

District 1

ABEL EBANE

9917 Xebec Street NE, Circle Pines, MN 55014

Occupation

Medicare Sales Consultant

Board Experience

American College of Healthcare Executives (2020-Present)

Minnesota Black Chamber of Commerce (2019-Present)

Manitoba Black Chamber of Commerce (2022-Present)

Metro State Student Senate (2014-2015)

Post-Secondary Education

Hamline University, Minnesota – MBA – Finance



What do you believe is an important opportunity and the most important challenge facing Connexus Energy, and how would you address both if you were elected?

Transition to renewable energy: Investing in renewable energy sources like solar, wind, and emerging technologies presents a significant opportunity. I'd advocate for strategic partnerships and initiatives to expand Connexus' renewable energy portfolio. Making it more accessible and affordable to members. Educating members about the benefits of renewable energy and offering incentives for adoption could further drive this transition.

Grid modernization and resilience: One of the most crucial challenges of Connexus, like many utility companies, is grid reliability, resilience, and adaptation to changing demands. This challenge can be addressed with grid modernization, adoption of new technologies, and strengthening existing infrastructure against extreme weather events or rampant cyber-attacks.

What do you believe members want from their electric utility and what keeps them satisfied with Connexus Energy?

Reliability: Members want consistent and reliable electricity to power their homes and businesses. Minimal outages, quick response times to restore service, and robust infrastructure contribute to high satisfaction levels. **Community support:** Excellent customer service is crucial. Members appreciate responsive, helpful, and knowledgeable support when dealing with billing inquiries, service issues, seeking info about services and programs.

Affordability: Cost-effective electricity rates and transparent billing are essential. Members want to know they are getting value for their money without unexpected or unreasonable expenses.

What personally motivates you to serve on the Connexus Energy Board of Directors?

Serving on the board of directors aligns with my personal values and aspirations in several ways:

Community impact: I am passionate about making a significant contribution to the community. Being part of Connexus Energy's board of directors allows me to directly contribute to enhancing the lives of fellow community members by ensuring reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy solutions.

Advocacy for cooperative principles: I strongly believe in the cooperative model and its democratic principles. Serving on the board provides an opportunity to actively advocate for these values, ensuring that member voices are heard and that decisions prioritize their best interests.

Commitment to sustainability: I am committed to fostering sustainable practices. Serving on the board enables me to influence decisions that promote renewable energy initiatives, environmental stewardship, and innovative solutions to further promote a greener future within the community.

What do you believe are the top three reasons you would be well-qualified to serve on the Connexus Energy Board of Directors?

Diverse professional experience: My background spans from banking, to healthcare, to non-profits. I have always been involved in customer/member service where the needs of the member or customer came first. In my previous roles, I led the implementation of strategic initiatives, improved financial position for the MN Black Chamber of Commerce, where I grew the finances from \$50k to \$2.00M to finance an impactful initiative. I led the implementation of a new strategy for the Chamber. I grew membership by multiple folds. I believe my experience will be invaluable in providing a comprehensive understanding of the various facets of Connexus Energy's operations. My diverse background can inform a holistic perspective when making decisions for the cooperative.

Strategic vision and analytical skills: I possess a track record of strategic planning and analytical thinking, which I believe are vital in not only solving complex issues, forecasting trends, making informed decision but most importantly, they will help contribute to the wellbeing of the cooperative.

Commitment to community and cooperative values: I deeply value cooperative principles and am dedicated to serving the community. My commitment to these principles aligns with Connexus Energy's mission of providing reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy while prioritizing the needs of its members.

Tell us what you believe are three of the most impactful member-owner benefits of the electric cooperative business structure?

Local control and democratic governance: Electric cooperatives such as Connexus are owned and governed by their members, allowing local communities to have a say in the direction and decision-making of their utility provider. Members elect a board of directors to ensure that that decision reflects the needs and best interests of the members and their communities.

Equitable treatment and member centricity: Members have an equal say in the cooperative's affairs, regardless of the amount of energy they consume. Equitability ensures that no voice outweighs another in the process of determining the direction of Connexus.

Community investment and economic development: Connexus is deeply rooted in the communities it serves. It reinvests profits into infrastructure improvement, economic development opportunities, and local programs, contributing to the overall wellbeing of the communities it serves. This focus creates jobs and supports local community initiatives.

Regarding your skills as a potential director, tell us one of your strengths and how it would contribute to the Connexus Board and list one weakness needing development and your plan to address it.

Strength: I easily engage with members and stakeholders to learn and find an innovative way to solve complex issues and address my knowledge gaps.

Weakness: Some people might think that my tendency is to take too long to make a decision because I want to gather the thoughts of many people is a weakness, but I think it could also be considered a strength.