

From: [Ohio Power Siting Board](#)
To: [Puco Docketing](#)
Subject: comment for 20-1605 [ref: _00Dt0GzXt._500t0cGKLI:ref]
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
It appears that the Director of Development for Lightsource BP, Shanelle Montana, has been misleading the residents of Allen and Auglaize counties. At the November 18, 2020 unofficial Public Information Meeting, held at the Apollo JVS, Shanelle Montana made statements regarding a Payment In Lieu Of Taxes agreement, in which she said that Lightsource BP were, “100% already talking to the County about what their expectations are, what their desires are, all of that. So, we are hoping a lot that conversation can happen up front so that what we propose to the State is something that both the County and we are already in agreement on.” Shanelle Montana also stated, “So the PILOT [Payment in Lieu Of Taxes] program is still being discussed and negotiated so we have a range with that...”.

The group opposing the industrial solar development, Against Birch Solar, reached out to the Commissioner’s office on November 19th for clarification and was told definitively that the Allen County Commissioner’s office is not currently and has not begun any negotiations with Lightsource BP (Birch Solar, LLC) regarding the proposed Birch Solar project. A representative from Against Birch Solar also had conversations with the Allen County Republican Party Chairman, Keith Cheney, as well as Allen County Auditor Rachel Gilroy, on November 23rd, who both stated that the Auditor’s office is not currently nor have been negotiating any aspect of a PILOT agreement with Lightsource BP as such negotiations are not and will not be made through the Auditor’s office but that of the County Commissioners.

During the Friday, November 20th official/mandated Public Information Meeting presented by Lightsource BP (Birch Solar, LLC), a representative from Against Birch Solar, Jim Thompson, asked Shanelle Montana to clarify which county office and who specifically Lightsource BP was “negotiating” with. Shanelle Montana danced around answering the question before finally stating it was the Allen County Auditor’s off, and staff.

The lack of transparency and now apparent untruths continue to feed the growing frustration of the residents within and surrounding the proposed industrial solar development. Also, many within the Allen and Auglaize county areas still have a sour taste in their mouth from when BP owned and operated the refinery in Lima as they threatened to close the facility if they could not find a suitable purchaser.

I find the lack of transparency and apparent untruths very disturbing. Shanelle Montana was given the chance to clarify her November 19th statements, at the November 20th meeting, and judging by her response I feel she knows she was caught misrepresenting the facts. This industrial solar development, if constructed, will be done so by a developer who has already admitted they have few, if any, similarly sized industrial solar developments, no developments of this size located to such a densely populated area, and is led by Lightsource BP’s CEO Keith Smith who lead the failed Crescent Dunes 110MW solar power development costing the US taxpayer millions of dollars. With such lack of transparency, misleading of our community and management with a failed track record I am hard pressed to think of anyone who should be in favor of this project both locally or at the Ohio Public Siting Board.

Jim Thompson 

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Summary: Public Comment of Jim Thompson, via website, electronically filed by PUCO
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