

# LIGHTNING ROUND

January 2019

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## Robert L. Peter

### 1950-2019

#### *KPP remembers its friend and former Board President*

The Kansas Power Pool mourned the sudden and tragic loss of Bob Peter on January 17, 2019. Bob, who was the City Attorney for Ellinwood, was on KPP's Executive Committee beginning in 2005. Later, he was an original member of the Pool's first Board of Directors organized in 2010. He served as Board President from 2010 through 2011.

The KPP Board of Directors met in their monthly meeting on the morning the news was received concerning Bob's sudden passing. At the meeting's commencement, Board President Larry Paine, referencing his own illness from a year ago, reflected on friendship and concern shown by Bob during Larry's hospital stay in Topeka. "That will always be in my memory," added Larry. "He came to visit me at a difficult time." CEO/General Mark Chesney echoed appreciation for Bob saying, "Bob Peter was a giant as far as I'm concerned – bright, steady, insightful and talented."



In 2012 Bob accepted an assignment to lead KPP's Finance Committee, a position he



Bob with Ellinwood City Administrator Chris Komarek

held until the end of his Board term in January 2018. During that period, KPP dramatically improved its cash liquidity position, its debt service coverage ratio commitments and other significant financial metrics. In 2015, when KPP underwent its second major bond issuance, Bob personally advocated KPP's improved financial position to ratings agencies in New York. They were impressed – elevating KPP's bond rating to A- and the equivalent rating of A3.

In addition to advocating for KPP, Bob tirelessly advocated for Public Power generally when annually visiting the offices of the Kansas congressional delegation in Washington and testifying before Energy and Utilities Committees in Topeka. "Bob was always willing to share his thoughts with me regarding whatever the topic of discussion was," remembers Garden City



Bob and other Kansans making Hill visits in D.C.

Public Utilities Director, Mike Muirhead. "But the topic seemed to always come back to how 'Public Power' played such a critical role in the development of Kansas, back then, and how it still does today. Bob was able to provide insight into the politics of the day, and was pretty darn good at predicting the outcome."

In 2014 Bob received national tribute from the American Public Power Association when receiving the APPA Larry Hobart Seven Hats Award. This award recognizes managers of small utilities who have small staff and must assume multiple roles. The following year, Bob received the Kansas Municipal Utilities' Edgar P. Schowalter award.



Bob and Julie Peter during the KMU Annual Meeting. May 2015

Bob was devoted to showing the value of not only Public Power but also joint action. Bob personally met with the City Council of Glasco, KS when it was deliberating whether to join KPP as a member taking electric service. In those settings Bob urged the understanding that economies of scale, unity of vision, equity in asset ownership and full disclosure of operating practices were the hallmarks setting apart KPP from the City's then-existing power supplier.



Bob addresses attendees at a KMU Annual Meeting. May 2015

"He had an understanding of the Pool concept value perhaps as well as anyone who has ever been associated with the Pool," noted Mark Chesney. "Since we learned of his passing, I have found myself on a few occasions reviewing old Board meeting Minutes from years past. On operating policies, transmission costs, equity among members and a host of other issues, there is no question he provided a very clear and wise voice for KPP. He made many statements and motions that set the stage for landmark milestones in our agency."



Bob addressing KPP members in 2010



For years Bob had served Ellinwood as both City Attorney and City Administrator. Beginning as City Administrator in June 2001, he was deeply involved in all aspects of city planning and design. Twice the city endured large, damaging floods. Bob was at the forefront of effecting substantial changes and upgrades to the city's infrastructure. His leadership was needed during the floods of 2007 and 2013 as well as following the massive ice storm of 2007. He was also influential in guiding the installation and financing of EPA-mandated retrofits to local power plant generators not only for Ellinwood but also for many KPP members.

Bob had been friend and colleague to many municipal utility officers and policy makers throughout Kansas. A longtime Board member of KMU, he was Board President in 2013-2014 guiding a continual outreach to cities throughout Kansas on a variety of legislative, operational and policy issues. Former KPP Board member and Minneapolis City Administrator Barry Hodges remembers, "I was a newly minted city administrator when I first met Bob, on a golf course. We would share a golf cart that day, which



Bob participating in the 2018 KPP Fall Planning Retreat

would lead to sitting on the boards of KMU and KPP together. Not only was Bob an excellent mentor to me in my young professional life, he was also someone I called friend from the first time I met him."

Kimberly Svaty, KPP and KMU contract governmental affairs liaison, summarized the feelings of many when she recently wrote that Bob was "a thoughtful man truly dedicated to public service and the betterment of his community and his state."



Bob conferring with Kimberly Svaty. Fall 2018

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## Larry Paine Re-elected as KPP Board President

*Paine to Serve Second Consecutive Term as President*



Larry Paine, City Administrator at Hillsboro, was unanimously elected to serve a second consecutive year as President of the KPP Board of Directors. Gus Collins, Director of Utilities for Winfield was elected as first vice president with John Wheeler, Marion City Council member, as second vice president and Scott Glaves, Clay Center Public Utilities Commission Superintendent as Secretary. Officers are anticipated to serve in these positions for the remainder of the calendar year.

Board officers are elected by the Board at the beginning of

each year following the election of Board members generally by all KPP members at the December Annual Membership Meeting. No new Board members were elected in December 2018. However, elections are anticipated in December 2019 as Jim Sutton, Augusta, and Rex Reynolds, Mount Hope come to the end of their terms. According to KPP By-laws, Rex Reynolds is eligible to be re-elected to another four-year term.



Larry Paine, January 17, 2019, Board of Directors Meeting



**Board of Directors meeting**  
**January 17, 2019**

# Last Call for Cyber Academy Registrations!

January 31, 2019 is the last day by which you may register for attendance at the APPA/KPP Cyber Academy. With attendance climbing modestly, KPP members are nearly set for valuable training through the custom-built 15 module curriculum.

At last count, 26 individuals from 12 cities have registered. The location is the KMU Training Center in McPherson for classes scheduled to last from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM on the calendar dates announced for the first series. Members are reminded that there is no cost for attendance and participation plus per diem and mileage reimbursement are being made.

By going to the KPP website, visitors will see a Cyber Academy registration banner in the upper right.

**Calendar dates for the first series are:**

**February 13, 20, 27 and March 13, 20.**



## KCC Order Favoring KPP Now on Appeal

On the thirtieth day of a thirty day time limit, an appeal was filed in Shawnee County District Court by Southern Pioneer, a member of the Mid-Kansas Electric Company. The appeal filing follows up to a KCC order favorable to KPP in its desire to undertake a Kingman direct transmission connection.

KPP members recall numerous reports over a four-year period for design and operational intentions to eliminate the exorbitant charges for use by KPP of Southern Pioneer's substandard 34.5 kV for importing energy into Kingman. KPP's plans provoked the filing of a complaint by Southern Pioneer at the Kansas Corporation Commission. That complaint was dismissed by the KCC. Subsequently, KPP filed for a transmission rights certificate. That action was also opposed by the cooperatives but the KCC order was resolutely favorable to KPP.

KPP General Counsel, J.T. Klaus, reminded Board members at their January meeting that the appeal litigation will restrict the cooperatives to the record created at the KCC. He stated that "they are not permitted to retry the case," adding that their arguments are restricted to those made before the KCC.



## KPP Small Scale Solar Continues on Track

Six KPP member Cities will soon see energy credits on their bill. Director of Engineering Services, James Ging, reported to the KPP Board recently that the small scale solar project continues to advance. Stanion Wholesale Electric Company is now preparing a quote for materials. Those quotes are expected to be in-house soon.



Among the six Cities, specific designs are still in process. Some have considered a rooftop installation while others intend to showcase the installation on the ground. The City of Hillsboro is first to provide a preliminary site plan for their solar array as part of a splash pad and recreational area. In that case, the installation would overlay a canopy. A canopy construction firm is reviewing the drawing and will be working directly with Hillsboro to make sure it fits the City's vision.

Metering drawings are also being completed with cost estimates. James reported that a complete package of drawings are expected to be delivered to Cities in the near future.