

Indiana Association Benefits from Strategic Planning Effort Led by Independent Party

A lot was happening all at once. Within a short period of time, the Indiana Municipal Electric Association welcomed a new chief executive officer, established the full-time position of safety & training director, and expanded the number of members serving on the IMEA Board of Directors from 10 to 12 individuals. IMEA leadership decided this was the perfect time to examine collectively the organization's mission and objectives, ensuring IMEA remains focused on advocating for, supporting and protecting public power in Indiana. To help facilitate this review of IMEA's strategic direction and planning, IMEA brought in the consulting team from Hometown Connections.

The utility services subsidiary of the American Public Power Association, Hometown Connections has offered more than 800 public power organizations guidance and access to quality products/services from a trusted entity with public power's best interests in mind. Hometown Connections personnel provide consulting support in the areas of organization assessment, strategic planning, governance development, and staffing. In addition, Hometown Connections is a resource for discounted pricing on technology, services, and other solutions from industry-leading companies. IMEA is a marketing affiliate of Hometown Connections, helping to promote its products and services to the IMEA membership.



Bill Ley (Avilla) and Stuart Tuttle (Auburn) were among the 12 IMEA Board members and staff who attended a strategic planning workshop

"We felt the best way to ensure we were on the right track was to bring in an experienced, objective, third-party to facilitate this discussion, as well as provide insight, support and feedback," said Peggy Georgi, IMEA's chief executive officer. "Selecting Hometown Connections was an easy task for our leadership team. We valued the more than decade-long relationship the organization has had with Hometown. And we recognized the benefit of accessing the vast knowledge base obtained by the Hometown staff, built upon 17 years of working with public power systems and associations."

Steve VanderMeer, Hometown's Senior Vice President—Planning & Marketing, facilitated the strategic planning session with IMEA's board and senior staff. In advance of

the meeting, IMEA shared with Steve the existing mission statement, by-laws, articles of incorporation, a strategic plan from 2001, and goals for the new session.

"Steve was an excellent facilitator," Georgi said. "His demeanor and leadership style helped participants feel comfortable and engaged. His breadth of knowledge coupled with nearly two decades of experience with Hometown Connections and public power organizations across the country was extremely beneficial from many respects. He was able to provide examples, food for thought and takeaways that the participants can utilize on a go-forward basis as a member of the IMEA Board of Directors, as well on other Boards on which they serve."

Georgi added, “After working through the process with Steve, we felt reassured and confident that as a leadership team and an organization, we are in a remarkably good place for having gone through quite a number of challenges and changes in the past 18 months. Thanks to a core group of dedicated and focused individuals, we were able to come together for a common goal. We not only successfully weathered a leadership transition and organizational hurdles under difficult and unusual circumstances, we are now in fact, thriving and helping public power in Indiana tackle some of its most pressing issues. “