

# Co-op Connection

Hamilton County Telephone Co-op

January 2025

## The Year Ahead

*Hope you all had a Merry Christmas!!!*

As we say goodbye to 2023, I want to take a moment to thank each of you for allowing the co-op to provide you service.

As I mentioned last year, our landlines continue to erode as we see more folks turn to our broadband only service. While 57% of broadband customers are still on Copper DSL, we are still working to bring fiber to your doorstep.

Last year, as stated, we were awarded a loan/grant that will directly affect our ability to increase our fiber connection to our subscribers within the foot print of the co-op. It is called Reconnect 3 and was the first funding available through USDA with the minimum 100/20 threshold. While we have been very excited about the opportunity to upgrade our entire network with fiber, the process can take some time. We have been working all through 2023 getting the approvals from USDA to get the project started. I am happy to say that the engineering portion of the funding has been approved and we are currently working with JSI engineering to design the fiber to all our member and subscriber locations within the project award footprint. Our crews will soon follow as the plans are released.

On another note, our upcoming Annual Meeting will be held in April 2024 (date not yet determined). This year we will have two (2) exchanges up for re-election. These exchanges are Belle Rive (756) and Blairsville (757). While nominating committees have selected a nominee for each of these exchanges, if you live in one of these exchanges and are interested in serving as a director, please contact me for more information.

As a reminder, last year was the last telephone directory printed and distributed in bulk mailing. If you need a copy of our directory, you are always welcome to stop by the Co-op to pick one up or give us a call. Also, a digital copy of the directory is available on our website.

We pray that you are blessed in health, finance, and have a Happy New Year in 2025!!!

*May God Bless,*

*Kevin Pyle, General Manager*

### Calendar of Events:

- Jan 1 - New Year's Day  
Office is CLOSED
- Jan 20 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
Office is OPEN



### FUSC Percentage Changes:

The FCC released a public notice increasing the FUSC-R for residential, single line and multi line businesses from 34.5% to 34.6% for the first quarter of 2024. We are required to bill customers this new rate beginning January 1, 2024. This is the charge that we all pay to help keep phone service affordable throughout the nation, especially in rural areas such as ours. This percentage fluctuates quarterly.

### Pay your bill by phone:

1-855-386-9912

### Pay your bill online:

<https://hcc.smarthub.coop>

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## **Board of Director Announcement:**

At this time, we are already underway planning for our 2025 Annual Meeting. It is our hope that we will hold the meeting in April at the Hamilton County Senior High School Gym in McLeansboro. This year the Belle Rive (756) and Blairsville (757) exchanges will be up for Director Elections.

According to the HCTC By-laws, the nominating committees for the Belle Rive (756) and Blairsville (757) exchanges have been selected by the Board of Directors. It is the responsibility of the nominating committee to select at least one certified nominee for Director to represent their exchange for a three year term.

The nominating committee for the 756 exchange consisting of Kerry Robertson, Donald Williamson, and Alfred Brookman, met on December 11th. During this meeting the committee made the nomination for their exchange for nominee Rob Kiefer to serve another three year term on the HCTC Board. The nominating committee for the 757 exchange consisting of Brad Miller, Steve Becker and Jeff Thomas, met on December 16th. During this meeting the committee made the nomination for their exchange for nominee Justin Woodrow to serve another three year term on the HCTC Board.

The Co-op thanks the nominating committees for their time and service, making certain that we continue to have representation from these exchanges for the next three years. Although the nominees as candidates are selected by these committees, the by-laws also allow for any other certified member of these exchanges the same right in running and serving a three year term as Director for their exchange. If you are interested, you can pick up a petition (required to be signed by 10% or 15 certified members, whichever is less, of your exchange) at the co-op from the General Manager, along with the specific details and requirements of serving as a Director.

You will have until March 15th to file your certified petition with the Co-op for your name to be placed on the ballot at the annual meeting. If you are not the nominee selected by the committee and would like your name printed in the annual meeting booklet, you will need to file your petition by February 15th due to the printing lead time requirements.

We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting in 2025.

Kevin Pyle  
Executive Vice President &  
General Manager

### ***Board of Directors:***

647 Exchange  
Steven Douglass

648 Exchange  
Alan Monroe, Secretary

728 Exchange  
Chris Sink, President

736 Exchange  
Lemuel Gage, Vice-President

756 Exchange  
Rob Kiefer, Treasurer

757 Exchange  
Justin Woodrow

773 Exchange  
Robert Abbott

*Reviews Matter...*



Please consider leaving us a review on  
Facebook or Google! Thank you!

## WIN \$15 OFF YOUR BILL!

Complete the following questionnaire, cut out this section and mail the completed form by January 10, 2025. Your name will be placed in a drawing for \$15 off your telephone bill with HCTC. There will be two winners in January.

1. What two exchanges are up for Board re-election? \_\_\_\_\_
2. When is the deadline to file your certified petition to run for the Board? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What month is our Annual Meeting normally held? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What number can you call to pay your bill by telephone? \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Congratulations to December's winners: Elmer & Angela Butler, Debbie Trout, Mark & Irma Karcher, and Jerry & Laura Seidel. They each received \$10 off their telephone bill.

**Check out our website at [www.hamiltoncom.net](http://www.hamiltoncom.net) for more information about the Co-op.**