



HARDIN COUNTY

Zoning Department

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Hardin County Zoning Commission
Tuesday, February 25, 2020
5:30 PM, Hardin County Courthouse Large Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

5:38 PM – Meeting called to order.

Roll Call: Katie Reifschneider and Curt Groen were present. Heidi, Stan, and Trent were absent.

Other attendees – BJ Hoffman, Adam Seward, Mark Buschkamp, Bette Dossman, Josh Odom, Kirk Yung, Jacob Bolson, Roger Sutton, Justin Ites, Brad Fjelland, Marc Broer, Trudy Winter, Denny Winter, Bob Gehrke, Pat Gehrke, Mariah Lynne, Brad King, Craig Coon, Darrell Meyer, Jacob Winter, Leland Mosch, Brian Perry, Alvin Clark, and Jessica Sheridan.

Approval of Agenda: Agenda could not be approved because there was no quorum.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from February 6, 2020 meeting could not be approved because there was no quorum.

Public Hearing Opened at 5:39 PM

Speakers

Jacob Bolson (landowner) – Concerns about impact on wildlife, drainage systems, aerial application, national debt, money from project is going out of the country. Social relations (neighbors not talking to neighbors). Concerns that IFADC has assumed responsibility for project. Concerns about re-blading and how it will impact the landfills. Concerns about ownership of company (company has changed hands). Concerns that the company did not notify landowners not involved in the project. “If you want to do something, let’s talk about it.” Concerns about setback distances for wind turbines. Would like Zoning Commission to consider putting manufacturer’s recommended setback distance in ordinance as setback for wind turbines. Isn’t seeing a sense of community from the company.

RWE Renewables (Brad King and Josh Odom) – Wanted to clarify that they aren’t applying for permits any time soon. Started working on leasing efforts in 2017. More than 21,000 acres leased, and majority of owners live in the community. Projected more than \$45,000,000 property taxes. \$20,000,000 landowner payments. \$690,000 paid to landowners so far. Agree with idea of multiplier for turbines setbacks. If they have to repower later on, they will have to get a variance if it put them within the setback distance requirements. Have to do noise and shadow flicker modeling. Also have to do decommissioning assessment and enter agreement with county. Had meetings with drainage districts last week. Will be entering separate agreement with individual drainage districts and the county. Are in the process of doing an avian study (will do pre- and post-inspection). Trying to communicate with the community. There was a merger where E.On purchased a majority stake of RWE and that is why the company name has changed. RWE is an owner/operator, so they construct and maintain all their turbines.

Mark Buschkamp (Iowa Falls Economic Development Director) – Wants to address concerns people have about his involvement in the project. Wants to make sure kids have a safe, reliable daycare for children to go to so parents can go to work and know their kids are well taken care of. Wants schools to receive funding. Wants farmers to be able to keep farming (landowner payments) and perhaps bring adult children back to the family farm. Wants businesses in Hardin County to be prosperous. Wants County to be able to provide services (secondary roads, bridges, essential emergency



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services). County is losing population, which means fewer people to spread tax burden across. County has already had to raise taxes and cut funding. Perhaps project could keep taxes down. Project would be a \$250,000,000 investment in the county. \$50,000,000 in property taxes will be brought in from project. \$20,000,000 will be paid in landowner payments. Extra income for farmers, which could allow them to keep the family farm going. There will be new local job opportunities. 150 jobs supported during construction. Housing, restaurants, and other local businesses will get benefits from extra workers being in the area, etc. Wind farm will be single largest taxpayer in Hardin County.

Bob Gehrke (landowner, business owner) – Gehrke is a drainage contractor. Drainage will be destroyed during construction of project. Usually, tile that gets destroyed is inadequate to start with. 99% of good tile will not be disturbed. Did all tiling on a wind turbine project. Company takes a lot of care in searching the tile. Plans then had to be made about how to get across tile. Did repairs for Garden Wind project. Everything they dug up was done properly. Have done some drainage projects where neighbors were mad at contractor, at neighbors, etc. Right now, we are in a lull where neighbors aren't really mad at each other. Roads are bad, so county is proposing a tax or levy to improve roads. Caused by heavy equipment from ag industry (hog houses, livestock production, etc.). Money from wind projects could really help improve roads. Higher salary jobs would be brought to community. Thus, those people would spend more money in the community and help economy.

Public Hearing Closed at 6:14 PM

Set Date and Time for Next Meeting: March 3, 2020 at 6:30 PM in the Hardin County Courthouse Large Conference Room

6:16 PM – Meeting adjourned.