

BEFORE THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD

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In the Matter of the :
Application of Republic :
Wind, LLC, for a :
Certificate of :
Environmental : Case No. 19-1066-EL-BTX
Compatibility and Public :
Need to Construct a :
Transmission Line in :
Seneca County, Ohio. :

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PROCEEDINGS

before Mr. Daniel Fullin and Mr. David Hicks,
Administrative Law Judges, at the Ohio Power Siting
Board, via Webex, called at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday,
January 7, 2021.

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1 APPEARANCES:

2 Bricker & Eckler, LLP
3 By Mr. Dylan Borchers
4 100 South Third Street
5 Columbus, Ohio 43215-4291

6 On behalf of the Applicant.

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Thursday Evening Session,
January 7, 2021.

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ALJ FULLIN: Thank you. Good evening and welcome, everyone. My name is Dan Fullin, and with me is David Hicks. We are Administrative Law Judges in the Legal Department of the Ohio Power Siting Board and have been assigned to this proceeding.

One of the duties of the Administrative Law Judges assigned by the Board includes conducting a public hearing in Case No. 19-1066-EL-BTX which involves the application filed by Republic Wind, LLC, for a certificate to construct a transmission line in Seneca County, Ohio.

Due to the COVID-19 emergency that remains in effect under Executive Order 2020-01D which was issued by the Governor of Ohio, today's hearing is being held through Webex which enables interested persons to offer testimony on the proposed project by telephone or video by way of the internet. The hearing is also being live streamed at www.youtube.com/user/pucoio -- pucoio one word.

Before we get started with the public hearing, I would like to address some preliminary issues. First, if you experience technical

difficulties during the hearing, there are several options to address the issue. If your internet connection drops at any point, you can try to join Webex again by video, or you can participate by phone. If those options are unsuccessful, please call the Board's Legal Department, and their number is (614) 466-6843. Call them immediately for assistance.

Finally, if you merely wish to listen to the hearing using your phone instead of accessing by way of Webex on the internet, you can view the live stream on the YouTube channel, or you can listen to the hearing by dialing 1-408-418-9388 and entering the meeting number which is 1736388904.

More information about the Webex technical help options can be obtained through the chat feature which will be available throughout the hearing. You may click on that chat button at any time to obtain technical assistance or ask procedural questions during the hearing. The chat feature should be -- should not be used for any other purpose such as to offer comments.

I'm missing a page here.

ALJ HICKS: I can wrap it up, Dan.

ALJ FULLIN: Okay. Go ahead.

ALJ HICKS: So as Dan was saying, the chat feature should not be used for any other purpose such as to offer comments about the proposed project that's the subject of the hearing. Please also be aware that chats are recorded and should not be considered private. Chats are also not part of the official record in this case.

As indicated by the entry of October 30, 2020, witnesses were to register to testify. Individuals who have registered to provide testimony should be ready to speak when we read their name from the registration list.

Individuals who are commenting by video will be unmuted by a Board staff member when it is time for their testimony. If you are providing your testimony by telephone, a Board staff member will call you at the phone number you provided when it is your turn to testify. I think it was commented earlier one witness is ready to go that way.

Please bear with us as we work to queue up each individual. In this case it sounds like that's already been achieved. So that should not be an issue. Also consistent with the entry of October 30, 2020, we ask that you keep your testimony to 5 minutes in length and avoid repetitive comments.

To avoid unnecessary background noise, we would ask that you keep your mic -- everyone, not just the witness, but everyone keep your mics on mute unless commenting. Again, if you have questions about this process as the hearing proceeds, please use the chat function in Webex.

Are there any questions from anyone before we officially proceed?

Hearing none, I think we will go ahead and move into the formal proceeding.

The Ohio Power Siting Board has scheduled for hearing at this time and place -- excuse me. Actually go on the record officially, Karen, if we are good to go?

COURT REPORTER: Yes.

ALJ HICKS: Okay. So the Ohio Power Siting Board has called for hearing at this time and place Case No. 19-1066-EL-BTX which is captioned in the Matter of the Application of Republic Wind, LLC, for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need to Construct a Transmission Line in Seneca County, Ohio.

As mentioned earlier, my name is David Hicks. Also on the line is Dan Fullin. We are Administrative Law Judges in the Board's Legal

1 Department and will be conducting today's hearing.

2 In addition to Administrative Law Judge
3 Fullin and myself, there are other members of the
4 Board assisting with various aspects of the hearing
5 including Micah Schmidt, Aubrey Barker, Matt Butler,
6 Jill Coker, and Brittany Waugaman who will be
7 overseeing the event on Webex and YouTube.

8 And at this time we will go ahead and
9 take appearances by counsel of the parties to the
10 case.

11 MR. BORCHERS: Thank you, your Honor. On
12 behalf of the Applicant, Dylan Borchers with the law
13 firm of Bricker & Eckler, 100 South Third Street,
14 Columbus, Ohio 43215. Thank you.

15 ALJ HICKS: Thank you, Mr. Borchers.

16 The subject of today's hearing is an
17 application filed by Republic Wind, LLC, for the
18 purpose of constructing and operating a transmission
19 line in Seneca County, Ohio. Specifically, the
20 Applicant proposes to construct a 7.4 mile 138
21 kilovolt transmission line and point of
22 interconnection switchyard to be used for delivering
23 power from the Republic wind farm which is the
24 subject of a pending application in another case
25 captioned -- with Case No. 17-2295-EL-BGN.

1 Republic Wind, LLC's application was
2 filed on August 27, 2019, and was supplemented on
3 February 25, 2020. I would also note that the
4 Board's Staff filed a Report of Investigation on
5 August 13, 2020. This report is a recommendation
6 from the Board's Staff and does not necessarily
7 reflect what the Board's final determination in the
8 case will be.

9 The purpose of today's public hearing is
10 to receive testimony regarding Republic Wind, LLC's
11 application from entities and persons in the local
12 community who are affected by the proposed project
13 but who are not parties to the case.

14 The public hearing is not a question and
15 answer session but is an opportunity to let the Board
16 know what you think about the proposed project.
17 Today's public hearing is only one aspect of the
18 process in this case. An evidentiary hearing is
19 scheduled to begin on Tuesday, January 28, 2021, also
20 via Webex. The purpose of the evidentiary hearing is
21 for the parties in this case including the Applicant
22 and Board Staff, there are no Intervenor in the
23 case, to provide testimony and other evidence
24 regarding the project.

25 Tonight's hearing is being transcribed by

1 a court reporter from Armstrong & Okey. If you plan
2 to testify, please speak clearly so that the court
3 reporter can accurately reflect your comments on the
4 record. Please make sure that you verbally respond
5 to all questions asked -- asked in order that they
6 can be properly transcribed.

7 Once I'm finished up with this
8 introduction, I will call the individual on the
9 registration list to testify about the proposed
10 project. Each person registered to testify will be
11 permitted to speak once about the project. We will
12 ask you to take an oath or affirmation that what you
13 are about to say is the truth. Your testimony will
14 then be considered as part of the official record in
15 this case and will be reviewed by the Board before a
16 final decision is made on the application.

17 Additionally, counsel for the Applicant
18 as well as myself and Judge Fullin will be permitted
19 to ask you questions about your testimony. Should
20 you decide that you do not want to testify when I
21 call your name from the registration list, you can
22 express that at that point. Also once you are
23 finished -- finished testifying, you are free to go
24 at any time. You don't have to stick around for
25 things to wrap up.

1 Individuals who wish to supplement their
2 testimony with an exhibit for the Board's
3 consideration, a copy of the document along with a
4 reference to the case number in this case, which
5 again is 19-1066-EL-BGN, must be provided to the
6 Board no later than January 13, 2021, and that could
7 be sent via e-mail to contactopsb@puco.ohio.gov or
8 sent via mail to the Ohio Power Siting Board at 180
9 East Broad Street, Attention: Docketing Division,
10 Columbus, Ohio 43215.

11 For anyone not testifying but who wishes
12 to file a public comment regarding the proposed
13 project, you can do so in writing on the Board's
14 website by e-mail also to contactopsb@puco.ohio.gov
15 or by mail again to the Ohio Power Siting Board, 180
16 East Broad Street, Attention: Docketing Division,
17 Columbus, Ohio 43215. And any written comments
18 should also reference Case No. 19-1066-EL-BGN.

19 The Board appreciates everyone's
20 participation in tonight's hearing and wants everyone
21 registered to testify to have the opportunity to do
22 so. And so at this time I believe we are set to go
23 ahead and begin testimony with our lone witness.

24 So if the host would go ahead and promote
25 Mr. Baldosser, I apologize if I mispronounced that,

1 to a panelist.

2 MR. SCHMIDT: Mr. Baldosser, you've been
3 promoted. Please enable your audio and video.

4 MR. BALDOSSER: Yes. Can you hear me?

5 ALJ HICKS: Yes, we can. Good evening.

6 MR. BALDOSSER: I have been getting a lot
7 of pixelating in some of your comments, so I'm
8 hoping -- I'm hoping it -- my bandwidth will carry
9 the testimony.

10 ALJ HICKS: I can hear you now.

11 MR. BALDOSSER: I would like to begin
12 first by saying thank you to Mr. Butler. I would
13 like to begin by thanking Mr. Butler and Mr. Hicks
14 and thanking the Power Siting Board and staff for
15 coordinating the public comment forum.

16 ALJ HICKS: I just --

17 MR. BALDOSSER: Yes.

18 ALJ HICKS: -- need to swear you in
19 before you begin.

20 MR. BALDOSSER: Yes, sir.

21 ALJ HICKS: Could you please raise your
22 right hand.

23 (Witness sworn.)

24 ALJ HICKS: Thank you. If you could just
25 for the record before you begin state and spell your

1 name.

2 MR. BALDOSSER: My name is Gary
3 Baldosser, G-A-R-Y B-A-L-D-O-S-S-E-R.

4 ALJ HICKS: Okay. And could you also
5 please provide your address including the township,
6 if any.

7 MR. BALDOSSER: My home address is 5120
8 Township Road 78, Republic, Ohio. ZIP Code is 44867.
9 And I am a resident of Adams Township.

10 ALJ HICKS: Okay. And do you reside or
11 work within the project area that is the subject of
12 this case?

13 MR. BALDOSSER: Yes, I do.

14 ALJ HICKS: Okay. Thank you. Please go
15 ahead with your testimony.

16 MR. BALDOSSER: Yes. Thank you again to
17 Mr. Butler and thank you, Mr. Hicks, and to the
18 Siting Board and staff for coordinating the public
19 comment forum.

20 As I said, I am Gary Baldosser and I am a
21 fourth generation farmer in Seneca County and I work
22 with my two sons who are the fifth generation of our
23 family to live and work in our community.

24 Now, I always begin every conversation
25 about our renewable energy project by stating my

1 position. I am in favor of developing this
2 transmission line project as well as the wind
3 generation project it will support. I live, I work,
4 I own land, and pay real estate taxes within the
5 footprint of the transmission project as well as the
6 generation project.

7 And we, our family, will be impacted by
8 every manner of this project in this event. I
9 support the construction of the transmission phase of
10 the project not just because it supports the
11 generation side of the project, but I support it as a
12 greater part of the conversation about investing in
13 rural America.

14 Society has established a new minimum
15 level of expectations. Our rural communities have
16 the same expectations as our urban neighbors. They
17 expect access to high speed broadband. They expect
18 reliable cellular and data coverage. They expect
19 fire and EMS services will be there when they call.
20 And they expect to have electricity every time they
21 flip a switch or want to recharge a device.

22 All of these things take an investment,
23 an investment in our rural community to meet those
24 expectations. Now, I understand that some people may
25 not see the need for this transmission

1 infrastructure, but our community has embraced this
2 investment, not by speaking loudly at meetings or
3 posting comments on social media but by partnering
4 with private industry and leasing their personal
5 resources, their land, to make all of our communities
6 better.

7 There is a great opportunity here to
8 leverage private resources with the developing
9 industry and local government to become the next
10 greatest generation within our community.

11 In 1936, my Great Grandfather Louis
12 Baldosser and his rural neighbors identified a need
13 in their community. That need was electricity. They
14 knew that no one would bring electricity to their
15 rural homes and farms and that they needed to act.

16 Great Grandfather Louis, along with his
17 neighbors, signed the original charter to create the
18 North Central Electric Cooperative. And as I
19 understand the story, they went way beyond that and
20 put some of their own money into the coop to provide
21 startup capital.

22 Our community is where it is at today
23 because some visionary leaders took action to invest
24 and share their resources with their neighbors. Like
25 my great grandfather, my vision is that we need to

1 act now and invest the resources we have into our
2 community to allow it to prosper, thrive, and support
3 generations to come.

4 I would urge and be very pleased if the
5 Power Siting Board would approve the certificate for
6 construction for the Republic Wind, LLC, transmission
7 lines. I would be more than happy to continue the
8 discussion and try to answer any questions that you
9 might have.

10 Thank you for your time and your
11 consideration.

12 ALJ HICKS: Thank you, Mr. Baldosser.

13 Judge Fullin, Mr. Borchers, I will open
14 it to either of you. Do either of you have any
15 questions?

16 ALJ FULLIN: I don't have any questions
17 at this time, but I did want to very much thank
18 Mr. Baldosser for his testimony. Appreciate what he
19 had to say.

20 MR. BORCHERS: Likewise. Thank you, your
21 Honor. I have no questions.

22 ALJ HICKS: Okay. Mr. Baldosser, we
23 appreciate again. I echo Judge Fullin's comments and
24 appreciate your testimony and taking the time to be
25 on with us.

1 MR. BALDOSSER: Well, thank you very
2 much. I am only picking up pieces of it, but I
3 appreciate the opportunity to participate.

4 ALJ HICKS: Thank you.

5 ALJ FULLIN: I was hearing everything you
6 said loud and clear on my end, and we will have a
7 transcript of it too so. Thank you.

8 ALJ HICKS: With that, Mr. Baldosser
9 being our only witness, I believe that concludes the
10 registered individuals to testify. I want to thank
11 everyone who participated in the public hearing and a
12 special thanks to staff here at the Board that help
13 us get all of this up and running via Webex and
14 continue these public hearings. And thank you to
15 everyone who tuned in via Webex or attended via
16 phone.

17 Judge Fullin, if you have nothing else, I
18 think that wraps up the -- today's public hearing.

19 ALJ FULLIN: I would agree. We can
20 conclude the hearing today, and I thank everyone who
21 participated or who attended.

22 ALJ HICKS: All right. Thank you,
23 everyone. We are adjourned.

24 (Thereupon, at 6:21 p.m., the hearing was
25 adjourned.)

CERTIFICATE

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is
a true and correct transcript of the proceedings
taken by me in this matter on Thursday, January 7,
2021, and carefully compared with my original
stenographic notes.

Karen Sue Gibson, Registered
Merit Reporter.

(KSG-7021)

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in

Case No(s). 19-1066-EL-BTX

Summary: Transcript In the Matter of the Application of Republic Wind, LLC, for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need to Construct a Transmission Line in Seneca County, Ohio. electronically filed by Mr. Ken Spencer on behalf of Armstrong & Okey, Inc. and Gibson, Karen Sue Mrs.