

January 31, 2023

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
OF
THE DWIGHT VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Held in the Public Services Complex
209 South Prairie Avenue, Dwight Illinois
January 31, 2023 at 6:00PM**

**PRESENT: Paul Johnson, Village President; Chuck Butterbrodt, Trustee; Jenny Johnson, Trustee
Marla Kinkade, Trustee; Randy Irvin, Trustee; and Pete Meister, Trustee**

ABSENT: Justin Eggenberger, Trustee

**Other Village Officials in Attendance: Kevin McNamara, Village Administrator; Nick Ehrgott,
Village Attorney, and Whitney Scott, Village Clerk**

President Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

The Special Meeting was called to discuss the proposed Pattern Energy Wind Farm turbines within one and a half (1.5) miles of the Village corporate limits and to vote on two proposed resolutions regarding the Wind Farm and a Community Benefit Agreement.

President Johnson explained that there would be a presentation from Pattern Energy Wind Farms, a statement from Josh DeLong, Superintendent of Dwight Township and Common Schools, a statement from Dave Halpern, former Logan County Board Member, a summary of the project and timeline of events from himself, and then the meeting would be opened for public forum and comments and questions from the community.

Pattern Energy's presentation provided background information on Pattern Energy and ConnectGEN and their relationship and their proposed projected layout of the wind turbines within 1.5 miles of Village limits. They also provided an explanation of the proposed Community Benefit/Development Agreement as well as estimated revenue for the Village and the community's Taxing Bodies. O'Brien did advise that these numbers would be slightly adjusted from what was presented and those originally provided at the January 18th Administration & Finance Committee, as three of the original seventeen proposed turbines closest to Village limits had been removed from the proposed project.

Josh DeLong spoke on behalf of Dwight Township and Dwight Common School districts, stating that the turbines would be a huge asset to the districts; he explained that while DTHS is in solid financial shape, a lot of that due to the wind farms west of town, DCS is struggling a bit more – these additional funds would allow for additional necessary teachers and staff, to update building and grounds, and possibly fund an addition to the grade school. He also advised that these funds would allow for the schools to continue to lower their tax rates, as they've done for the past eight years.

Dave Hepler, a former Logan County Board member, stated that he had been part of the Board when they approved four turbines within the 1.5-mile buffer of city limits of Lincoln IL, that it has proven beneficial to their community, and they're proceeding with a proposed project for additional turbines. He further advised that some of their finest roads were constructed by wind developers, which are frequently used by their community school busses and production agriculture, and that the Project Developers have kept all their promises.

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President Johnson thanked everyone for their input and gave an overview of the project history and background and clarified a few of the common concerns he'd heard over the past week. Johnson explained that there had been rumors of the Board choosing to wait to hold discussions on the proposed project until The Paper had closed late last month, but clarified that was absolutely not true – he advised that when he was originally elected, outgoing Mayor Jared Anderson and Kelly O'Brien had approached him, stating that the project was in the very early stages of planning and that they'd reach out to them as soon as they were ready to move forward; and then it sat dormant for approximately two years. Johnson advised that he had received an email on December 10th requesting that the project and proposed Resolutions be added to the next Village Board Agenda. Johnson had replied to that email requesting additional information for the Trustees to review ahead of time and suggested they be added to the Administration & Finance Committee meeting in January. The Administration & Finance Committee discussed and determined additional community feedback would be necessary before they'd be willing to vote on the proposed project. Johnson advised that he and the Trustees have worked as the middlemen between the constituents and the project, trying to determine the best course of action for the community. Concerns regarding three of the closest turbines have been dropped from the proposed project. He explained that no large businesses are knocking on our door, and that the Community Benefit Agreement from the project could be ear-marked specifically for our parks and recreation, because the entire community has access to the parks, and that these funds other taxing authorities would receive could impact lowering tax rates and increasing property values.

Johnson also clarified that this project did not “go around” or “skirt” the authority of the Plan Commission, explaining that both the Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals Committees only handle matters within the Village Limits of Dwight; this project is not within the Village Limits, just within the 1.5 miles buffer of Village Limits. Johnson also explained that recent Economic Recovery Strategy studies had provided three proposed scenarios of potential growth for the Village, and that none of the proposed 14 turbines would impact any of those, stating that they could co-exist.

PUBLIC FORUM

Leeann Baily, Dwight resident, had asked several questions of Mr. Hepler, concerning the specifics of impact to property values and expressed her frustration that she had just learned of the proposed project in Dwight three days ago.

Jen Statler, Dwight resident, expressed her thanks to Johnson and the Trustees for taking their concerns regarding the three closest proposed turbines seriously and removing them from the project scope. She stated that she had previously lived in rural Dwight, within a quarter mile of a turbine, and while she had received “good neighbor incentives”, you can always hear them, many neighbors experienced the strobing effects, and when they catch fire, you can smell them for a long time from a long distance. She expressed concerns those factors might have on nearby property values dropping, especially as they near end of life.

Project representatives ensured that there are several layers of protection; an Agricultural Agreement would ensure that anything above ground and down to 5' underground must be removed at end of life, and the farm land restored to pre-existing conditions. Livingston County Ordinance also requires third-party engineering to post financial assurance that the funds would be available to decommission the wind farm, and returned to agricultural use, without any financial responsibility to the landowners. They confirmed that it is their responsibility to decommission any turbine within 18 months of a turbine's failure, stopping use of, or end of life.

Trustee Irvin inquired about the potential of Pattern Energy/ConnectGEN transferring ownership and ensuring that all responsibilities would transfer to the new owners. They advised Pattern's business

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model is to develop, own and operate for the life of the project; that they're not in the business of selling once the project is up and running.

Michael, Dwight resident, expressed his thanks for the public forum and stated that he was offended by Pattern Energy's behavior, finding it offensive and despicable, to provide such limited and late information to the community, sugar-coating the project, and bribing the Board with a Community Benefit Agreement. He expressed his concerns regarding the noise and flicker of the turbines, as well as impacts of potential lost tax revenues for the schools.

Mark Scott, rural Dwight resident, stated that he has six turbines just east of him and an additional six turbines within a mile south of his property, putting up with the smell and nuisance of those twelve, and urged the Board to be cautious, making sure the Village isn't stiffed like they were with PharmaCan and Spuds agreements.

Seth Gahn, Dwight resident, expressed his concerns with the height of the turbines and their proximity to his property, explaining that he'd recently moved to town and put in a nice patio; he does not wish to view those so close to his home.

Everett Severson, Dwight resident and landowner of one of the proposed turbines within the 1.5 mile limits, stated that he doesn't see any downfall to the proposed project and that he's just trying to leave a legacy for his children.

Finding no further public comment, the Trustees discussed and confirmed they did not have any additional questions.

Trustee Johnson made a motion, with a second from Trustee Meister, to vote on the proposed Wind Farm Resolution, allowing fourteen (14) wind turbines within the Village Corporate Limits. Roll call; Butterbrodt (no), Irvin (aye), Johnson (no), Kinkade (no) and Meister (aye). Motion fails, 2-3.

Because the proposed Wind Farm Resolution failed to pass, there was no need to vote on the proposed accompanying Community Benefit Agreement.

Finding no further business, Trustee Irvin made a motion, with a second from Trustee Kinkade, to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 PM, all voted aye.

Paul Q. Johnson, President

ATTEST:

Whitney Scott, Village Clerk