

NEWS



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SUNFLOWER SELECTS NEW PRESIDENT AND CEO

HAYS, KANSAS, —The Board of Directors of Sunflower Electric Power Corporation recently selected L. Earl Watkins to succeed L. Christian Hauck as the President and Chief Executive Officer effective June 1. Board Chairman Charles Ayers wrote recently, "Earl knows the company well and shares the Board's enthusiasm for the future and the dogged persistence to claim it."

Chris Hauck, Sunflower's retiring President and CEO, commented on the announcement saying, "Earl is not only a dear friend, he is also the best qualified person I know to continue the great traditions that are being established here at Sunflower. I wish him nothing but the best as he takes the reins at Sunflower and leads the organization into the future."

When asked to comment, Watkins said, "It is indeed my honor to serve the Member cooperatives that own Sunflower. I am confident that we will continue to bring to them a highly reliable wholesale power supply through the efforts of our talented and dedicated workforce."

Regarding Sunflower's future plans Watkins said, "The future is very bright as we will work to complete the development of the new 600 MW powerplant at Holcomb and the Sunflower Electric Wind Farm near Leoti. While the industry continues to change rapidly, I am convinced Sunflower is positioned to overcome the obstacles we'll face as we work to meet our Members' needs in a way that will let them effectively serve their western Kansas consumers."

Watkins began his private law practice after leaving the United States Air Force Judge Advocate General Corps as a Captain and receiving the Meritorious Service Award, normally awarded to field-grade officers. He joined the law firm of Dietz, Hardman, Dahlberg and Watkins in 1977, and in 1983, he partnered with his high school classmate, Mark D. Calcara, to create the law firm of Watkins and Calcara, a practice that has grown from two to seven attorneys with an administrative staff of ten additional employees. He began doing Sunflower's legal work in 1977 and in November 2001, he joined Sunflower as Executive Vice President and General Counsel and served as Sunflower's Corporate Secretary for the Board of Directors.

Watkins and his wife, Karen, live in Hays and are active in the North Oak Community Church and other community organizations. They enjoy their family that includes three daughters, two of whom are married, and four grandchildren.

A Great Bend native, Watkins graduated from the University of Kansas with a B.S. in Political Science in 1971 and his law degree with honors in 1973. He was admitted to the Kansas Bar the same year and to the United States District Court for the District of Kansas and the United States Supreme Court in 1975. He is a member of the Board of Directors of First Kansas Bank of Great Bend, Kansas, ACES Power Marketing of Indianapolis, Indiana, Western Fuels Association and Western Power Producers, both of Denver, Colorado.

Sunflower Electric Power Corporation is a regional wholesale power supplier that owns and operates a 595 MW system of gas and coal-fired generating plants and a 1,200-mile transmission system for the needs of its six member cooperatives who serve 120,000 people spread throughout a 21,000 square mile area in western Kansas. Sunflower also provides power to regional utilities in western Kansas and in ten states.