

September 28, 2009
Wind Energy Resource Zone Board
Michigan Public Service Commission
6545 Mercantile Way
Lansing, MI 48911
10:00 a.m.
Minutes

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Board Chair, David Walters at 10:00 a.m.

Roll Call

Members Present: Julie Baldwin, Steve Brock, Trevor Lauer, John Miceli, Mary Templeton, David Walters, David Wright

Alternates Present: David Bertram, Alternate for Gene Jorissen

Joe DeVito, Alternate for Rodger Kershner

Carlo Capra, Alternate for Tom Vitez

II. Web Meeting Announcement.

Christine Battiste, MPSC Staff, provided technical assistance for the web meeting.

III. Adoption of the Agenda.

The Chair asked if there were changes, deletions or additions to the agenda.

Ms. Templeton requested an additional agenda item to discuss an article that appeared in the Detroit Free Press regarding her employment. Ms. Templeton made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Miceli. The Board adopted the Agenda as amended.

IV. Approval of the proposed minutes of the September 14, 2009 meeting.

The Chair requested that the minutes be revised to show reflect the correct meeting date under item IV. The meeting date was corrected to show that the board approved the minutes for the August 10, 2009 meeting instead of the September 14, 2009 meeting. He then asked if there were other changes, deletions or additions to the minutes. Mr. Bertram made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Capra. The Board approved the minutes as amended.

V. Review and discuss final report.

A discussion was held with Sally Talberg (Board's Report Writer Consultant) regarding Board member comments received regarding the report to date.

Ms. Talberg asked the Board how the two petitions received from Huron County and Lake Township residents should be addressed in the report. The Board opted to separate the petitions from the public comments in the graphs and the summaries. Ms. Talberg will work with a graphic designer on some options for including the petition information in a report chart.

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Ms. Talberg explained that due to an error in the FAA dataset used in the Board's analysis, the Charlevoix Airport was not correctly reflected in the Board's airport exclusions. Chuck McKeown, the Board's wind energy consultant, recalculated the Board's minimum and maximum data for Region 2 to incorporate this correction. A summary of the updated data was provided to the Board via email. The report will be updated with this corrected data.

Ms. Templeton suggested revising the report to remove all wind turbines located within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. She explained that the Board initially concluded that due to the one mile Great Lakes shoreline buffer, there would be very few, if any, turbines placed in the park. She also said that the Board had previously agreed not to place any turbines within the park. However, the proposed report analysis did include some wind turbines within park boundaries. After the Board held a discussion, the decision was made to add some clarifying language explaining that the 66 – 81% reduction made by the Board to account for various siting factors would include sensitive areas like Sleeping Bear Dunes.

Ms. Templeton moved to change the report and remove all turbines located within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. After a discussion, a vote was taken. There were 2 members voting yes, 6 members voting no and 2 members abstained. The motion did not pass.

The Board ended the discussion by deciding to add the phrase “or sensitive federal lands” to the sensitive areas language on page 61 of the proposed report.

Mr. McKeown presented a table showing the impact on the number of turbines that could be placed in each of the Board's four identified wind regions using setbacks from structures of 300 and 400 meters. The table also included the number of wind turbines based on the 200 meter setback used by the Board for its analysis. The Board concluded that using a structure setback number higher than 200 meters would have likely resulted in the Board choosing to use percent reductions lesser than the 66-81%. Mr. McKeown will work with Ms. Talberg to develop a graphical representation showing the impacts of the different setback distances.

Ms. Talberg will send the new report sections to Board members for review by September 30. She asked for Board member comment by October 7.

Va. Discuss Mary Templeton's employment change.

Ms. Templeton explained that she recently accepted a position Wind Energy Consulting and Contracting, Inc.. An article in the Detroit Free Press suggested that since Ms. Templeton is the Board member representing the public-at-large, there may be a conflict since she now works in the wind industry. Ms. Templeton stated that since the focus with her company was on Community

Wind and the focus of the Wind Board was on large scale utility development, she did not think there would be a conflict of interest, however, she would abstain from any votes that may represent a conflict of interest. The Chair pointed out that he too had accepted a new job since he was appointed to the Board. He felt that his new job as General Manager of the Michigan Public Power Agency did not constitute a conflict with his Board duties. The Chair and several Board members strongly supported Ms. Templeton continuing to represent the public-at-large. The Board decided to ask Mr. Ianni to review the situation.

VI. Planning discussion.

The Board has a regularly scheduled meeting on October 12.

The final report is due on October 15, 2009.

The Chair asked Ms. Baldwin to review Public Act 295 and appropriate Commission Orders and describe the remaining Board activities at the next meeting.

VII. Public comments.

Mike Serafin, Detroit Edison, pointed out that quantifying the comments received by the Board might not be a fair representation of sentiment. He mentioned that during the public hearing in Bad Axe, through a show of hands, approximately half of the people in attendance indicated they liked wind turbines while the comments made to the Board did not necessarily reflect that level of support.

Mr. Serafin said that percent reduction numbers (66-81%) adopted by the Board may be too high if 300 or 400 meter structure setbacks are used. This could cause the Board to understate the wind potential.

Dave Peruski, Huron County Commissioner from Sheridan Township, asked the Board why there was no representation on the Board from Huron County. The Chair explained that the legislature determined the makeup of the Board and that they did not know where the Board would identify wind regions. However, Mr. Peruski replied that the legislature knew there were two wind projects in the county. Mr. Peruski requested representation from areas where turbines are present, like Huron County, on any future board.

Mr. Peruski recommended linear setbacks. For example, 100 feet/100 db, 1000 feet /45 db, and 1300 feet /35 db.

Mr. Peruski said that zoning for placement of wind turbines should stay local. The Chair responded by saying that the Board is not charged with making zoning determinations.

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Kurt Damrow, Huron County Commissioner, said that the Board's use of a 200 meter setback in its analysis may imply support for this setback. He said that turbines are quieter now and also that larger turbines are expected for future wind developments. He said there is a concern with multiple turbines located near a non-participating resident. Additionally, he said that there are historical issues that may impact turbine placement due to old farms. He said that we need to know federal guidelines related to turbines near the Great Lakes Shoreline. He also pointed out that ITC building transmission lines to serve the wind zones will be controversial.

Tom Karas, from the Traverse City area, pointed out that the Sleeping Bear Dunes area is a small part of the local lakeshore. He said there is more interest in community wind in the area.

Mr. Miceli made a motion to adjourn the meeting that was seconded by Mr. Brock. The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.