

**BEFORE  
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

In the Matter of the Wooster Renewable Energy, LLC :  
Application for Certification as an Ohio : Case No. 14-2253-EL-REN  
Renewable Energy Resource Generating Facility :

---

**REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION  
SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE STAFF OF  
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

---

**CASE HISTORY**

On December 16, 2014, Wooster Renewable Energy, LLC (Applicant) filed an application for certification by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO or Commission) of the heat captured<sup>1</sup> from its combined heat and power (CHP) generator set as a renewable energy resource generator.<sup>2</sup> The Wooster Renewable Energy, LLC facility (Facility) is located at 1123 Old Columbus Road, in Wooster, Ohio. The Facility was developed by quasar energy group.

According to the application, the Facility is an anaerobic digester facility that converts biomass materials such as biosolids, fats, oil and grease, and food waste into biologically derived methane gas, which is also referred to as biogas. These biomass materials were previously unused or otherwise would be sent to landfills. The application indicates that the Facility was placed in-service in December 2013.

On January 12, 2015, an Attorney Examiner suspended the automatic approval process for this application. On April 15, 2015, Staff sent the Applicant an initial set of questions related to the application. On May 14, 2015, Staff held a site visit with the Applicant's representative at a similar digester facility. The Applicant filed its responses to the initial data request on October 27, 2015 and October 30, 2015. Staff and Applicant conducted conference calls on November 23, 2015, December 7, 2015, and December 21, 2015. The Applicant filed answers to questions raised during these conference calls on December 23, 2015.

**STAFF REVIEW**

The Staff's review of applications for certification of a renewable energy resource facility consists primarily, but not exclusively, of three items: (1) the deliverability of the facility's output to the state of Ohio, (2) the resource/ technology used at the facility, and (3) the facility's placed in-service date.

1) Deliverability

The Applicant indicates that the Facility is located in Ohio and therefore the Facility meets the generation deliverability requirements, pursuant to R.C. 4928.64(B)(3)(a).

---

<sup>1</sup> See, Ohio Revised Code (R.C.) 4928.01(A)(37)(a)(x)

<sup>2</sup> The electricity generated by the Facility was previously certified in Case No. 14-0824-EL-REN.

## 2) Resource/Technology

The Facility accepts approximately 138 wet tons of biomass per day from various sources. All waste material is delivered to the site by truck. The biomass, which is fed into the anaerobic digester, is converted to biogas. The biogas is then used to fuel a nominally rated 1.0 megawatt (MW) internal combustion engine and electric generator set.

The generator produces electricity, and a byproduct of the electricity production process is hot exhaust gas. The Applicant captures the heat from the hot exhaust gas in a CHP unit heat loop, which consists of a jacket water heat loop and exhaust gas heat exchanger. The heat from the CHP unit heat loop is then transferred to a second heat loop for the plant. The plant heat loop provides heat to the biosolids pasteurization process, heating to the anaerobic digester process, and seasonal heating to the shop floor. The Facility sometimes flares excess biogas, and a portion of the genset heat is vented to the atmosphere by a radiator. These items are not part of this Application.

Staff concurs with Applicant's proposed methodology for measuring the heat captured and used by the Facility and for converting the measured quantities to an equivalent MWH production level.<sup>3</sup> Based on Staff's review of the application, interrogatory responses, site visits of similar quasar energy facilities, and discussions with the Applicant, Staff concludes that the Facility does capture heat from a generator of electricity and that the generator is fueled by biologically derived methane gas. As such, Staff concludes that the Facility qualifies as a renewable energy resource, pursuant to R.C. 4928.01(A)(37)(a).

## 3) Placed In-Service Date

The Applicant indicated in its application that the placed in-service date of the Facility was December 31, 2013, thereby satisfying the requirement of R.C. 4928.64(A)(1) which requires a qualifying renewable energy resource to have a placed-in-service date on or after January 1, 1998.

## 4) Additional Considerations

- (a) The Facility must be registered with either M-RETS or PJM EIS' GATS, the two attribute tracking systems currently recognized by the Commission. The Applicant indicates that, once approved, it would register the Facility in GATS.
- (b) Consistent with the Commission's decision in Case No. 11-2667-EL-REN, the Staff would typically recognize a certified facility's renewable output beginning with the later of the application filing date or the facility's placed in-service date. However, this Facility has not yet installed the temperature sensors, nor has it determined a baseline volumetric flowrate of the CHP heat loop, both of which are integral to the determination of the MWH equivalence discussed above. Staff proposes that the Applicant should file an update in this proceeding when the temperature sensors are installed and operational, as well as when the volumetric flowrate is established, at which point the Commission should commence recognition of the Facility's renewable output.

---

<sup>3</sup> Applicant responses dated December 23, 2015, and January 6, 2016.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the foregoing analysis, Staff recommends that the Commission certify the Facility as a renewable energy resource generating facility as it satisfies all the applicable eligibility requirements. In addition, the Staff recommends that the Applicant be directed to file an update in this proceeding when the steps mentioned in 4(b) are completed, at which point the Commission should commence recognition of the Facility's renewable output.

**This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities**

**Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

**1/21/2016 8:40:55 AM**

**in**

**Case No(s). 14-2253-EL-REN**

Summary: Staff Review and Recommendation electronically filed by Mr. Stuart M Siegfried on behalf of PUCO Staff