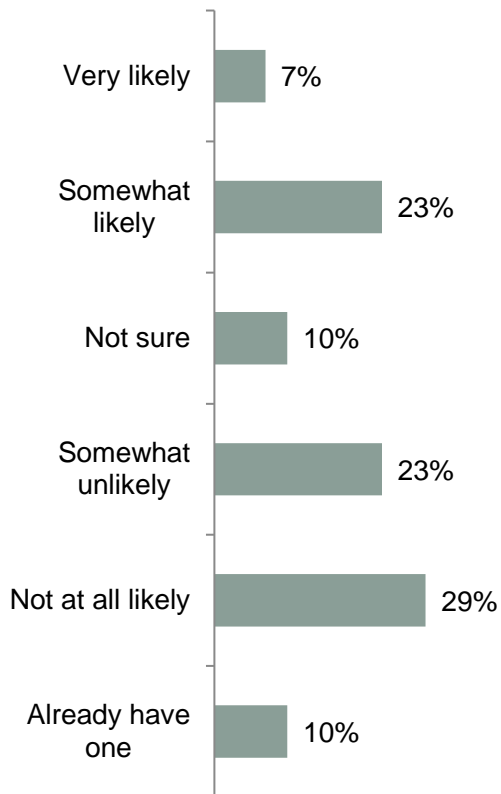
How Strongly Support State of Rhode Island's Goal of 100% Renewable Electricity Generated by 2032



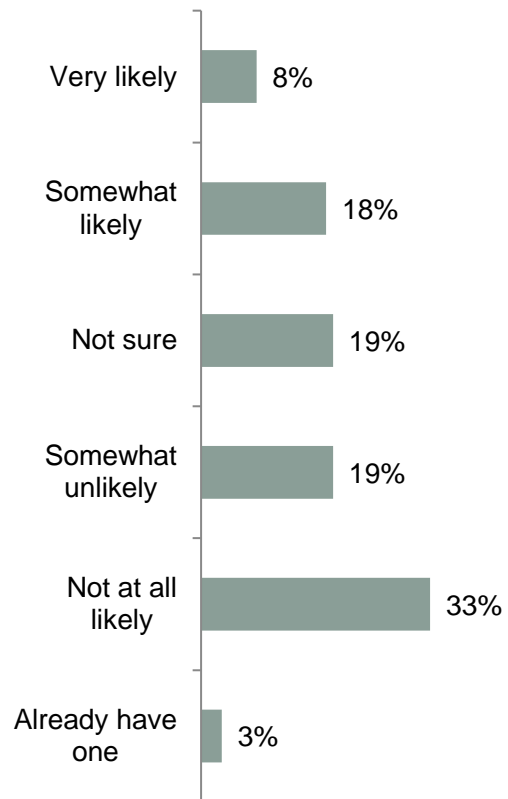
One in ten members currently own or lease a plug-in electric vehicle and three in ten are likely to purchase or lease one in the next 3 to 5 years. Fewer have, or are likely to have, a level 2 charger.

There are few consistent significant differences between member groups in the likelihood of owning or leasing a plug-in EV in the next 3 to 5 years. However, there are a few member groups that are more likely than their counterparts to install a level 2 charger. These include newer members and those paying higher monthly electric bills.

Likelihood of Owning/Leasing Plug-in Electric Vehicle in Next 3-5 Years



Likelihood of Installing Level 2 Charger at Home



Member Demographics and Segmentation

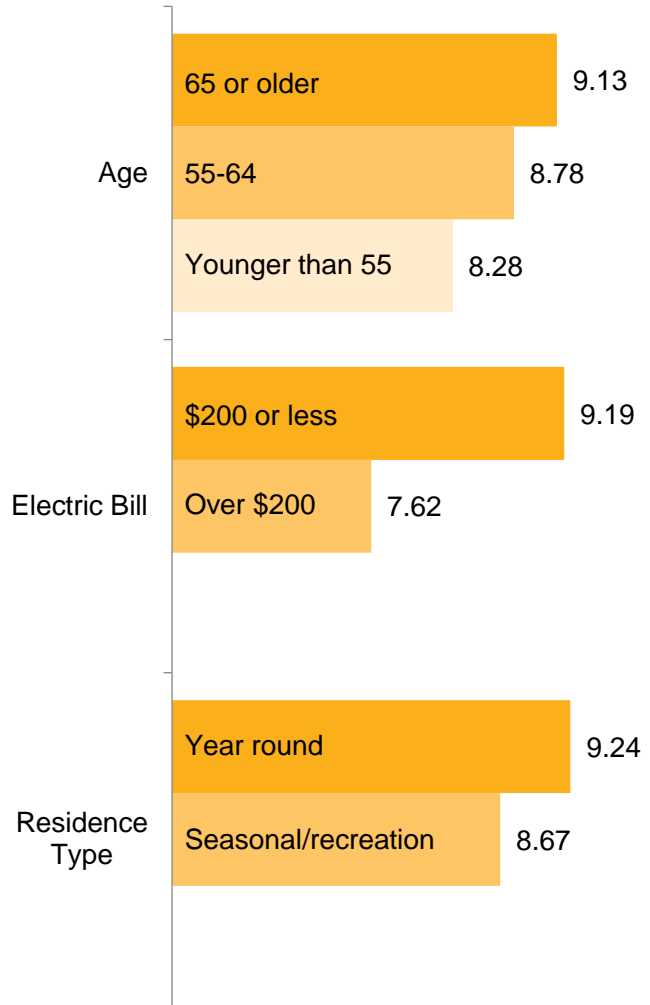
Older members, those paying lower monthly electric bills, and year round residents are significantly more satisfied with Block Island Utility District than are their individual counterparts. They also give higher ratings for the other three ACSI measures along with females.

Older members also give higher ratings on most of the performance attributes although few of the differences are significant.

In addition to higher satisfaction and performance ratings, older members are also more likely than younger members to:

- Say their contact with the utility district was much better than with other utility companies
- Have higher member loyalty
- Agree that:
 - They trust Block Island Utility District to make sound decisions to balance reliability, environmental impact, and affordability
 - Block Island Utility District is doing all it can to reduce reliance on fossil fuels
- Say increased use of renewable energy or both increased use of renewable energy and lower electric bills are important

Mean Overall Satisfaction



Verbatim Comments

At the conclusion of the survey, customers were given the opportunity to share any comments, concerns, or questions they had. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents offered input.

Among those who commented, the following table provides a breakdown of the subjects mentioned and the number of comments that were positive, negative, or neutral. A full listing of comments can be found in Appendix B.

Subject/Topic	Total # Comments	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Renewable Energy/Climate Change	19	1	6	12
Management/Board	16	11	2	3
Rates/Fees	16	1	6	9
Operations/Engineering	9	6	2	1
Overall Satisfaction	8	8	0	0
Member Service/Communication	6	6	0	0
Newsletter/Website/Electronic Media	4	3	0	1
Community Support	2	2	0	0
Co-op Membership/Member Identity	2	2	0	0
Additional Services	2	0	0	2
Billing/Finance	1	0	1	0

APPENDIX A: Key Driver/Factor Explanation

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was used to reduce the many service attributes rated in the survey to a core set of issues. This analysis shows how consumers subconsciously think about or group the many different performance attributes. Six factors were found and named Member Service, Electric Service, Employees and Easy to Reach, Outage Communication, Electric Rates, and Payments and Bills.

The performance quality attributes that make up each factor are listed below in order of the performance attribute most related to the factor down to the attribute least related to the factor.

Member Service Factor

- Having members' best interests at heart
- Operating with concern for the environment
- Communicating with you and keeping you informed
- Resolving any issues or problems
- Supporting the local community
- Helping you to be more efficient in your use of electricity

Electric Service Factor

- Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum
- Keeping longer outages to a minimum
- Restoring power after an outage

Employees and Easy to Reach Factor

- Having friendly, courteous employees
- Having highly trained and professional employees
- Being easy to reach
- Being easy to reach to report an outage

Outage Communication Factor

- Notifying you before planned power outages
- Keeping you informed on the status of outages

Electric Rates Factor

- The monthly customer charge
- Charging reasonable rates

Payments and Bills Factor

- Having convenient payment options
- Providing accurate and easy to understand bills

Key Driver Analysis

To help determine where expectations are and are not being met for co-op members, we calculate importance scores for the factors and attributes. The importance scores were derived using the beta scores from a regression of the factors and attributes on overall satisfaction. What we are looking for is significance. If a factor or attribute is positively significant, it has a positive relationship with satisfaction. If the factor/attribute receives a high rating, overall satisfaction also receives a high rating. That is, the more a factor or attribute influences overall satisfaction, the higher its importance score. Factors and attributes that are found to be significant in the regression are labeled as key drivers of overall satisfaction and shown in the figure.

Separate analyses were done to find the key drivers of value among residential members of Block Island Utility District. Rather than regressing the factors and attributes on overall satisfaction, they were regressed on the attribute “delivering good value for the money”. The key drivers of value are shown in a separate figure.

APPENDIX B: Verbatim Responses

Using a 10-point scale on which 10 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied," how satisfied are with Block Island Utility District? Please explain your rating.

"10" Rating – Very Satisfied

Always responsive to issues, accurate in billing, very pleasant to deal with.

Always there when you need them - a phone call away.

Any disruption in service is always handled asap. Also, rates decreased.

Any issues are always addressed in a timely manner. Current updates on possible disruptions and or situations which may cause disruptions. Professional, courteous, kind and understanding staff.

Appreciate recent improvements to infrastructure.

Appreciate the regular service updates and posts on BIBB.

BIPCO has always provided great service and as they upgrade the utility, this great service continues.

BIPCO's investment in infrastructure and their courteous customer service and keeping everyone up to date on changing conditions.

Communication by Jeff Wright.

Consistency of service.

Easy to get in contact with, GREAT COMMUNICATION from Jeff about outages and repairs.

Easy.

Electric power is provided as expected.

Electronic bill and bill payment works well, like seeing usage stats.

Email updates. Prompt notification and responses to outages. Attention to clearing and reinforcing power poles and lines.

Everything works the way it should. We get plenty of notices of events and issues.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating
“10” Rating – Very Satisfied
(continued)

Excellent communication.

Excellent customer service, communication and reliability.

Excellent response to power outages.

Excellent uptime, maintenance in infrastructure. Great email communication from Jeffrey and team. Rates reasonable. SmartHub informatics is very handy.

Fine service. Reasonable cost.

Great communication and personal responses.

Great communication. Rarely if ever power outages, and if so, very quick. Nothing like our mainland house.

Great communication. Fast response to outages and issues. Clear billing system. Great staff. Good maintenance of distribution system. Good concern for community issues. Osprey camera!!

Happy with service.

I am very pleased about the Utility District since it was formed several years ago.

I feel that it works efficiently and communicates frequently with the general public to update the island about weather and general interruptions in service. I appreciate all that is done to address upcoming events, possibilities, and disruptions.

I feel the BIUD has the best interest of Islanders in mind when making important decisions. And Jeffrey Wright is an excellent communicator.

I have always felt that the Power company's interest was serving the customer, which they have always done in a fair and professional manner. The service is very dependable!

I have had 2 interactions with the BIUD and they couldn't have been [more] responsive. One weekend during the winter I inquired about service to my house while off island. Jeff called me twice while on his vacation and had people go to my house to investigate.

I have had no real issues all these years.

I have power when I need it at a fairly reasonable price. I love not hearing the generators, although I appreciate having them as backup.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating
“10” Rating – Very Satisfied
(continued)

I recently added two new services to property on High Street. The project required multiple inspections and a lot of coordination. Everyone was informed and helpful. I am very grateful to everyone who works at the power company.

If there are problems, they are resolved as quickly as possible.

In the last few years I have seen a significant increase in the quality of the service. I don't remember the exact dates, but I believe this improvement happened after the sale of the company.

It has been reliable, and we are updated and well informed.

It has improved recently. No outages and always keep us well informed.

It is great that Jeff keeps everyone informed via the BIBB when something is coming up, or if there is an emergency situation.

It was straightforward to get my service set up, and the online/app billing is simple, but provides clear and useful information.

It's the best service we've ever had. Ever since Jeffrey Wright took over.

Jeff and his team are awesome.

Jeff communicates well, the supply is steady, the bills consistent.

Jeff Wright is an excellent communicator and responds immediately to any questions or concerns.

Jeff Wright is doing excellent job.

Jeffrey Wright communicates with the public and is on top of almost all situations.

Jeffrey Wright has always informed the community of any possible upcoming disruptions due to storms, repair, mainland grid, etc. And when there is an outage he is the first to respond by email to his customers, explaining the situation and how long the repair might take. He then follows up with the results. He is extremely professional and a concerned Block Island citizen.

Jeffrey Wright has done an outstanding job. He keeps the community apprised of weather changes, power outages, when the team will rectify interruption of services... the list goes on and on. Tracey Fredricks is great when you call with a question. The crew members are the BEST.

Lights are on.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating
“10” Rating – Very Satisfied
(continued)

Love the emails informing us of potential weather events that could impact electricity. The quick response to any outage.

Minimal times at the service is out and quick response when the service is out. Also, the notations on the Block Island bulletin board by Jeffery right when service is out.

Much better communication with customers than previous owners. Available of staff during storms and advance communication. Customer service is excellent.

My electric service has seldom flickered and with the relatively recent structure and leadership inspired by Jeffrey Wright, I am always informed about what to expect. The company has excelled in their customer service and communication.

No issues; responsive; we appreciate proactive communicate re power outages, etc.

No power lost and better service.

No problems, bills are easy to pay and very reasonable. Once the power went out and it was fixed within the hour.

No problems.

No problems. Answer when you call. Continuous communications re: power issues & and plans. Working with tSI to be greener.

Our rates make more sense now. We used to have randomly huge numbers that were not correlated to our usage. I feel that service is more honest now and the prices charged are fair.

Power has become very reliable and clean.

Power is consistent and I appreciate Jeffry Wright always reporting what's happening and when it will be fixed.

Power is reliable and cost is within reason.

Power stability has improved a great deal. Tree work and pole work has been impressive. Communication during outages has been outstanding by Jeffrey Wright.

Price is reasonable. Service availability exceeds my expectations. Issues are quickly addressed. Communication is excellent!

Reason For Satisfaction Rating
“10” Rating – Very Satisfied
(continued)

Proactive efforts maintaining infrastructure and weather preparedness. Outages are infrequent and brief. Excellent Communication.

Prompt information is provided for service outages, both planned and unplanned.

Prompt, professional service. Good communication during storms and other unpredictable weather.

Quick communication for power outages, planned outages and storm readiness.

Rarely an outage and if so, [there is] clear, timely communication.

Regular communication.

Reliability.

Reliable service, improved maintenance.

Reliable service. Excellent communications.

Reliable, responsive, quality electricity, communications.

Responsive, communicative, replacing and improving infrastructure. High quality of the power.

Results greatly exceed expectations given the circumstances.

Service and communication.

Service has always been provided when available.

Service. Communication.

Significant upgrade in the billing process and allowing me to better analyze my electric power consumption. Proactive management of control of vegetation which has resulted in very few interruptions of power. Jeff Wright very responsive when I reach out with a question.

Significantly reduced number of brown outs. Improved consistency of voltage.

Since being taken over by the Town and the hiring of the new General Manager, maintenance has become a priority including appropriate tree trimming. Reliability has improved substantially where an outage is a rare exception, not the rule.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating
“10” Rating – Very Satisfied
(continued)

Since Jeff has assumed management of the company, the service is vastly improved and the organization as a whole is extremely responsive to customer needs

Since Mr. Wright has been in charge everything has been Right. Very few short power outages. Great communication.

Since the windmills were installed, the town took over the power company, and they hired Jeff Wright I have nothing but very positive ratings for the power company.

Stable power and rated.

The attentiveness of the linemen, the office staff and the folks on charge of keeping the power flowing and communicating with the public as soon as issues arise, or service interruptions are scheduled. I also appreciate the amperage flow as do my appliances.

The brownouts are gone. We can depend on the electric service without fear of ruining our electric machinery.

The current management and crew are very attentive and responsive.

The excellent communication from the BIUD regarding outages, storms, etc. They manage my expectations very well.

The new (relative) Director seems on top of our concerns, relates to us his viewpoints, and probable actions - BEFORE taking action!

The new Utility District has done a great job in improving infrastructure--new, taller poles, etc. Communication has been excellent--timely and informative.

The people that work there.

The service gets better yearly. You have turned an ugly property into an attractive campus. The best is how you keep your members/customers informed using text messaging.

There was only one weekend with an electric snafu. 6 years ago and it was back on by evening. The diesel always sounded like a huge sewing machine.

They have answers when you have a question and take care of a problem if you have one.

They have made many improvements and the service is much better than it used to be.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating
“10” Rating – Very Satisfied
(continued)

They pickup the phone when you call and are responsive when there is a problem.

Very responsive, clear communications.

We have never been without power, even on exceptionally windy or stormy days. Our home on Block Island is our vacation home, so we are not here Year-round. We are both retired, so we can come more often and stay longer. For example, this year, we were on island the entire months of February, June, July and August. We only return "to America" for doctor's appointments, weddings or our son's graduation from Medical School.

We very much appreciate Jeffery Wright's communications and the rapidity of fixing any problems with the power. We also seem to be paying less.

We've had no issues with our power since buying the house.

You are always right on top of all situations especially with your warnings and you are very "community" conscious.

You simply have never let us down.

“9” Rating

1. Electricity quality is much improved in the last 5 years or so. Few spikes on the line, frequency control superior. 2. Appearance of equipment (transformers, switch gear, poles) vastly improved. 3. Strange outages reduced to virtually zero.

1. Fewer black outs. 2. My power comes inland from Westside Rd. for four poles. You recently cleaned and repaired poles which made me very comfortable because I live here full time and winters are a bit worrisome.

As a "summer" resident, never had any problems except for an occasional outage.

Better communication and service now than ever before - dating back to the 70's. Allowing for tree removal by their contractors.

BIPCO under the current operating structure is very responsive to customers. Also, the upgrades/maintenance that should have been done over the last several years, is getting completed.

Changing to a publicly owned utility has been transformative. Service has drastically improved and communication with the customer has changed so much for the better.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating
“9” Rating
(continued)

Communication is outstanding to us.

Cost of electricity is high.

Damn good!

Excellent service, improvements to the infrastructure, great communications. We would like to see the BI Utility District help the members implement more alternative energy options, like solar. Being able to manage our use of power by seeing real time data on usage so that we can improve and become more efficient.

Expensive power.

Few brown outs. Electricity when I need it.

Generally quite consistent. Reliability has increased.

Great communications regarding potential disruptions.

Had really little trouble over those years.

Has gotten SO much better since Jeff got here - but nobody's perfect!

I thought that after the windmills were added to the energy supply, that the costs would decrease considerably.

Improvement in consistency of service. Formerly more outages and fluctuations in power.

Major glitches in past - fried refrigerator - before turbines and cable stabilized things.

My electric bill did not skyrocket. Greatly reduced power outages.

My electrical needs have always been satisfactory and attended to.

Quality of power into the home. Reasonable rates all things considered. Good communication with the public. Professionalism of staff and employees. Transparency!

Rare outages.

Reliability, under these unique circumstances.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating**“9” Rating
(continued)**

Reliable and responsive.

Reliable power and good communication regarding outages and improvements.

Service has been reliable and recent upgrades to the distribution system have been beneficial.

Significant improvements have been made to BIPCO over the past decade in the quality and provision of electrical distribution.

Summertime billing took my monthly payment from \$130-140 per month to \$836 for July!! Otherwise, I am completely satisfied.

The Net Metering Policy of the power company does not even let the self-generating customer use their own energy behind the meter in their own household but makes them sell all the self-generated electricity to the company at avoided cost with no self-use to reduce their own electricity cost. This significantly departs from the self-generation customer policy of most other utilities.

The rates are higher than expected.

They do the best they can to supply power in times of huge demand (summer).

Upgraded system and infrastructure.

Very reliable service and now, a true customer focus as members, not just customers.

We have had a few extended outages, but otherwise excellent.

“8” Rating

Very good communication during regular operations and during blackouts as well.

Communication good. We rarely lose power.

Communication with customers is excellent. Efforts to restore power when it is lost are always timely and effective. Power losses are infrequent and of short duration. Being a customer who has for many years used solar power, I'd like to see a friendlier rate structure going forward to encourage more customers to install renewable power sources.

Completely satisfied although the customer service of the in-office personnel could be improved.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating**“8” Rating
(continued)**

Consistent service. Good app, good data, easy payment.

Done a great job improving the company. Rates are still too high!

Effective communication and reliability of the service. However, cost is high.

Great job keeping power on during storms. Used to be too many storm surges in the past.

I think they are excellent at communicating all service events and are managed very well. The power is as reliable as it can be considering where it is located. It is 100% better than it used to be.

I would like to see more public education and implementation re net metering.

In the past we've had numerous blackouts. They have diminished. My main issue is why we cannot use our 5 windmills consistently. Will full use of the wind farm ever occur? If so, I'd expect lower electric costs.

It has improved over the years...no one is perfect. Wish rates were lower like everything else in the world.

Just wish it was cheaper in the summer.

No complaints. Straight forward to work with. Didn't put 10, bc no one is perfect.

Occasional black outs.

Reliability.

Service hasn't been as reliable as service on the mainland, but I'm not sure that I'd expect this. I thought that wind power would be less expensive than it has proven to be, and I don't understand why the windmills work as infrequently as they do.

Service was not as steady as it is now.

Since we have been a customer of BI Power for 25 years the rating is a bit skewed as in the early days 1998-2018 the source of power was diesel generators with documented reliability issues. Since the wind farm and cable connection came online in 2018 the reliability has been excellent and without any power surges (that I am aware of at our property). Therefore, if I were rating this for the last 5 years only it would be a 10 rating.

The improvements over the last few years have been very beneficial and appreciated.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating**“8” Rating
(continued)**

The new power poles are huge and since most of the customers on the street have underground service, the line should have been installed underground as well!

The only reason I can't give it a 9 or 10 is because we still experience flickering lights/"brown outs" at times. Not nearly as often as we used to but a couple of times a month. I think the communication is excellent! I think our electric bills are on the high side but better than they used to be.

The service has been basically satisfactory. The price is a different question.

The service is wonderful, prices not so much.

Too expensive.

Too many outages in the off season.

Transparency. Friendly service. Prompt response.

Wires are a little all over the place. And stuff like transformer-like boxes are on my land without my permission. It's OK with me but it would have been nice to be asked.

Would be a 10 but for the rates.

“7” Rating

Cost very high.

Cost.

I know BIPCO tries to secure the best rates - the total delivered cost is still too high. Block Island was sold a "bill of goods" with regard to the wind farm. The promise of cheap power was never delivered and never will be.

Numerous short-term outages in service.

Quick response to report of pole failure; good billing logistics; community engagement; well-maintained HQ/plant.

Rates still unreasonably high!

Service is very good and has gotten better in recent years. Price is still very high.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating**“7” Rating
(continued)**

Somewhat discouraged that the rate after being connected to the wind farm remains high, also the voltage was erratic in the past and was not kind to all appliances.

Too many aerial poles. Need emphasis on underground utilities.

“6” Rating

Delay in up-grading system and replacement of Electric poles.

Dissatisfaction with the attitude toward net metering.

Expensive and used to be unreliable. Now much more reliable.

I don't feel BIPCO is transparent about or motivated to invest and encourage customers to explore solar and other renewable energies.

More should be done to update & maintain the infrastructure.

Very difficult to understand billing.

Wish there were better coordination for solar power.

“5” Rating

We don't experience interruptions to our service. However, with wind turbines and renewable sources we would hope that those sacrifices (eye sores) would keep prices down.

“4” Rating

BIPCO does not work at explaining the reasons behind the high cost of power on Block. Communication is insufficient. Further, we wonder what is being done to reduce the cost of power.

Costs are too high vis a vis the expectations of the wind turbines. Your service is good. Jeff is outstanding in his communications to the community. Your questions are not formulated in a way to give us the feedback we would like to give.

Service is great. But the stance on solar is archaic and hurts Block Island in the long term.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating (continued)

“3” Rating

Management and the Board majority have participated in a campaign of misinformation, deception, and outright purposeful redaction of facts regarding their customer generation and energy utilization policies. I have undertaken the technological and economic analysis and in field, and engineering work to show this. I have shown their policies to be flawed and purposely flawed in order to stop people from installing customer generation. They took a position from the 1980s, when we were recommending policies that California actually adopted and were fair by all research and analysis presented. They just refused to discuss and consider. Requests for the basis of their analysis were largely ignored or shown without a doubt to be wrong. They were slanted, biased all in order to justify a false narrative, the consequences of which we see today. Of course, there is no repercussion because this is a dark science to many, and few could realize that such orchestrated falsehoods would be any credible company's policies.

BTW, I asked for this survey over four years ago. One reason was for ownership input to the destructive policies they were considering. People were largely unaware of their plans as this was the ONLY rate case they did not place on their website to my knowledge. I pointed this out repeatedly and since they act with imperious and isolated policies, they knew they could do whatever they wished or wished not to do. There is no outside reasonable oversight of this Board or Management. We are less than .1% of the State electric service and just an inconvenience it appears. The Management and Board leverage this to do what they want. For all the financial distress they claimed, we all have observed the new vehicles, especially managements and the amount of money being spent on landscaping and who knows what else. This is financial responsibility. Also, this is a company whose income was rising at the exact same time they claimed customer generation was causing economic harm. Also, their energy efficiency programs, are really load building programs. They don't really do energy efficiency. I know, I have run those programs for utilities. Yes, I am pretty disgusted with Management, and the Board majority.

Unreliable service, with blackouts and also damage to the electronics in my appliances. Has greatly improved since not dependent on diesel generators. Same applies to items that follow. My current estimates would be around 9.

“2” Rating

(No “2” Ratings Given)

“1” Rating – Very Dissatisfied

Rates. \$400 in the summer where the stove and hot water are propane and there is no air conditioning.

Reason For Satisfaction Rating
“1” Rating – Very Dissatisfied
(continued)

Ugly windmills I see from my house each day and night. Red lights blinking at night and now more yellow lights below. I understand the safety reasons but the windmills should not be there in the first place. Bird kills and sea life disturbance are also issues. Cheaper electric total monthly bills promised but that has not appreciably happened for me.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

In order to present comments in their entirety, verbatim responses may appear under more than one heading. The portion of the comment pertaining to the section is in black, while portions covered under other areas are colored in gray.

Overall Satisfaction – Positive Responses

I'm satisfied/They do a good job/No problems (8 general comments like this)

Management/Board – Positive Responses

Hope Jeff and his staff are with us for a long, long time. These are professionals you can trust!!!!

I think the Utility District has made remarkable progress to convert an investor-owned utility into a true cooperative electric utility with all the benefits that ensue. I know this because I was on the team which first tried to get this transition in 1992. Hats off to the utility district and the Power Company Management and employees to actually pull this off!

Jeff's appearance on the Two Guys on Block Island podcast shed so much light on how the power company works, how we utilize (or not) the wind farm, and Jeff's extensive background in power/electric in general. Gave me much more confidence in his ability to run our tiny island in the best way possible. If there was a way to get that info out to his customers, I think others would feel the same. Not suggesting having to listen to the podcast but maybe a summary newsletter or similar.

Keep going, BIUD is headed in the right direction.

President is highly competent and model for BIPCO.

The guy in charge of BIPCO, Jeff, is a wonderful addition to that business. He cares about what he is doing and is very knowledgeable about his responsibilities. He cares about the island and its people. He was interviewed recently by the local podcast called "Two Guys From Block Island". It was a great show. We learned so much.

Under no circumstances let Jeffery Wright leave Block Island. His ability to be proactive including planning and handling issues is what makes him so critical part of the BIUD.

We think Jeff is incredible in his job and would hope he stays on in the future. We are currently building a house at a new property but previously had another house on the island for over 20 years. Our summer utility bills are through the roof - \$2000+ during July and August. We thought the wind turbines would ease these costs somewhat and did not see this happen. Big disappointment. Don't know who is seeing the benefit of these turbines but it's surely not the homeowners on the island.

Additional Comments**Management/Board – Positive Responses
(continued)**

You have done a wonderful job transforming the utility district. Just need to lower prices.

Management/Board – Negative Responses

Obviously, I have severe issues with Jeff Wright and Barbara McMullen. However, Tom Risom, the Towns Building Official and Wright colluded without the Town or Board's knowledge to pass information on Town permits re solar to Wright. I finally figured it out and both of them were not fired. That is what goes on here. Anyone who questions my ethics or style needs to remember I have always been in the open. Not our power company. And one further thing. Wright said he could not take my advice as I was a for profit company. How absurd is this statement? Obviously so. He hired all his acquaintances from VT for tree trimming, line work, design etc. I believe they were all FOR PROFIT! Oh my God! I have offered my professional knowledge to the community for over thirty years, and this person, with no degrees in Finance, Engineering, Public Administration, etc., feels that he can ascertain that my efforts are nefarious and self-serving. What a bunch of poppycock. Meanwhile he has taken many vacations to build a house in Texas. This could have been a great time for us, but Wright and the Board majority have done this community as great long-term disservice. I am sure we both have mutual disrespect for each other. Mine is based upon that they are poor representatives of a community owned coop. Theirs is based upon that they don't like to hear better ideas and feel only their voice counts.

Management/Board – Neutral Responses

I beg BIPCo to resist the futile green agenda. Your focus should be on lowest cost to customers - regardless of whether renewable or not. I have questions about the current charging station on BIPCo property. It seems like The Solar Initiative owns this??? If so, what does BIPCo get from them? Does BIPCo make a profit (I hope so!)? Does BIPCo charge for the space the charger uses?

I'm very happy with BIUD but would like to see Block Island serve as a model community that values our fragile environment over monetary gain. I understand this is a balance, but I still hope that our small island can successfully put the earth first. That's ultimately all we have.

Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses

Ever since the windmills became active, the power has been quite reliable. Any needed repairs to the lines that affect my home are quickly responded to and taken care of. The electricity is more consistent with little to no surges now.

Additional Comments**Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses
(continued)**

I appreciate the progress that has been made in recent years modernizing the distribution system and diversifying the power supply. I remember the challenges of the 1970s and 80s with reliability in spite of the best efforts of dedicated employees like Merrill Slate. It is difficult to meet the needs of ratepayers during the summer when demand surges with the increase in seasonal residents and visitors, but things have greatly improved over time.

Keep up the good work in improving the system and performing proactive maintenance. Thank you for your community involvement and good communication.

Pleased with the proactive approach that has greatly decreased the number of black outs and brownouts, which were too common in the first decade of my 27 years on the island.

Operations/Engineering – Negative Responses

I did not like the cutting of so many trees which I accept as necessary. I would have liked a tree planting program to replace some of the trees in safer spots. PS: The last question ON THE NEXT PAGE about my email address is not a yes/no question. I answered yes but I'm not completely sure it meant OK.

It would be nice if BIPCO did less damage to our yard when using its easement over our property to work on lines.

Operations/Engineering – Neutral Responses

We should not be impacted if there is a problem at the substation on the mainland. If we did not have diesel generators as a backup source, I would be concerned with our level of service and reliability.

Member Service/Communication – Positive Responses

Excellent teamwork. We appreciate all your hard work.

I am very grateful for all of your hard work!!

Just want to say that we appreciate the communication to the customers. Whether planned or unplanned I always feel well informed.

Keep up the good work in improving the system and performing proactive maintenance. Thank you for your community involvement and good communication.

Additional Comments**Member Service/Communication – Positive Responses
(continued)**

Many thanks to the whole BIUD team for your excellent communication and excellence service to our community. I am proud to live within the BIUD.

Billing/Finance – Negative Responses

It was difficult to set up the automatic credit card payment. It is too difficult to look at the payments over the last year to give you an average payment - not worth the time to go through the statements or bills which are at home.

Rates/Fees – Positive Responses

Balancing sustainable power with cost requires a balance. Prior to being retired and on fixed income. I always opted for the environmental option even with increased cost. I have found that since retiring I am a little more cautious to increase my utility costs since any decision to increase cost for sustainable power must also take into account the obligatory inflation adjusted cost as well. A 5% surcharge is something I would support however what I have historically found is that the projected cost often balloons over time to far more than what the estimate was. I say this based on my bills from Philadelphia. Power costs on Block Island have diminished since the implementation of the Power district.

Rates/Fees – Negative Responses

Being a seasonal resident, we seem to pay more.

Eliminate the "system charge", seemingly unique to BIUD and I would change several answers to "excellent".

Very positive framed survey! Everything is fine, it's just super expensive to have power.

We think Jeff is incredible in his job and would hope he stays on in the future. We are currently building a house at a new property but previously had another house on the island for over 20 years. Our summer utility bills are through the roof - \$2000+ during July and August. We thought the wind turbines would ease these costs somewhat and did not see this happen. Big disappointment. Don't know who is seeing the benefit of these turbines but it's surely not the homeowners on the island.

You have done a wonderful job transforming the utility district. Just need to lower prices.

Additional Comments**Rates/Fees
(continued)****Rates/Fees – Neutral Responses**

Average monthly bill is difficult to determine because it depends on: -- time of year -- heat/humidity and consequent need for a/c -- cold and consequent need for heat.

Balancing sustainable power with cost requires a balance. Prior to being retired and on fixed income. I always opted for the environmental option even with increased cost. I have found that since retiring I am a little more cautious to increase my utility costs since any decision to increase cost for sustainable power must also take into account the obligatory inflation adjusted cost as well. A 5% surcharge is something I would support however what I have historically found is that the projected cost often balloons over time to far more than what the estimate was. I say this based on my bills from Philadelphia. Power costs on Block Island have diminished since the implementation of the Power district.

I would like to see more wind turbines and solar panels and less reliance on fossil fuels while at the same time lowering my monthly bill. Is that too much to ask?

Need to do all you can to reduce rates and manage costs.

Please adhere to the promise of lower rates for the island after the windmills were installed.

Should have different rates for time-of-day use.

We live in our partially unwinterized home 8 months of the year and have kerosene heaters for heating and hot water. We realize that Block Island's electricity costs are much higher than they are on the mainland.

Community Support – Positive Responses

Keep up the good work in improving the system and performing proactive maintenance. Thank you for your community involvement and good communication.

Many thanks to the whole BIUD team for your excellent communication and excellence service to our community. I am proud to live within the BIUD.

Additional Services – Neutral Responses

Have an electric vehicle in mainland. Will not have one on the island in foreseeable future. My BI home is owned by the town, and I have no control over choice of heating options.

Additional Comments**Additional Services – Neutral Responses
(continued)**

I beg BIPCo to resist the futile green agenda. Your focus should be on lowest cost to customers - regardless of whether renewable or not. I have questions about the current charging station on BIPCo property. It seems like The Solar Initiative owns this??? If so, what does BIPCo get from them? Does BIPCo make a profit (I hope so!)? Does BIPCo charge for the space the charger uses?

Newsletter/Website/Social Media – Positive Responses

The guy in charge of BIPCO, Jeff, is a wonderful addition to that business. He cares about what he is doing and is very knowledgeable about his responsibilities. He cares about the island and its people. He was interviewed recently by the local podcast called "Two Guys From Block Island". It was a great show. We learned so much.

We especially appreciate Jeffrey Wright's communications.

Jeff's appearance on the Two Guys on Block Island podcast shed so much light on how the power company works, how we utilize (or not) the wind farm, and Jeff's extensive background in power/electric in general. Gave me much more confidence in his ability to run our tiny island in the best way possible. If there was a way to get that info out to his customers, I think others would feel the same. Not suggesting having to listen to the podcast but maybe a summary newsletter or similar.

Newsletter/Website/Social Media – Neutral Responses

Jeff's appearance on the Two Guys on Block Island podcast shed so much light on how the power company works, how we utilize (or not) the wind farm, and Jeff's extensive background in power/electric in general. Gave me much more confidence in his ability to run our tiny island in the best way possible. If there was a way to get that info out to his customers, I think others would feel the same. Not suggesting having to listen to the podcast but maybe a summary newsletter or similar.

Co-op Membership/Member Identity – Positive Responses

I think the Utility District has made remarkable progress to convert an investor-owned utility into a true cooperative electric utility with all the benefits that ensue. I know this because I was on the team which first tried to get this transition in 1992. Hats off to the utility district and the Power Company Management and employees to actually pull this off!

Additional Comments**Co-op Membership/Member Identity – Positive Responses
(continued)**

Many thanks to the whole BIUD team for your excellent communication and excellence service to our community. I am proud to live within the BIUD.

Renewable Energy/Climate Change – Positive Responses

Ever since the windmills became active, the power has been quite reliable. Any needed repairs to the lines that affect my home are quickly responded to and taken care of. The electricity is more consistent with little to no surges now.

Renewable Energy/Climate Change – Negative Responses

I beg BIPCo to resist the futile green agenda. Your focus should be on lowest cost to customers - regardless of whether renewable or not. I have questions about the current charging station on BIPCo property. It seems like The Solar Initiative owns this??? If so, what does BIPCo get from them? Does BIPCo make a profit (I hope so!)? Does BIPCo charge for the space the charger uses?

I believe the ship has sailed but I am disappointed that Block Island does not receive power directly from the wind farm.

We think Jeff is incredible in his job and would hope he stays on in the future. We are currently building a house at a new property but previously had another house on the island for over 20 years. Our summer utility bills are through the roof - \$2000+ during July and August. We thought the wind turbines would ease these costs somewhat and did not see this happen. Big disappointment. Don't know who is seeing the benefit of these turbines but it's surely not the homeowners on the island.

Renewable Energy/Climate Change – Neutral Responses

Continue to work toward more favorable treatment of households generating/providing solar energy.

I had hoped the windfarm would reduce our rates more significantly.

I have some solar backup.

I wish BIPCO would prioritize renewable energy and make it easier for (and even encourage) patrons to use solar/wind on their property - both for the economic and environmental benefits.

I would investigate solar as an optional source of power.

Additional Comments
Renewable Energy/Climate Change – Neutral Responses
(continued)

I would like to see a push for more solar on homes and buildings. Preferably rooftop vs ground mount.

I would like to see a report on how much it costs to generate electricity on Block Island with 5 windmills compared to using oil generators.

I would like to see more wind turbines and solar panels and less reliance on fossil fuels while at the same time lowering my monthly bill. Is that too much to ask?

If you want to encourage higher renewable energy use, allow customers to use solar or wind options and feed the grid the extra! Offer or redirect customers to reliable solar and wind installers and include information about rebates to incentivize conversions.

Please get the wind farm to produce more electricity by more use.

Some questions forced unwanted choices. How can I answer a question on renewable energy increased use if I am not told what type of source there is for the energy. Obviously more windmills do not work for me. Referring to below regarding someone contacting me, I see no point. All we would do is have a polite conversation of different points of view that would serve no purpose.

We have a zero carbon footprint home using solar and geothermal to heat, ac and all our electric needs.

Other Comments

Have an electric vehicle in mainland. Will not have one on the island in foreseeable future. My BI home is owned by the town, and I have no control over choice of heating options.

Heating is oil-fired radiant and solar panels.

I did not like the cutting of so many trees which I accept as necessary. I would have liked a tree planting program to replace some of the trees in safer spots. PS: The last question ON THE NEXT PAGE about my email address is not a yes/no question. I answered yes but I'm not completely sure it meant OK.

I had to answer "not sure" of too many of the questions because I simply have not been a customer long enough to be able to answer honestly. I will say that I am, so far, leaning toward being able to be very positive about the utility, based on my experience thus far.

I just put in splits for AC & heat.

I keep my home open all year, but often travel to visit family members.

Additional Comments
Other Comments
(continued)

I say I live year-round in my home, but I actually rent it out for two months a year so technically we really only live there for 10 months. Our renters are nowhere near as conservative as we are, so they do have a tendency to use more energy when staying in our home.

I'm addicted to watching Oscar the osprey. I'll be sad when he/she flies off and I have to wait another year to see one!!

Just installed a mom-split to supplement my oil heat.

The URL to answer this survey is ridiculous and will kill your response rate if people (like me) do not see that there is an easier way to access via your site. Tiny URL is a great way to simplify online survey campaigns.

There are 2 houses on our lot, only one is rented seasonally.

Too little contact to answer all your questions well.

Very positive framed survey! Everything is fine, it's just super expensive to have power.

We have a very loose criteria to apply as to year-round versus seasonal. I think one strong factor is whether or not we keep the utilities on, including electricity and other utilities such as heat. In the winter we turn the heat down for periods we are away. But overall, it's both a primary home and a second home depending on family member occupation. We need to dwell more on who pays the taxes and votes locally. I'm one of those. My driver's license reads my BI address. I consider myself a resident, full time even though others use the property when I'm not there. Another criteria for some determinations is from what address one files federal taxes. That criteria should not be applied. Having built a retirement income in another state where state income tax is not collected on retirement income, I file in that state. It's logical and appropriate to file there and not in RI because it is not presently earned income and not deferred income but savings of the past (post tax savings). While this thesis is not important to your survey, I submit it for consideration and may be passed on or published for all members of the town however situated to consider. Thank You.

Why not dress up the front of the building. Chain link fences removed is nice but looking at the buildings is sure not a pretty site and I don't think the grass will cover that up. Put up a fence and some bushes. I know you are proud of the buildings, but they are an eyesore.

**Additional Comments
(continued)**

Due to the length of this comment, it is listed just once. It is counted as Management/Board (positive), Operations/Engineering (positive), Member Service/Communication (positive), Rates/Fees (negative and neutral), and Renewable Energy/Climate Change (negative).

Jeff Wright's emails to the community are very much appreciated for the transparency they provide. We haven't had all the blackouts we used to have. Communication is very professional and proactive. Our monthly bill appears to be more fair, less capricious than under previous management. Energy is reliable now, though still expensive. Renewable energy is aspirational, but the goals on timing are unrealistic.

Due to the length of this comment, it is listed just once. It is counted as Overall Satisfaction (positive), Management/Board (negative) and Renewable Energy/Climate Change (negative).

As previously stated, the utility has vastly improved in many, many ways since 2018. However, the difficulty in finding a solar panel contractor that will install on Block Island is increasingly frustrating. The utility is in business to sell electricity, and this impacts the homeowner's ability to install solar power in a negative fashion e.g., battery storage is not allowed. I don't complain about the net metering policy but between not assisting homeowners in their ability to obtain solar power (RI Energy does) AND to use battery backup is not consistent with what other utilities do. I find it totally ironic that you can have a propane powered generator but not battery storage. We have installed 4 heat pumps for back up heat and AC to combat the humidity issue which vastly increases our electric bill - we are buying more electricity- but have almost zero recourse to deflect some of that cost with solar and battery backup. BI Power needs to recognize this and work with consumers to amend this issue.

Due to the length of this comment, it is listed just once. It is counted as Management/Board (positive and neutral), Operations/Engineering (positive), Rates/Fees (neutral), and Renewable Energy/Climate Change (negative).

Focus on rates. You did a great job hedging natural gas prices. Help our little island maintain reasonable electric rates. Don't buy into the many false green strategies that fail to deliver reliable power but cause a material increase in cost. Living standards are directly impacted by the cost of energy. Focus on this as a primary goal over the next ten years. Great job keeping the power up and running over the last few years. The grid resiliency has gotten much better!

APPENDIX C: ACSI – American Customer Satisfaction Index

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) is provided through Touchstone Energy. It is designed to provide a continuous update of residential consumer evaluations of the top electric, gas, and combination electric and gas energy utilities in the country. ACSI began operations in 1994 and updated results are published every quarter. The central ACSI component is the core customer satisfaction index. The index is a weighted average of three questions on a 0 to 100 scale: overall consumer satisfaction, meeting consumers' expectations, and comparing one's own utility to an ideal utility. The second component of the ACSI measurements is the retention percentage, which is calculated using consumers' ratings of their likelihood to stay with their cooperative if they had a choice.

ACSI creates separate categories for the averages of all investor-owned, municipal, and cooperative utilities plus aggregates of the "all other" smaller utilities within each of the three categories. ACSI scores are for internal use only. Please see Touchstone Energy Cooperative's guidelines for using ACSI information in consumer-facing materials.

Q2 2023 ACSI		Q2 2023 Retention %	
Atmos Energy	78	WEC Energy	77
Berkshire Hathaway Energy	78	Ameren	76
WEC Energy	78	Dominion Energy	76
CenterPoint Energy	77	Sempra Energy	76
Dominion Energy	77	Atmos Energy	75
Xcel Energy	77	CenterPoint Energy	75
Ameren	76	Consolidated Edison	75
Consolidated Edison	76	Edison International	75
Southern Company	76	Berkshire Hathaway Energy	74
Cooperative Industry Average	75	Exelon	74
Duke Energy	75	Southern Company	74
Exelon	75	CMS Energy	73
Investor-Owned Energy Utilities	75	Investor-Owned Energy Utilities	73
NextEra Energy	75	NextEra Energy	73
Sempra Energy	75	Xcel Energy	73

Q2 2023 ACSI		Q2 2023 Retention %	
Edison International	74	Duke Energy	72
PPL Corporation	74	PPL Corporation	72
Public Service Enterprise Group	74	Public Service Enterprise Group	72
National Grid	73	Cooperative Industry Average	71
American Electric Power	72	Municipal Industry Average	71
FirstEnergy	72	National Grid	71
Municipal Industry Average	71	FirstEnergy	70
NiSource	71	DTE Energy	69
CMS Energy	70	NiSource	69
DTE Energy	70	Entergy	68
Entergy	70	Eversource Energy	68
Eversource Energy	70	American Electric Power	66
Pacific Gas and Electric	67	Pacific Gas and Electric	62
Edison International	74	Duke Energy	72
PPL Corporation	74	PPL Corporation	72
Public Service Enterprise Group	74	Public Service Enterprise Group	72
National Grid	73	Cooperative Industry Average	71

APPENDIX D: Questionnaire

**BLOCK ISLAND UTILITY DISTRICT
2023 MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY**

FINAL 7/3/23

PROJECT SUMMARY

Methodology/sample size: 250 online
7-9 minutes
Member loyalty index
Comment coding

EMAIL INVITATION

Email from: Block Island Utility District
Reply to: Jane.Sanstead@nreca.coop
Subject: Block Island Utility District – Feedback Requested

Dear Utility District Member,

We are inviting members to participate in a short online survey concerning the service you receive from **Block Island Utility District**. As a member, you have a say in how we run your utility district and your opinions are important to us.

We would greatly appreciate your participation. It will not take much of your time and your responses will remain confidential. **Please complete this survey before Monday, July 24.** We thank you in advance, and we enjoy your membership.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Market Research Services is conducting this survey on our behalf. If you have any questions about the study, feel free to contact *Jane Sanstead, Project Manager/Research Analyst*, by replying to this email. If you would like to verify the legitimacy of this survey, you can contact us at 401-466-5851 or email at tfedericks@blockislandutilitydistrict.com.

Please note that this email account is not monitored at night or over the weekend. If you have an urgent matter regarding your electric service or account, please call the utility district at the number above.

To get started, please click below:

INTRODUCTION – ONLINE

WELCOME! To begin – click on the **Next** button below.

To indicate your answer – click on the button or box next to the response you want to select or fill in the text box.

To go back – click on the **Previous** button at the bottom of the screen.

If you need to exit the survey before it is complete, your responses will be saved up through the last Next button you clicked. You may re-enter the survey using the same link.

1. First, how long have you received your electric service from Block Island Power Company/Utility District?

- 1 Less than 1 year
- 2 1 to 2 years
- 3 3 to 5 years
- 4 6 to 9 years
- 5 10 to 14 years
- 6 15 to 19 years
- 7 20 years or more
- 8 Not sure

SATISFACTION AND PERFORMANCE

2. How satisfied overall would you say you are with Block Island Utility District? (*satis*)

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely satisfied

2a. What are the reasons for rating your satisfaction that way? _____

3. Considering all of your expectations, to what extent has Block Island Utility District fallen short or exceeded your expectations? (*expect*)

Falls short 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Exceeds expectations

4. Now, imagine an ideal utility company. How well do you think Block Island Utility District compares with that ideal utility company? (*idealutl*)

Not close 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very close to ideal

5. How would you rate Block Island Utility District on the following aspects of their service? [**RANDOMIZE AFTER A**]

	Very Poor				Excellent		Not Sure
a. Delivering good value for the money (<i>value</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
b. Resolving any issues or problems (<i>resolve</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
c. Having friendly, courteous employees (<i>friendly</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
d. Having highly trained and professional employees (<i>htemp</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
e. Being easy to reach (<i>ezrch</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
f. Having members' best interests at heart (<i>best_int</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
g. Communicating with you and keeping you informed (<i>communic</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
h. Supporting the local community (<i>comunity</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
i. Operating with concern for the environment (<i>environ</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	

CONTACT

6. In the past year, did you contact Block Island Utility District by phone, a visit to their office, or email for any reason?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No [**SKIP TO Q8**]
- 3 Don't remember [**SKIP TO Q8**]

7. Compared to other utility companies, would you say the contact you've had with Block Island Utility District has been: (*cntceval2*)

- 5 Much better
- 4 Somewhat better
- 3 About the same
- 2 Somewhat worse
- 1 Much worse
- 6 Not sure

ELECTRIC SERVICE PERFORMANCE

8. How would you rate Block Island Utility District on the following aspects of their electric service? **[RANDOMIZE AFTER C]**

	Very Poor				Excellent		Not Sure
a. Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum (<i>limit_bl</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	6
b. Keeping longer outages to a minimum (<i>limit_ou</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	6
c. Restoring power after an outage (<i>restore2</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	6
d. Keeping you informed on the status of outages (<i>outinfo2</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	6
e. Notifying you before planned power outages	1	2	3	4	5	6	6
f. Being easy to reach to report an outage (<i>ezoutg</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	6

COST AND BILLS

9. How would you rate Block Island Utility District on the following? **[RANDOMIZE]**

	Very Poor				Excellent		Not Sure
a. Providing accurate and easy to understand bills (<i>clearbil</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	6
b. Having convenient payment options (<i>payoptn</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	6
c. Charging reasonable rates (<i>reasrate</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	6
d. The monthly customer charge (<i>svcfes</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	6
e. Helping you to be more efficient in your use of electricity (<i>efficien</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	6

UTILITY DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP

10. Assume for a moment that you could choose your electric service provider from among more than one utility. How likely would you be to choose Block Island Utility District? (*choose*)

Very unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very likely

11. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about your Utility District. **[RANDOMIZE]**

	Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree	Not Sure
a. I usually approve of Block Island Utility District's policies and procedures (<i>policies</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	11
b. I feel I have a good relationship with Block Island Utility District (<i>relation</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	11
c. I think of Block Island Utility District as a long-term ally for my energy needs (<i>ally</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	11

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| d. I am proud to be associated with Block Island Utility District (<i>proud</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| e. Block Island Utility District is one of the best organizations of its kind (<i>organize</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

12. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- | | Strongly Disagree | | | | | | | | | Strongly Agree | Not Sure |
|--|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|----------|
| a. In a rapidly changing energy world, I trust Block Island Utility District to make sound decisions to balance reliability, environmental impact, and affordability | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| b. Block Island Utility District is doing all it can to reduce reliance on fossil fuels | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES

13. Which is more important to you, a lower electric bill or the increased use of renewable energy?

- 1 Lower electric bill
- 2 Increased use of renewable energy
- 3 Both are equally important
- 4 Not sure

14. **[IF Q13 = 2 OR 3]** How strongly would you support Block Island Utility District moving to all renewable energy if it meant a 5% rate increase? For the average residential member, this would mean a \$20/month increase.

- 4 Strongly support
- 3 Somewhat support
- 2 Somewhat do not support
- 1 Strongly do not support
- 5 Not sure

15. How strongly do you support the State of Rhode Island’s goal of 100% renewable electricity generated by 2032?

- 4 Strongly support
- 3 Somewhat support
- 2 Somewhat do not support
- 1 Strongly do not support
- 5 Not sure

16. How likely are you to own or lease a plug-in electric vehicle in the next 3 to 5 years or do you already have one?

- 1 Not at all likely
- 2 Somewhat unlikely
- 3 Somewhat likely
- 4 Very likely
- 5 Already have one
- 6 Not sure

17. How likely are you to install a level 2 charger at your home or do you already have one?

- 1 Not at all likely
- 2 Somewhat unlikely
- 3 Somewhat likely
- 4 Very likely
- 5 Already have one
- 6 Not sure

DEMOGRAPHICS

Thank you for your patience. There are just a few final questions that are used for classification purposes only. This information is completely confidential.

18. What is your primary method of heating your home? (*heat*)

- 1 Electricity
- 2 Natural gas
- 3 Propane gas
- 4 Fuel oil
- 5 Wood
- 6 Other (specify) _____
- 7 None/Don't have heat
- 8 Not sure

19. Do you use electric baseboard heat or portable electric heaters?

- 1 Use electric baseboard heat
- 2 Use portable electric heaters
- 3 Use both
- 4 Do not use either
- 5 Not sure

20. Into which category does your age fall? (*ageresp*)

- 1 Under 25
- 2 25 to 34
- 3 35 to 44
- 4 45 to 54
- 5 55 to 64
- 6 65 or older

21. What is your average monthly electric bill? (*bill3*)

- 1 \$50 or less
- 2 \$51-\$100
- 3 \$101-\$150
- 4 \$151-\$200
- 5 \$201-\$250
- 6 \$251-\$300
- 7 Over \$300
- 8 Not sure

22. Do you own or rent your home? (*own_rent*)

- 1 Own
- 2 Rent
- 3 Not sure

23. Do you live in the residence serviced by Block Island Utility District year round or on a seasonal/recreation basis?
(*yearrnd*)
- 1 Year round
 - 2 Seasonal/recreation
 - 3 Not sure

24. **[IF Q23 = SEASONAL]** Do you rent this residence when you are not there?
- 1 Yes
 - 2 No
 - 3 Not sure

25. Gender of respondent:
- 1 Male
 - 2 Female
 - 3 Prefer not to respond

26. Are there any additional comments you would like to make? _____

[IF GIVE COMMENT]: Would you like someone from Block Island Utility District to contact you about your comment?

- 1 Yes → Collect contact information
- 2 No

Q26A AND Q26B ARE FOR AUTHENTICATOR SURVEY ONLY:

Q26A: IF CONTACT INFORMATION INCLUDES EMAIL ADDRESS: Block Island Utility District is working to increase the number of members they have email addresses for. These email addresses will not be used for anything other than them sharing news and information with you. Do you give permission for the Utility District to add this email address to your account information?

Q26B: IF NO COMMENT GIVEN OR Q26 DOES NOT INCLUDE EMAIL ADDRESS: Block Island Utility District is working to increase the number of members they have email addresses for. These email addresses will not be used for anything other than them sharing news and information with you. Would you provide your email address that Block Island Utility District can add to your account information? Please note that by sharing your email address, the Utility District will know you participated in this survey but will not see any of the responses you provided.

- 1 Yes → Collect name and email address
- 2 No

Thank you so much for your participation! It is very much appreciated!

POWER SUPPLY AND TRANSMISSION RATE PROPOSAL
AND POWER SUPPLY STRATEGY
NOVEMBER 2, 2023

The BIUD reconciles its power supply and transmission rate collections with actuals each year, forecasts the next year's expenses, and recalculates new rates that go into effect on January 1st.

This year we are proposing a rate and strategy that:

- 1) Includes BIUD complying with the RI State Renewable Portfolio Standard (“RPS”) – which requires 28% of our power supply portfolio to be from renewable resources. BIUD will accomplish this in 2024 by retiring its Renewable Energy Credits (“RECs”) from its existing contract resources, and by purchasing additional RECs to make up the 28%. The cost of this new strategy is roughly one cent/kilowatt.
- 2) Includes an additional “NET \$0” line item that includes a grant from the BI Solar Initiative that would fund the purchase of additional RECs so that BIUD can claim 100% renewable. The generous contribution from the BI Solar Initiative would be roughly \$50K.

The new rates are shown on the following pages. For comparison, I have also included rates that reflect no renewable strategy.

Some questions that can be anticipated are:

- Q1: What if the BI Solar Initiative funding is withdrawn?
A1: If the funding were pulled we would just revert back to “meeting the RI-RPS” (28%) but not be able to claim 100% renewable.
- Q2: What financial risk is there to BIUD?
A2: None, we will simply purchase the energy and RECs from Gravel Pit, Broadleaf, FirstLight, roof top solar and possible NYPA and then retire those RECs.
- Q3: Are the REC expenses in Attachment 1 net of the retirement of the resource RECs listed above?
A3: Yes, the total cost of REC purchases is net of those RECs we already purchase as part of our existing contracts.
- Q4: How many other electric utilities can make this claim of 100% renewable?
A4: From our limited research, there appear to be less than ten electric companies in the US that can make this claim.
- Q5: Why is the BI Solar Initiative willing to make this contribution?
A5: Mr. McClusky wanted to advance the development of renewable generation and be a catalyst for change. This generous offer meets this criterion.
- Q6: Does the 28% in 2024 change annually?

A6: Yes. Each year the percentage increases until, 2032, the year the RI RPS percentage reaches 100%.

Q7: Does our expense increase accordingly?

A7: Yes, we estimate a necessary increase of half a cent each year in the power supply rate each year until 2032.

Q8: Can BIUD change its strategy in any year or are we committed until 2032?

A8: BIUD would not give up its exemption of the RPS, but rather be clear that we are meeting it voluntarily. This would allow BIUD to change its strategy. The decision to meet the RPS is an annual commitment and can be changed with its annual filing.

Q9: Does BUD's power supply sub-committee support this proposal?

A9: Yes. They will voice their full support in our meeting.

Impact

Jan-Dec

Factor	Current	Proposed	Difference	
Power Supply Service	\$0.1036	\$0.1200	\$0.0164	15.8%
Transmission	\$0.0786	\$0.0778	(\$0.0008)	-1.0%
Fuel Adjustment	\$0.0000	\$0.0000	\$0.0000	
TOTAL	\$0.1822	\$0.1978	\$0.0156	8.6%

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	Peak	Shoulder	Off Peak
Current			
Customer	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
Electric	\$ 142.50	\$ 71.25	\$ 44.75
Power	\$ 91.10	\$ 91.10	\$ 91.10
	<u>\$ 243.60</u>	<u>\$ 172.35</u>	<u>\$ 145.85</u>
Proposed			
Customer	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
Electric	\$ 142.50	\$ 71.25	\$ 44.75
Power	\$ 98.89	\$ 98.89	\$ 98.89
	<u>\$ 251.39</u>	<u>\$ 180.14</u>	<u>\$ 153.64</u>
	\$ 7.79	\$ 7.79	\$ 7.79
	3.2%	4.5%	5.3%



2023 ANNUAL MEETING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO THE MEMBERSHIP

The Block Island Utility District began operating Block Island's power company in March 2019, less than five years ago. In that short time, we have positively impacted our members' lives by keeping the lights on, turning the lights back on quickly when they do go off, and maintaining stable rates during some very turbulent global economic times.

Last October, the utility district commissioners and all the employees spent two full days working on a strategic plan facilitated by professionals from our cooperative bank, CFC. In the short time that the residents of Block Island owned the power company, we made significant improvements quickly, but we did not want to rest on our laurels. We knew that we needed to collectively put our heads together to chart our future to meet our members' expectations. At the end of the exercise, we narrowed our focus to six core competencies, set goals, and developed strategies to help meet those goals.

I will report on the strategic plan and the results shortly, but first, I need to recognize the hard work and commitment that some key contributors continue to make.

OUR EMPLOYEES at the utility district are the most important asset we invest in and maintain. They keep the lights on, get the bills out, and are members of this great community. Many of them are your friends and neighbors, and are there for you in times of need. We all thank them for their commitment to the utility district.

It's also important to express my appreciation for the support that we all have at home. My wife, Linda, reminds me that when things get tough during a storm or power outage, I'm out the door, leaving her alone to deal with the cleanup. Every employee has a family at home, and the 24/7 commitment that we all make impacts their everyday lives. We all signed up for the mission, but it's essential to recognize and thank those who support us.

OUR CONTRACT PARTNERS are our year-round support system that we rely on all year. Holbrook Brothers Tree Service has gotten us to the point where we are now in

maintenance mode with right-of-way clearing. Three Phase Line Construction, specifically Greg Horne and John Blanchard have helped us keep our pole replacement program on track and are always there for us during hurricane season and winter storms. It is essential to recognize their commitment and share that they volunteered to stay on the island during last year's Christmas storm. We all had Christmas dinner together at our house. They were happy to do it, brought their wives down for a few days, and were there for us to help keep the lights on.

There are some local contractors and partners that we rely on regularly, but we do want to call out Chris Reeves for all he does for us. Every time I call Chris with a request, his answer is "whatever you need." Chris has become a vital resource for setting poles, building stone walls in front of the power company, and everything else we need. Knowing we have a partner that we can always rely on is comforting.

THE UTILITY DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS continue to support the utility district collaboratively and thoughtfully. They provide us with direction and support in our mission. They govern the utility district, engage in healthy debate, make decisions as a board, and speak with unity. They represent the membership and have a fundamental fiduciary responsibility. The utility district board meets every fourth Thursday of the month, and I encourage all members to attend the meetings and get involved.

THE COOPERATIVE NETWORK is a group of not-for-profit member-owned cooperatives providing services and support for nearly 1,000 electric and telecom cooperatives in the country, such as the Block Island Utility District. Those who directly support us include:



The National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association is a \$25B trade organization that provides employee benefits programs and technical and business support for the utility district. The NRECA assisted in creating the utility

district and with recruiting me to help lead the organization's transformation. I have represented Rhode Island on the NRECA Board of Directors for the past four years and was recently named Chairman of the Business Technologies and Strategies Committee.

I also serve as President of the Northeast Electric Cooperatives Association, a regional subset of NRECA members from the northeast. Our annual conference is being hosted by us this year in October, and on the last day, we will show the 100+ attendees the

wind farm from the deck of an Interstate fast ferry. Coop directors and employees are traveling from NY, ME, NH, and VT to RI and we are excited to host the event.

We have a very special guest with us today who is representing NRECA: Chris Christensen, and his wife Carol from Hinsdale, Montana. Chris is currently a director for his local coop and the Montana representative on the NRECA Board. Chris was the NRECA Vice-President and a director on the CFC Board when we were forming. Chris and I have become terrific friends, and I am honored that he and his wife, Carol flew to Block Island to see what he helped create.

It is essential to give NRECA credit for its role in our creation. Barbara MacMullan and her husband, Henry, started discussions with NRECA in 1991, seeking advice and help in taking over the power company's ownership.

You'll notice the NRECA logo that we will begin using. In respect of all that NRECA does for all its members, we are adopting the same logo that most electric cooperatives use across the country. We are a part of a huge family of electric cooperatives now and will proudly embrace and display the logo.



Touchstone Energy is a national alliance of electric cooperatives that is affiliated with NRECA. We have recently partnered with them to help provide member

outreach. They support their member cooperatives with member engagement tools, such as website development and assistance with social media content.

“CFC” is a \$30B cooperative bank owned and governed by its members to finance the needs of its members,



**National Rural Utilities
Cooperative Finance Corporation**

Created and Owned by America's Electric Cooperative Network

such as the Block Island Utility District. CFC also provides business support in many ways, allowing smaller organizations like the utility district to perform like our larger peers. The utility district is a 100% CFC borrower, bringing additional benefits and discounts. Colleen Taylor is the Regional Vice President who works with us to ensure our financing needs are met. Colleen will share some thoughts with you shortly.



The National Information Solutions Cooperative provides virtually all our software needs, including accounting, billing, mapping, outage management, and

SmartHub, the mobile app many members use for online payments and monitoring real-time usage. We pay a “per-meter” charge so our costs are relative to our size. We use big company tools at a small company price.

The Cooperative Response Center provides backup answering services to the utility district. They staff four large call centers nationwide to provide answering services to more than 1,000 utilities, including ours, and have full access to our outage management and billing systems. Our goal in partnering with CRC is that our phone will always be answered. Please consider them an extension of our office. They are good at what they do and a critical partner in getting your lights back on when they do go out.



Our partnerships with these supporting cooperatives allow us to provide extensive services at a low cost to our members and enable us to do things we otherwise couldn't do. Representing Rhode Island's interests at the national level ensures that we have a voice in important legislation that affects us.



THE BLOCK ISLAND SOLAR INITIATIVE continues to be a very supportive partner. As you know, Don McClusky's passion was to promote renewable energy and electrification. His desire to be a catalyst for change led him to create and fund the Solar Initiative. His efforts have invested over \$3M in the island's renewable energy and electrification initiatives. We lost Don last summer, but his legacy further promotes his passion. This year, the utility district took delivery of the 8th EV bucket truck in the country. The truck will not only be a helpful tool for our line crews but will help our balance sheet as well. Don's daughter, Martha, even rode with us in the 4th of July parade, joining Barbara MacMullan in the bucket! We are very appreciative of her ongoing support. We are working with them on several other projects, one of which I will discuss when we discuss power supply. Their contributions to providing a level three EV charger should also be recognized, along with the generosity of others following the lead of member and donor Will Young. Despite some start-up issues, donating this \$65K asset to the community is something everyone should appreciate.

KEY FOCUS AREAS

EMPLOYEE SAFETY - FINANCIAL BALANCE - MEMBER ENGAGEMENT - SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE CAPITAL PLANNING - POWER SUPPLY

EMPLOYEE SAFETY is a key focus area that tops the list of six in our strategic plan. We have stepped up our game by providing quarterly training using outside consultants, cleaning up the safety concerns around the plant, and regularly inspecting trucks and tools. We are working with another cooperative partner, Federated Insurance Exchange, to switch our insurance coverage from the private insurance markets. Federated, like CFC, is much more than its core mission appears. They are champions for safety, both employee and public, and work collaboratively with their member cooperatives to provide insurance coverage and improve their safety records.

Federated demonstrated their commitment to us when they gained approvals to do business in Rhode Island unsolicited by us. They are now positioned well to help Pascoag and Block Island Utility Districts with their insurance needs. With insurance costs increasing yearly, they will provide immediate savings and become our partner in keeping us on track with our safety programs.

FINANCIAL BALANCE has been a focus area for our commissioners this year as everyone faces record-setting fuel prices, inflation, and economic uncertainty. Our strategic planning sessions focused on strategies to manage rates while providing the financial resources necessary to provide exceptional service. It's a balance, and we realize that. Inflation and supply chain challenges continue to be a challenge for all of us, forcing us to seek a small increase next year. It will be the first increase in base rates since 2008. Pole prices have doubled, transformer prices have tripled, and raising interest rates make it difficult for us to continue our system improvements without a small increase.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT was my number one focus when I came to Block Island and continues to be. We have developed trust with our members through transparency, open communication, and frequent outreach. NRECA recently helped us conduct our first-ever member satisfaction survey to solicit honest feedback on where we were doing well and where we needed to improve, and the preliminary results are going to help us refine our strategies to serve our members best. Our American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) measure is 85, which perfectly aligns with most electric coops nationwide. The key drivers of that index are member service, rates, reliability, communication, employee interactions, and easy payment and billing processes.

We ranked very high in reliability. More than 95% of those surveyed applauded us for keeping the lights on, restoring power after an outage, and informing them during outages.

We ranked equally high when asked about our employees. Our members feel our employees are friendly, courteous, highly trained, professional, and easy to reach.

We did not rank well compared to other electric providers regarding rates or providing helpful energy efficiency programs. Our board will receive a complete presentation from NRECA on the results, and we will discuss how to address any areas we need to improve upon.

SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE is a key focus area for most cooperatives, but it is even more critical for a small, remote workforce on an island with limited resources. We have formed a board subcommittee to review employee benefits to ensure we keep up with our peers regarding compensation. We have committed to focusing on a common Block Island problem: employee housing. Last year, we took significant steps by finishing a second apartment in the office building and purchasing a townhouse. We have budgeted funds in 2023 to relocate the office to a temporary location to convert the office into a two-bedroom apartment and plan to move forward soon.

CAPITAL PLANNING has become more critical as we get deeper into the system rebuild efforts and voltage conversion. We have made significant progress with those two areas and want to collaboratively develop a five and ten-year capital plan that will address our fleet, facilities, generating plant, and distribution system. We have opportunities for some significant DOE grant funding to replace poles and finish the voltage conversion, so we want to take advantage of those programs but need to find a balance so that we don't neglect any area of investment.

The grant opportunities that we currently have include the award of a DOE Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership. The grant will provide technical assistance from national labs and other energy partners focusing on investigating local energy solutions. For Block Island, our largest contingency is the loss of the submarine cable, so I believe our scope will focus on local energy resources considering a long-term cable failure. I want to recognize Commissioner John Warfel for his hard work in pursuing and delivering this grant.

We have partnered with 16 other electric cooperatives in applying for a DOE grid resiliency grant. Block Island's portion will be \$5.3M if awarded to replace the remaining poles. We have replaced roughly 600 of our 2,000 poles and have targeted another 800 to bring our pole plant up to industry norms. We should receive news any day now.

Lastly, DOE has recently announced approximately \$10B in funding opportunities for electric coops to invest in renewable energy projects and long-term power contracts. We will submit our grant application when more information becomes available.

POWER SUPPLY is a local, regional, and national issue that, along with EV adoption and electrification, has become the most transformational issue facing all electric providers.

Nationally, the electric sector faces an increase in demand from electrification yet faces the highest reliability risks ever. Rolling blackouts have become so common that companies such as NISC have

developed communication tools to use before, during, and after these events. Aggressive renewable goals and our rush to end our reliance on fossil fuels have resulted in a very disorderly retirement of generation resources across the US. This has been a concern of grid operators for a while now. Without some rapid advancements in storage technologies, the shift from base load, always available generation plants to intermittent renewables will make for a rough road ahead.

Regionally, this hit home last fall when RI Emergency Management met with the ISO-New England, RI electric and gas utilities, and state officials. The ISO-NE warned that rolling blackouts in New England were certain given the right circumstances. New England generation resources reliance on natural gas competes with home heating gas. A cold snap on Christmas Eve and some large Canadian transmission lines tripping led to a generation shortage, drove energy prices up 40X regular prices for hours, and nearly resulted in a rolling blackout. Fortunately, it did not, but nine states in the mid-west were not so lucky. They faced similar conditions and experienced rolling blackouts over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Locally, Block Island is faced with an important decision. Like Pascoag, we are exempt from the RI renewable portfolio standard (RPS). Our board and I collectively believe that supporting the state RPS is in the best interest of our members. To voluntarily meet the RPS, Block Island would slowly integrate renewables into our portfolio over the next ten years. It would impact rates by approximately one cent/kilowatt hour in year one and a half-cent/kilowatt hour each year over the next ten years. During this time, Block Island would collectively work with others in the country to find reliable energy/storage solutions to meet the increasing demands. If we decide to make this shift in policy, it will be with caution and understanding of the risks that go along with that decision. We will commit to be "truth-tellers," such as NRECA, when it comes to the goal's reality. If we face too much financial risk or too many technical challenges, we will pause and be willing to adapt.

The Solar Initiative is willing to help. They have offered to pledge close to \$1M over the next ten years to bring Block Island to 100% renewable in year one. Their pledge would mean significant contributions in the early years that would slowly drop as we integrated more and more renewables into our portfolio. This generous offer is being analyzed now, and our two boards will work closely together in the upcoming months to vet the details.

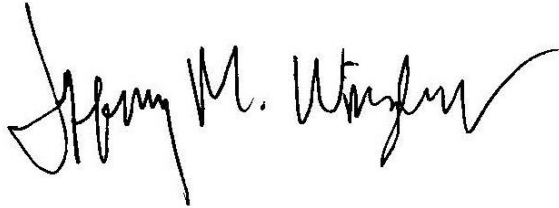
CLOSING THOUGHTS AND LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024

I feel so lucky that we have the support of our industry partners, such as NRECA, CFC, Federated Insurance Exchange (soon), and others. We are so fortunate that the utility district benefits from community support and our Board of Utility Commissioners. As you look to 2024, we will aim to find ways beyond just serving our members with electricity to support this excellent island community.

We have recently been asked to investigate operating and maintaining the town's broadband infrastructure. We will open our minds to the possibilities with the goal of best serving the island.

I am so pleased to see seven electoral candidates who want to get involved. Every cooperative manager's dream is to have an engaged membership and a willingness of the community to help set policy and provide long-term leadership. My legacy, I hope, when I do leave Block Island will be that I helped build a sense of community through living the cooperative principles, that I built a strong team that is committed to making the utility district successful, and that I rallied the help of everyone in charting the utility district's future.


Thank you for your support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeffery M. Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Jeffery M. Wright, President
Block Island Utility District



BLOCK ISLAND UTILITY DISTRICT

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday August 26, 2023 @ 4:00 pm
at the Power Company

AGENDA

1. Public Input
2. Commissioner's Report: Barbara A. MacMullan, Board Chair
3. Treasurer's Report: Tom Risom, Treasurer
4. President's Report: Jeffery M. Wright, President
5. Colleen Taylor, Regional Vice President of National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC)
6. Introduction of Candidates for 2023 Commissioner's Election
7. Keynote Speaker: Chris Christensen, Montana Representative on NRECA Board of Directors and past NRECA President and NRUCFC Director



8. Open Q&A

Location:

100 Ocean Ave
Phone: 401-466-5851
Email: tfredericks@blockislandutilitydistrict.com

Join us for the meeting, grab some BIUD swag, eat some ice cream, and enter to win a raffle prize!

**Block Island Utility District
Meeting of the Board of Utility Commissioners**

Thursday, November 2, 2023 @ 4:00 PM

THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE HARBOR CHURCH

1. Public Input
2. Commissioner's Report
 - i. Election Review – Welcome new Commissioner, Ken Lcoste
 - ii. Election of Board of Utility Commissioner Officers
3. Strategic Plan Update
4. Approve Meeting Minutes from the June 22, 2023 and July 27, 2023 meetings
5. Treasurer's Update
6. President's Update
 - i. Grant Updates (ETTIP and NRECA GRIP Grant)
7. Review and Approve 2024 Power Supply and Transmission Procurement Plan (100% Renewable Portfolio) and Rates
8. Review of the Northeast Association of Electric Cooperatives Conference
 - i. NRECA Board Governance Presentation
9. Review the 2024 Budget Process and appoint two Commissioners to a Capital Planning Sub-Committee
10. Review and Act Upon BIUD's position on Orsted Off-Shore Wind Projects

Individuals requesting services for the deaf and hard of hearing must call (401) 466-5851 forty-eight hours before the meeting date.

Posted: October 31, 2023 12:00 PM

Secretary of State Website, BIBB, Town Hall, BIUD Website www.blockislandpowercompany.com

**Block Island Utility District
Annual Meeting
August 26, 2023 at 4pm
At the Block Island Utility District**

Meeting Minutes

Barbara MacMullan called the meeting to order at 4:05pm.

1. Public input – Member Cliff McGinnis- said, “Thank you! You people are doing a great job.”

2. Commissioner’s report – Board Chair, Barbara MacMullan welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the employees of the Block Island Utility District, and the Board of Commissioners.

Barabara noted some of the many accomplishments of the BIUD over the past year, including increasing employee housing with a new apartment and the Town House on High St. She noted the generous gift of the Electric Bucket Truck from the Solar Initiative, and the award of a Department of Energy technical assistance grant. She noted we had legislation passed that exempts BIUD from retail choice, which now allows us to enter long term contracts and will help us keep our prices down. Barbara noted that we have made great strides in pole replacement, with the voltage conversion, and much needed improvements to the grounds. Going forward, BIUD will continue to work with the Solar Initiative, continue with pole replacements and other infrastructure improvements, and begin discussion with the Town Council regarding taking over the broadband.

Barabara also noted that this year is an election year for us, two seats available, Mary Jane Balsler and Eliot Taubman, who are both running for reelection.

3. Treasure’s report – Treasurer, Tom Risom reported that BIUD is financially sound. Sales are on par with previous years, we have the same inclines and declines as any other business on Block Island. All the financial reports are on the website.

Tom added that we have a flat revenue, but the cost of doing business is going up, and we have managed to maintain a stable rate, but we will need to address our rates next year.

Tom noted that BIUD has maintained stable power supply rates. Our debt-to-equity ratio is improving now at 24% looking to be at 28% (debit to equity ratio). Tom also noted that we have posted our 4th clean audit to the website for everyone to view.

4. President's Report – President, Jeffery Wright reported that in four short years, we have made a positive impact on the lives of the people of Block Island in the past 5 years. This past October BIUD went through a strategic planning session last winter, in order to take the BIUD to the next level.

Jeff thanked the employees and our contract partners; H Brothers tree service, Three Phase Line Construction and local contractor Chris Reeves.

Jeff thanked the Board of Utility Commissioners for their support and guidance.

Jeff thanked the Solar Initiative, noting that Don McClusky has been extremely generous by donating the new EV school bus, rooftop solar, and the new bucket truck. Jeff thanked Don McClusky for his generosity.

Jeff thanked Will Young for his donation of the EV car charger.

Jeff reported on safety, noting we have not had any lost time injuries in the past six years.

Jeff talked about future rate impacts due to inflation. The distribution rate has not changed, but the cost of doing business has increased, inflation has caused the cost of poles, transformers and equipment to drastically increase. The Board of Utility Commissioners will be presented with a small rate increase during the budget process.

Jeff reported on BIUD's first membership satisfaction survey. Overall, the rate is equal with other utility companies around the country. BIUD scored very high for reliability, and employee service. Rates were not viewed as favorably, understandably.

Jeff closed by saying we are lucky to have the support of our industry partners, our community support and look forward to continuing to serve our members.

5. Colleen Taylor, Regional Vice President of National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) - Colleen Taylor introduced herself and thanked BIUD and it's members for inviting her to the Island, and offered that she looks forward to working with us as our representative with CFC.

6. Introduction of Candidates for the 2023 Commissioner's Election - Each of the five candidates present introduced themselves: Craig Fontaine, Ken Lacoste, Elliot Taubman, William Penn, and Carlos Salinas. Mary Jane Balsler and William A. Wilson, were unable to attend the meeting.

7. Keynote Speaker: Chris Christensen, Montana Representative on NRECA Board of Directors and past NRECA President and NRUCFC Director

Chris introduced himself, noting that he was on the CFC Board of Directors when the Block Island Utility District was formed, and past NRECA President when BIUD joined NRECA. He went

on to speak about his experiences with the cooperative business model and applauded BIUD for taking such large steps towards improvements in its short existence.

8. Member Question and Answers:

1. Member, Rosemary Ives asked about how all the new air conditioning added on the island has affected our system. Jeff answered it has not really affected our system, noting that the new equipment is more efficient.
2. Member, David Kane asked about the wintertime peak changed with new people on the island and with the newly installed heat pumps. Jeff answered that there isn't any significant increase in load. Jeff encourages more installation of heat pumps.
3. Member, Patrick Tengwall asked what challenges the district is going to face with the burning of the Harborside. What can BIUD do to make us more resilient and less flammable. Jeff responded by saying the lost revenue is the biggest impact, overall impact is about \$50,000.
4. Member, Everett Shorey asked about the Maui fire and similarities with block Island as it appears that they were caused by down power lines. Jeff responded saying the best thing BIUD can do is to cut the trees and during dry periods, consider setting protocols to deenergize lines during certain situations (such as a fire).

The meeting concluded at 5:55 PM.

Minutes Approved: September 28, 2023