

**BEFORE
THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD**

In the Matter of the Application of **NORTHWEST**)
OHIO WIND ENERGY, LLC for a Certificate to)
Site Wind-Powered Electric Generation Facilities in) Case No. 13-197-EL-BGN
Paulding County, Ohio.)

TESTIMONY OF

Matthias Weigel

on behalf of

Northwest Ohio Wind Energy, LLC

October 23, 2013

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Case No. 13-197-EL-BGN

1 **1. Please state your name.**

2 My name is Matthias Weigel.

3 **2. Please give your business address.**

4 My business address is 706 Second Avenue South, Suite 1200, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402

5 **3. By whom are you employed?**

6 I am employed by National Wind LLC. National Wind is wholly-owned subsidiary of Trishe
7 Wind Energy Holdings, Inc. (Trishe) and is employed by Trishe for the day-to-day
8 development activities of Northwest Ohio Wind Energy, LLC (“NWOWE”) Trishe is the sole
9 owner of NWOWE. My experience prior to my current position with National Wind includes
10 involvement with wind projects in the United States and Europe, ranging in size from 25 MW
11 to 400 MW.

12 **4. What is your position?**

13 I am the Director of Project Development.

14 **5. What is your role in this application before the Ohio Power Siting Board?**

15 I am the Project Manager (“PM”) of the NWOWE project. I stepped in as the PM after the
16 previous PM, Marcus da Cunha, resigned to pursue an opportunity with a solar firm in San
17 Francisco, California. I began work as the PM for this project in September 2013, though I had
18 been a team member on the project for more than half a year. I am responsible for supervising
19 the progress of the Application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public
20 Need through the Ohio Power Siting Board (“Board”) process. I am also responsible for
21 managing the project, including retaining consultants, evaluating various turbine suppliers and
22 proposals and coordinating the eventual construction of the wind farm. Finally, I am
23 responsible for working closely with the Board Staff and ensuring close cooperation with the
24 local communities impacted by the project.

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1 **6. Please indicate the purpose of your testimony today.**

2 The purpose of my testimony is to give a short summary of the project and explain the
3 background of the stipulation that has been presented in this case and to support its adoption by
4 the Board. I will provide background about the process that led to the stipulation and give
5 reasons why I believe the stipulation should be adopted.

6 **7. Please provide a summary of the NWOWE project.**

7 The project is located in Paulding County, specifically in Blue Creek and Latty townships. The
8 total project area consists of approximately 21,000 acres of primarily agricultural land in Blue
9 Creek and Latty townships. Land lease and wind easements have been signed with
10 approximately 155 landowners representing approximately 12,750 acres of land.

11 The wind farm will have up to 59 wind turbines, each with a nameplate capacity of 1.7 MW to
12 2.0 MW. When completed, the project will generate up to 100 MW of electricity.

13 The project's roots are in Paulding County, as NWOWE did not originally conceive the project.
14 Rather, the concept of the NWOWE project originated with a group of local farmers and other
15 community members with a vision to harness the wind to create additional economic
16 opportunities and clean energy for their communities. These founders of the NWOWE project,
17 local farmers and members of the surrounding community, approached National Wind to build
18 the project. The result of this collaboration between the local founders, Trishe eventually
19 purchased the project from the local founders but set up an advisory council to have the benefit
20 of their advice.

21 **8. Please provide the background concerning the discussions leading to the stipulation.**

22 Aside from the Staff, there is one intervenor in this case, the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation
23 ("Farm Bureau"). The Staff investigation process was very smooth and professional. During
24 the investigation phase, there were several meetings with the Staff on site and throughout this

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1 process, our company representatives gained great respect for the Staff and their work. When
2 the Staff Report was issued a few weeks ago, we had very few items with which we disagreed
3 and those issues primarily concerned the timing of the performance of the conditions and
4 refinement of the wording of the conditions.

5 After we reviewed the Staff Report, we communicated our concerns and the reasons behind
6 them to the Staff and set a series meeting to discuss the stipulation. At our initial meeting, we
7 settled some, but not all of the issues and subsequently had several telephone conferences and
8 two additional face-to-face meetings that ultimately led to the final stipulation which is being
9 presented today.

10 Those involved in the meetings and conferences included the Staff's project manager, its
11 subject matter specialists and an assistant attorney general assigned to the Board. I, as
12 NWOWE's PM, and our environmental specialist as well as our counsel attended. Although
13 the Farm Bureau was informed of the meetings, based upon the issues we identified for
14 resolution, the Farm Bureau did not feel it was necessary to attend. The Farm Bureau was
15 provided all the documents pertaining to the proposed stipulation and kept apprised of all
16 outcomes throughout the process of developing the proposed final stipulation. Thus, the
17 discussions were among knowledgeable people who were committed to resolving the issues
18 we had between us. We exchanged additional information and documentation with the Staff
19 and Farm Bureau in between the meetings and conferences.

20 Without the seriousness, the respectfulness and the knowledge of the parties' representatives, I
21 do not believe a stipulation could have been reached.

9. Why do you believe the stipulation should be accepted?

23 In my opinion, all of the negotiations were held in good faith with legitimate concerns being
24 expressed by the parties. The Applicant believes that the stipulated conditions make our

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responsibilities more clear and also clarify some of the processes that are to be followed as we move forward to construction, operation, and eventual decommissioning.

Because of the cooperation of the Staff and Farm Bureau, we believe that the conditions set forth in the stipulation represent an improvement in some of the conditions originally presented in the Staff Report. We think both the public and the project will be better served through the approval of the conditions set forth in the stipulation today. The proposed wind farm will provide economic benefits to the community. For example, landowner lease payments are made to all landowners in the project regardless of whether facilities are located on their properties. Increase tax revenue from personal property tax as well as the income from the leases paid by this project will filter into the local economy through increased spending in local business, and enhanced services by the local governments. Finally, the project has been warmly received in the community.

On behalf of National Wind and the NWOWE project, I can say that we appreciate the Staff's and the Farm Bureau's receptivity to our concerns and their willingness to work out satisfactory solutions. The Staff, Farm Bureau and Applicant have agreed that the conditions in the stipulation are reasonable and that they are the product of good faith negotiation among knowledgeable parties. Therefore the stipulating parties recommend the conditions as well as the entire stipulation to the Board for its approval.

It is my understanding that although a stipulation is not binding upon the Board, stipulations are given careful scrutiny and consideration, particularly where no party is objecting to the stipulation.

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10. What clarifications to you want to make concerning testimony present at the local public hearing on October 22, 2013?

Of the many local community members who testified, all enthusiastically supported the project, with the exception of one individual. Based on his testimony, my understanding is that he does not live in the project area. In his testimony, he shared his experience living near a wind turbine of a nearby wind farm that has no affiliation with the NWOWE project. Namely, he expressed his dissatisfaction with the responsiveness of that wind farm's management to his concerns with some minor noise and shadow flicker occurrences on his property.

The proposed NWOWE project is the result of comprehensive studies to ensure that the wind turbines are located in ways that minimize noise and occurrences of shadow flicker. Further, as part of the final stipulation and a set of commitments submitted with the project's Application, the NWOWE must abide by rigorous noise and shadow flicker standards as a requirement to construct and operate the wind farm.

As a project with its roots in the local community, the management team of the NWOWE project has been, and will be, committed to responding to concerns raised by members of the community. NWOWE operates a local office in Paulding County and has closely worked with landowners in and around the project area to shape land lease agreements that ensure a broad benefit from the project and to assure that the facilities placed on landowner property have been discussed with the affected landowners. Along with maintaining our local presence throughout the construction, operation, and eventual decommissioning of the wind farm, NWOWE will develop, as a condition to begin construction, a comprehensive complaint resolution process. This project originated with members of the local communities, and our commitment to them is unparalleled.

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1 **11. Does this conclude your testimony?**

2 Yes, it does. However, I wish to reserve the right to file additional testimony after the official
3 transcript from the October 22, 2013 local public hearing becomes available.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the Testimony of Matthias Weigel has been served upon the following parties listed below by electronic mail, this 23th day of October 2013.



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Summary: Testimony of Matthias Weigel on behalf of Northwest Ohio Wind Energy, LLC
electronically filed by Teresa Orahod on behalf of Sally Bloomfield