

# ARCHITECT CHOSEN FOR HEADQUARTERS PROJECT

Dear Member:

MLEC is proud to announce that we have chosen Architectural Resources, Inc. (ARI) as our architectural partner for the potential headquarters project. ARI has offices in both Hibbing and Duluth, and recently completed the new Lake Country Power service center in Cohasset.

We met with a variety of architectural firms, each bringing their own unique perspective and talents to our potential project. The biggest strength we felt ARI brought to the table, in addition to their experience in our exact project need, was their commitment to our members. Through the entire vetting process, ARI communicated to us how important it was that we get this right for the future of our cooperative – and our members.



## **Katie Hildenbrand**

Katie is a Certified Interior Designer and the President of ARI. Katie has been in the Hibbing office for nearly 20 years, and in addition to interior design, her experience branches out to project management, construction administration, and facility planning. Katie understands the unique needs of a member-

owned organization, and why budgetary constraints are critical. She and her team are also sensitive to our employees' desires, respecting our future neighbors, and communicating all progress to our members.



## **Karl Larsen**

Karl is a Principal and Registered Architect at ARI. Karl is in the Duluth office, and has experience in every type of project, from the smallest remodel to some of ARI's largest new construction builds. His expertise spans from creative design solutions to construction documentation, project management, and

construction administration. Karl and Katie have visited other cooperative facilities with our management team, carefully documenting the things we feel are critical in a modern, technology-friendly, community-centric building.



*Sarah Cron  
CEO*

It is also important to note that ARI understands this project is not a slam dunk. In fact, it is far from over, and if the costs do not come in at a level that is realistic for our long-range financial forecast, the project will be put on hold or cancelled completely. Even with that uncertain outlook, ARI is fully committed to this project. Their team is putting in a significant amount of time, working cooperatively with MLEC to construct a building that will work for us, our members, and our 80-year plan.

After meeting with our management team and all employee groups, and touring several cooperative facilities, ARI will now work on putting together a building plan based on the information they gained from these meetings. The next steps will include vetting contractors, much like the process we used for vetting architectural firms, selecting a firm, and obtaining bids for the construction of the new facility. This is the next phase of the process that will change this from a "potential project" to a "building project", or an "on-hold project" if the costs are too high.

I appreciate your taking the time to follow all this information over the last 18 months. Please continue to watch the MLEC website, our Facebook page, and the Outlet newsletter for updated information. You can also stop by our Annual Meeting on May 5th to meet Katie and Karl in person.

We hope to see you there!

*SM*