Hatcher Gives Up KEA Seat After 33 Years

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Veteran Directors Says Low Cost Electricity Has Been Priority

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For the first time in more than three decades, the Kodiak Electric Association Board of Directors will not include Bob Hatcher, who decided to not to run again this year, after more than 33 years of service. KMXT’s Casey Kelly has this profile of the man who’s been working to bring low cost electricity to Kodiak for nearly half of the years that KEA has existed.

Bob Hatcher says he doesn’t remember exactly who told him that he should run for the KEA board. He just remembers that there was one person he had to consult with first.

(Hatcher 1 :12s “…over the years.”)

When Hatcher joined the KEA board in 1975, it was before the Terror Lake hydroelectric plant had been constructed. The idea was one that had been talked about since the early ‘60s, and with high diesel prices in the ‘70s it became even more necessary. Although the groundwork was already being laid by the time he joined the board, Hatcher says it took a lot of effort to complete the project.

(Hatcher 2 :21s “…and life refuge.”)

Hatcher says the board has always been focused on keeping the cost of electricity down for consumers. That’s what’s behind KEA’s current wind power project, where the utility hopes to have five windmills on top of Pillar Mountain within the next decade.

(Hatcher 3 :43s “…everything goes well.”)

The KEA board is looking more and more to renewable energy, Hatcher says. In part, that’s because of rising fuel prices once again, and in part it’s because of environmental concerns. Harnessing the tidal power in and around Kodiak has also been discussed, although Hatcher says the technology for that is still a ways off.

(Hatcher 4 :22s “…green as possible.”)

No

matter what the future holds for KEA, Hatcher says he’s a big believer in the co-op system, because the utility belongs to the people. And he has some advice for those interested in serving on the KEA board.

(Hatcher 5 :12s “…paying right now.”)

A military man, whose service first brought him to Alaska in the 1940s, Hatcher says the next few months will be tough as he re-programs himself to not think about board meetings and travel. After that, he plans to rest and relax, but says he hopes to stay involved in any way he can.

I’m Casey Kelly.

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