

**BEFORE
THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD**

In the Matter of the Application of Hardin Solar)
Energy II LLC for a Certificate of Environmental)
Compatibility and Public Need to Construct a Solar-)
Powered Electric Generation Facility in Hardin)
County, Ohio.)

Case No: 18-1360-EL-BGN

TESTIMONY OF

Gabe Klooster

on behalf of

Hardin Solar Energy II LLC

March 18, 2019

1. Please state your name.

Gabe Klooster.

2. Please state your business address.

One South Wacker Drive, Suite 1800, Chicago, Illinois 60606.

3. Please summarize your educational background and work experience.

I received a Bachelor's Degree from Oberlin College. I worked for three years in the energy efficiency industry, managing the retrofits of over 6,000 units of low income housing. Over the course of the last 3 years, I have lead the development of over 2 gigawatts worth of renewable energy projects in the PJM Interconnection LLC ("PJM") territory.

4. By whom are you employed?

Invenergy LLC.

5. What is your position?

Associate, Renewable Development.

6. What is your role in this Application before the Ohio Power Siting Board?

I am the lead developer in Ohio for Invenergy LLC's ("Invenergy") East Region. The east region oversees all project development within the state of Ohio, including the solar-powered generation facility proposed by Hardin Solar Energy II LLC ("Applicant" or "Hardin Solar II"), a subsidiary of Invenergy LLC. I was involved in all aspects of the Hardin Solar Energy LLC project (Case No 17-773-EL-BGN), which received its certificate from the Ohio Power Siting Board ("Board") and predated the development of the Hardin Solar II Project. I have been involved in all aspects of the Hardin Solar II Project since its initial inception. From land acquisition to environmental studies to financial modeling, I am familiar with all aspects of the Hardin Solar II Project development.

1
2
3 **7. Please state the purpose of your testimony.**

4 The purpose of my testimony is to provide a summary of the Hardin Solar II Project and
5 a description of the process that led to the joint stipulation and recommendation
6 (“Stipulation”), which was filed in the docket on March 18, 2019, and is being offered in
7 this proceeding as Joint Exhibit 1. I intend to explain the background of the Stipulation
8 and the reasons why I believe it should be adopted by the Board. In addition, my
9 testimony will confirm that the Stipulation complies with the Board’s three-part test for
10 evaluating stipulations.
11

12 **8. Please provide a summary and description of the Hardin Solar II Project.**

13 As described in detail in Hardin Solar Energy II LLC’s certificate application, which was
14 filed in this case on October 12, 2018, as supplemented on November 14, 2018 and
15 February 15, 2019 (“Application”), the Hardin Solar II Project is located on
16 approximately 3,297 acres of leased land in Hardin County, Ohio in the townships of
17 Marion, Roundhead, and McDonald (“Project Area”). The facility will be built on
18 private land under lease and easement to the Applicant. Land use within the Hardin Solar
19 II Project is predominantly agricultural. The Applicant determined that the Project Area
20 is an ideal location through a statewide review of transmission line locations and
21 availability, landowner interest, community interest, competitive analysis, and evaluation
22 of site suitability.
23

24 The Hardin Solar II Project consists of a solar-powered electric generation facility of up
25 to 170 megawatts (“MW”). The facility will interconnect to the regional electrical
26 system through the Hardin Switch 345 kilovolt substation within the Project Area.
27 Depending on the exact modules used, we expect the facility to include over 560,000
28 solar modules and to produce over 365,000 MW hours per year. The Hardin Solar II
29 Project’s purpose is to produce clean, renewable, reliably-priced, low-cost electricity to
30 the Ohio bulk power transmission grid operated by PJM or under a power purchase
31 agreement.

1
2 **9. Please provide the background concerning the discussions leading up to the**
3 **Stipulation.**

4 The Board's Staff ("Staff") issued a Staff Report of Investigation on February 26, 2019
5 ("Staff Report"). A local public hearing was subsequently held at Kenton High School in
6 Kenton, Ohio on March 14, 2019. The Stipulation, which was signed by the Applicant,
7 Staff, and the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation ("OFBF"), was filed on March 18, 2019.
8 The evidentiary hearing was scheduled to commence on March 28, 2019, at the office of
9 the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio.
10

11 In my opinion, Staff completed its investigation process seamlessly. The Applicant did
12 not detect any major issues or hurdles during Staff's investigation of the Application.
13 Since the submission of the Application, we responded to questions from Staff and filed
14 our responses in the docket on February 19, 2019. We do not have major concerns with
15 the Staff Report, and most of our proposed Stipulation revisions related to refinement of
16 condition language. Note that the OFBF is the only intervenor in this case and has been
17 involved in the development of and discussions regarding the Stipulation.
18

19 **10. Did you encounter any objections to the Hardin Solar II Project from the officials in**
20 **the area?**

21 No. The Applicant has been working in Hardin County and meeting with landowners
22 regarding the Invenergy projects for almost 11 years. Throughout this time, we have
23 formed strong relationships with local landowners, as well as county officials. In
24 addition, we have become a platinum sponsor of the Hardin County Chamber and
25 Business Alliance, an organization designed to educate the community, increase
26 community wealth and pride, and provide a network for unified purpose.
27

28 **11. Why do you believe the Stipulation should be adopted by the Board?**

29 In my opinion, the Stipulation is a reasonable, good faith settlement that resulted from
30 serious negotiations among capable, knowledgeable parties to the case. Not only does
31 the Stipulation address all legitimate concerns that have been expressed by the parties,

1 but, in addition, we believe the stipulated conditions ensure that the Hardin Solar II
2 Project will serve the public interest.

3
4 The Applicant estimates that construction and operation of the Hardin Solar II Project
5 will employ approximately 200 onsite workers during construction and 2 ongoing
6 workers for the life of the Hardin Solar II Project. We estimate that approximately 160 of
7 these workers will be from Ohio during construction, and 1 of the 2 ongoing workers will
8 be from Ohio as well.

9
10 Moreover, we expect the Hardin Solar II Project to cause significant increases in county,
11 township, city, and school district tax revenue. As set forth in the Application, if the
12 minimum payment in lieu of taxes (“PILOT”) payment (\$7,000 per MW) is calculated,
13 we expect the following annual revenues will benefit the Project Area as a result of the
14 Hardin Solar II Project: the Upper Scioto Valley School District should receive over
15 \$706,000; the Hardin County General Fund should receive more than \$63,000; and other
16 taxing districts can expect to receive over \$90,000. However, I would note that the
17 Applicant has committed to Hardin County Commissioners that it will pay the maximum
18 PILOT payment of \$9,000 per MW, which will increase the revenue that will go to the
19 county. We expect the Hardin Solar II Project to result in over \$12.9 million of
20 additional investment in Hardin County, and over \$91.2 million for the state of Ohio.

21
22 Note that, in general, solar power provides a clean, sustainable source of electricity, free
23 of fuel pricing volatility. As energy and environmental costs rise, and technology
24 advances, solar-powered generation provides a sustainable, long-term, competitive
25 energy solution to both residents and businesses alike. In sum, we believe the public will
26 be better served through the approval of the conditions set forth in the Stipulation today.

27
28 Finally, as a package, the Stipulation benefits ratepayers and the public interest,
29 providing enormous economic benefits to the surrounding local community. In so doing,
30 the Stipulation package does not violate any regulatory principle or practice. As such, we
31 believe the Stipulation should be adopted by the Board.

1

2 **12. Does this conclude your testimony?**

3 Yes.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The Ohio Power Siting Board's e-filing system will electronically serve notice of the filing of this document on the parties referenced in the service list of the docket card who have electronically subscribed to this case. In addition, the undersigned certifies that a copy of the foregoing document is also being served upon the persons listed below via electronic mail this 18th day of March, 2019.

/s/ Christine M.T. Pirik

William V. Vorys (0029759)

Counsel:

jodi.bair@ohioattorneygeneral.gov

cendsley@ofbf.org

lcurtis@ofbf.org

amilam@ofbf.org

Administrative Law Judge:

megan.addison@puco.ohio.gov

This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities

Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on

3/18/2019 3:00:21 PM

in

Case No(s). 18-1360-EL-BGN

Summary: Testimony of Gabe Klooster on behalf of Hardin Solar Energy II LLC electronically filed by Christine M.T. Pirik on behalf of Hardin Solar Energy II LLC