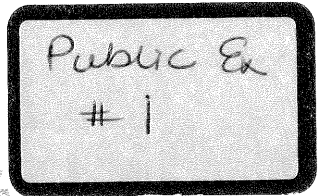


SOUTHWEST WIND CONSULTING LLC
1631 - 290th Avenue
Tyler, MN 56178
(507) 531-0075

2006 AUG 17 AM 8:59
RECEIVED
ADMINISTRATIVE
HEARINGS



August 16, 2006

The Honorable Steve M. Mihalchick
Administrative Law Judge
100 Washington Square
Suite 1700
Minneapolis, MN 55401-2138

Re: Big Stone II Certificate of Need Process for Transmission Facilities
Docket No. OAH No. 12-2500-17037-2, MPUC Dkt No. CN-05-1275
Docket No. OAH No. 12-2500-17038-2, MPUC Dkt No. TR-05-1275

Dear Judge Mihalchick:

A number of local citizens and elected officials in the area that will be directly impacted by the above-referenced transmission facilities are very concerned about the impact of these facilities on their community. As with the development of transmission facilities in Southwest Minnesota, local officials feel responsible for ensuring that local interests and concerns are fairly represented in the Certificate of Need process.

With this process having proceed past its Fourth Prehearing Order, the local elected officials are concerned that they may have missed their opportunity to express their interests and concerns with regard to these facilities.

I am writing in my capacity as a wind project developer who is working with local officials on a wind project which is proposed for Big Stone County. I am a former Lincoln County Commissioner and had the opportunity to testify in the Xcel Energy transmission line case in 2003-04 (OAH Docket No. 15-2500-14699-2).

County Commissioners and local citizens in Big Stone, Swift, Lac Qui Parle, Kandiyohi, Chippewa and Stevens Counties would like to become involved in the public discussion regarding these transmission facilities. They feel strongly that, as in Southwest Minnesota, when the burden of these facilities fall locally, there should be some opportunity for local benefit to offset community impacts.

Page 2

The Honorable Steve M. Mihalchick

August 16, 2006

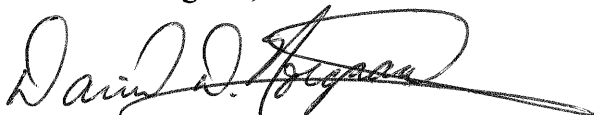
Although I cannot specially address how the local officials will propose to find this balance for the community, I expect that they would propose something like the Conditions established on the Xcel Energy Certificate of Need for Transmission Facilities. Those Conditions included the development of a certain amount of "community wind" whereby area residents would have an opportunity to invest in these facilities and derive some economic benefit in the immediate area.

Upon review of your Third Prehearing Order, I specifically noted your reference to Minn. R. 1400.6200 of the Contested Case Rules, subpart 5, Participation by Public. I was encouraged that the Rules authorize a Judge to hear testimony and receive exhibits from any person at hearing whether they have petitioned to intervene or not. I would hope that the local elected officials would be afforded the opportunity to present their case under this particular provision – even if they are unable to secure intervenor status in their own right.

The specific question we have for you is how this process – having proceeded as long as it has – might accommodate the presentation from local officials. We will be in contact with certain parties who have secured intervenor status in this matter. In the meantime, each of the counties noted above will be discussing this project at upcoming Board Meetings and will likely prepare formal resolutions expressing their interests and concerns regarding the Certificates of Need and any conditions they might deem appropriate in this matter.

Your consideration of the questions and issues raised above is greatly appreciated.

With best regards,



David D. Norgaard

DDN/kmd

file copy



STATE OF MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
100 Washington Square, Suite 1700
100 Washington Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401-2138

August 22, 2006

David D. Norgaard
Southwest Wind Consulting, LLC
1631 – 290th Avenue
Tyler, MN 56178

Re: *In the Matter of the Application of Otter Tail Power Company and Others for Certification of Transmission Facilities in Western Minnesota; MPUC Dkt. CN-05-619; OAH Docket No. 12-2500-17037-2*

In the Matter of the Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for a Route Permit for the Big Stone Transmission Project in Western Minnesota; MPUC Dkt. TR-05-1275; OAH Docket No. 12-2500-17038-2

Dear Mr. Norgaard:

This is in response to your letter of August 16, 2006. In that letter, you state that a number of local citizens and elected officials are concerned that they have missed the opportunity to express their interests and concerns regarding the transmission facilities proposed in this matter. I believe that there are still several opportunities to provide input that can affect the outcome of these proceedings.

First, public officials, and the public in general, can contact the Department of Commerce and any of the other parties and discuss their personal and mutual interests. I have enclosed a copy of the service list that lists the parties and other non-party participants for your use.

Second, and more important from my point, is the opportunity for everyone to provide input at the public hearings in western Minnesota during the week of October 9 and in St. Paul on October 16, 2006. Those public hearings are also informational meetings being held by the Department of Commerce on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. I and the Department strongly encourage all members of the public to provide comments and ask questions at those consolidated public hearings and informational meetings. We also encourage you to submit written comments to me or the Department by October 31, 2006.

6x 1

Third, you or anyone else may request to be placed on the service list as a non-party participant so that you can receive copies of notices, orders, and similar procedural documents that are filed.

I have enclosed a copy of the Fifth Prehearing Order which revised some of the schedule dates in this matter. I hope that the information I provided is helpful to you and local officials in western Minnesota and do encourage you and them to provide us the input we need to make informed, reasonable decisions in this matter.

Sincerely,



STEVE M. MIHALCHICK
Administrative Law Judge

Telephone: 612-349-2544
steve.mihalchick@state.mn.us

SMM:mo
cc: Service List

In the Matter of the Application of Otter
Tail Power Company and Others for
Certification of Transmission Facilities in
Western Minnesota

ALJs' Service List as of April 24, 2006

In the Matter of the Application to the
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for
a Route Permit for the Big Stone
Transmission Project in Western
Minnesota

**Party and Agency Representatives—receive all correspondence, motions, prefiled
testimony, and discovery; one copy unless otherwise indicated:**

Burl W. Haar, Executive Secretary (15)
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 Seventh Place E., Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

Steve M. Mihalchick
Administrative Law Judge
100 Washington Square, Suite 1700
Minneapolis, MN 55401-2138
(Original only, no discovery)

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Docket Coordinator
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Dean Pawlowski
Big Stone Project Manager
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215 South Cascade Street
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Elizabeth Goodpaster, Attorney
Minn. Center for Environmental Advocacy
26 East Exchange Street, Suite 206
Saint Paul, MN 55101
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Minnetonka, MN 55305

Carol Overland
Overland Law Office
402 Washington St S
Northfield, MN 55057-2467
(only as to issues related to the Mesaba
Project)

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John DiDonato, Executive Director
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Janet Shaddix Elling
Shaddix & Associates
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Bloomington, Minnesota 55431
(prefiled testimony only)

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David R. Moeller
Minnesota Power
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Duluth, MN 55802-2093

Elizabeth Goodpaster, Attorney
Minn. Center for Environmental Advocacy
26 East Exchange Street, Suite 206
Saint Paul, MN 55101
(as to Route Permit Matter)

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kmb@mcgrannshea.com
jshaddix@janetshaddix.com

DAVID D. NORGAARD
1567 – 280TH AVENUE
TYLER, MN 56178
(507) 531-0075

August 28, 2006

The Honorable Steve M. Mihalchick
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings
100 Washington Square, Suite 1700
100 Washington Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55401

**Re: In the Matter of the Application of Otter Tail Power Company and Others
for Certification of Transmission Facilities in Western Minnesota;
OAH Docket No. 12-2500-17037-2
MPUC Docket No. CN-05-619
And
In the Matter of the Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities
Commission for a Route Permit for the Big Stone Transmission Project
In Western Minnesota;
OAH Docket No. 12-2500-17038-2
MPUC Docket No. TR-05-1275**

Dear Judge Mihalchick:

Thank you for your response to my inquiry regarding the opportunity for local officials to be heard in the process of determining the need for transmission facilities in West Central Minnesota.

I will be working with local officials in the coming weeks to follow-up on your advice in this matter.

We will avail ourselves of the opportunity to contact Department of Commerce officials to discuss community interests with respect to the certification of need and siting of transmission facilities.

The local officials with whom I am working look forward to the opportunity to participate in the public hearings and informational meetings that are scheduled for October. It is virtually certain that these community representatives will prepare and submit written comments to you and/or the Department by October 31, 2006.

Page 2

The Honorable Steve M. Mihalchick

August 28, 2006

I would request that the following persons be placed on the Service List as Non-Party Participants so that we can receive copies of notices, Orders and similar procedural documents that are filed. Please include the following persons:

David D. Norgaard
Southwest Wind Consulting LLC
1567 – 280TH Avenue
Tyler, MN 56178
commish5@frontiernet.net
Fax: 507-247-5672

Paul Strong
Big Stone Wind LLC
P.O. Box 275
Ortonville, MN 56278
pstrong@ortonvillemn.net
Fax: 320-839-6119

Kevin Walli
Fryberger, Buchanan, Smith & Frederick, P.A.
332 Minnesota Street, Suite W-1260
St. Paul, MN 55101
kevinwalli@integraonline.com
Fax: 651-221-1035

Again, thank you for your prompt response to my inquiry. I will be working to facilitate local/community participation in the above-referenced proceedings.

Sincerely,



David D. Norgaard

DDN/kmd



VINCENT R. GUERTIN
BUSINESS MANAGER

LOCAL UNION 949

Public Ex
#2

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS

IBEW

12908 NICOLLET AVENUE SOUTH, BURNSVILLE, MINNESOTA 55337

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2006 OCT -2 AM 9:27
ADMINISTRATIVE
HEARINGS
TELEPHONE: 952/ 890-8484
FAX: 952/ 890-2244

September 29, 2006

The Honorable Steve M. Mihalchick
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings
100 Washington Square, Suite 1700
Minneapolis, MN 55401-2138

The Honorable Barbara L. Neilson
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings
100 Washington Square, Suite 1700
Minneapolis, MN 55401-2138

RE: OAH: 12-2500-17037-2
MPUC Docket No. CN-05-619

Dear Judge Mihalchick and Judge Neilson:

IBEW Local Union 949 represents approximately 2,500 members in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa. On behalf of these bargaining unit members, many of whom will consume power and benefit from electricity generated at BSP II, it is the position of this Local Union that the proposed Big Stone II Plant Project and the accompanying transmission applied for is not only reasonable, but in the best interest of the citizens of Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota and Iowa.

The utilities' plan to build an electric generating plant that will be coal-based, using the latest proven technology, resulting in 18% less CO2 than conventional coal combustion technologies, to generate approximately 630 megawatts of power, serving 2.3 million customers of seven regional utilities. The plant will make use of an existing site, thereby utilizing existing infrastructure for rail, water and ash disposal.

The construction phase of the project will provide employment for an average 625 construction workers; many of them union jobs. There is expected to be a peak workforce of 1,500. This amounts to approximately \$516 million in new wages during the construction period. Once the Plant is up and running, an estimated 35 – 40 new employees will be required to operate the Plant, the majority of which are expected to be union.

The ripple effect of these new jobs is expected to generate a total economic activity increase of \$3.1 million in the form of goods and services purchased in the area. Increases in wages and spending generate increases in the tax base.

The availability of, and the base load power generated at Big Stone II will contribute to the reliability of our regional electrical system and help meet the rising demand needs of the consumer at reasonable cost.



LOCAL UNION 949 IBEW

Steve Mihalchick / Barbara Nieison
September 29, 2006
Page Two

The ability to deliver this power efficiently and reliably is key and in the public interest. The application is valid and has merit.

Your Honors, we urge you to very carefully and favorably consider the matter of application of Otter Tail Power Company and Others for Certification of Transmission Facilities in Western Minnesota. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



VINCENT R. GUERTIN
Business Manager

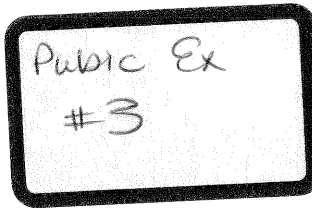


RICHARD P. OAKES
Business Representative

/eat, OPEIU 12, AFL-CIO



Worthington PUBLIC UTILITIES



318 Ninth Street
P. O. Box 458
Worthington, MN 56187-0458
Phone 507-372-8680
Fax 507-372-8688
www.worthingtonutilities.com

October 4, 2006

The Honorable Steve M. Mihalchick
Office of Administrative Hearings
100 Washington Square, Suite 1700
Minneapolis, MN 55401-2138

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2006 OCT - 6 AM 8:56
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HEARINGS

Dear Judge Mihalchick:

I am writing to express the City of Worthington Public Utilities support for the Big Stone II generation and transmission projects. Big Stone II is a collaboration of investor-owned utilities, municipal electric utilities and electric cooperatives from Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota working together to ensure abundant, reliable, and affordable energy.

A new generation plant will be constructed on the site of the existing Big Stone Plant near Milbank, South Dakota. The generation plant is anticipated to be operational in 2011. Big Stone II will be approximately 600 megawatts, coal-based, and designed with the best available emission-control technology as prescribed by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements. The transmission portion of the project will include upgrades or new construction of power lines, substations, and other infrastructure to deliver the power generated by the new plant.

To show the City of Worthington Public Utilities support and request your support for the Big Stone II projects the attached *Resolution of Support for the Big Stone II Project* was adopted by the City of Worthington Public Utilities Water and Light Commission at their regular meeting on Monday, April 17, 2006.

Worthington Public Utilities respectfully requests that the attached resolution be entered into the record expressing our support of the Big Stone II generation and transmission projects.

Sincerely,

Scott Hain
General Manager

Attachment

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE BIG STONE II PROJECT

WHEREAS, the City of Worthington Public Utilities is a member of Missouri River Energy Services (MRES), and

WHEREAS, the City of Worthington Public Utilities purchases all its supplemental power needs from MRES to support its community growth and growing energy needs, and

WHEREAS, MRES has determined that additional base load resources are now necessary to meet the growing needs of all its member municipal electric systems, and

WHEREAS, the Big Stone II Project (BSP II) has been judged to be the most cost effective option to meet the growing needs of the City of Worthington Public Utilities and other MRES members to ensure rate stability and service reliability on a timely basis, and

WHEREAS, BSP II will incorporate highly efficient technology that will result in a cleaner environment, including a substantial reduction in mercury, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides emissions, and

WHEREAS, BSP II will construct new transmission facilities in the region to improve reliability and in conjunction with other transmission projects in the state will also accommodate development of 800 – 1,000 MW of additional generation beyond that needed by BSP II, including potential new renewable generation facilities, and

WHEREAS, the City of Worthington Public Utilities finds this project consistent with its environmental record of 30% of hydro power, recipient of 5,500 KW of wind power and the balance from the cleanest possible base load generation,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Worthington Public Utilities fully supports the Big Stone II Project generation and transmission facilities, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City urges its state legislators and all state regulators to support the BSP II project based on the base load energy needs of the City and the region, the environmental considerations being shown by the project, the potential for future resource development created by the additional transmission capacity proposed by the project and the cost stability and system reliability BSP II would bring to the area.

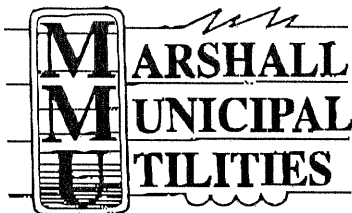
Passed and adopted by the Water and Light Commission of the City of Worthington, Minnesota, this 17 day of April, 2006.

(SEAL)

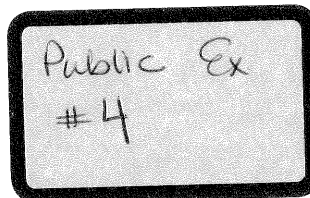
Attest: Deb Scheidt
Deb Scheidt, Secretary

Donald E. Fleming
Donald Fleming, President

Donald E. Habicht
Donald E. Habicht, General Manager



113 South Fourth Street
Marshall, Minnesota 56258-1223
Telephone: 507-537-7005
Fax: 507-537-6836
www.marshallutilities.com



BRAD ROOS
General Manager
STEVE JOHNSON
Operations Manager
LESLIE HISKEN
Customer Service Manager
ROXY SOVELL MOON
Finance Manager

DATE: October 4, 2006

FAX Cover Page

TO: The Honorable Steve M. Mihalchick; and
The Honorable Barbara Neilson

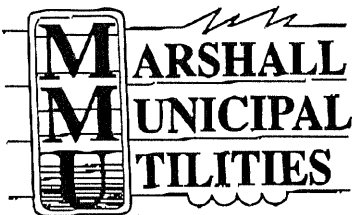
FAX NUMBER: 612-349-2665

FROM: Brad Roos, General Manager

RE: MPUC Hearings on Big Stone II Transmission
State Environmental Impact Studies and Certificate of Need (CON)

TRANSMISSION CONSISTS OF 3 PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER SHEET.

IF ALL PAGES ARE NOT RECEIVED, OR IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL
507-537-7005.



113 South Fourth Street
Marshall, Minnesota 56258-1223
Telephone: 507-537-7005
Fax: 507-537-6836
www.marshallutilities.com

BRAD ROOS
General Manager
STEVE JOHNSON
Operations Manager
LESLIE HISKEN
Customer Service Manager
ROXY SOVELL MOON
Finance Manager

October 3, 2006


The Honorable Steve M. Mihalchick; and
The Honorable Barbara L. Neilson
Office of Administrative Hearings
100 Washington Square, Suite 1700
Minneapolis, MN 55401

In the Matter of:
MPUC Hearings on Big Stone II Transmission
State Environmental Impact Studies and Certificate of Need (CON)

On April 19, 2006, the City of Marshall, acting by and through the Marshall Municipal Utilities Commission adopted Resolution #55, a Resolution in Support of the Big Stone II Power Plant Project (enclosed).

This resolution indicates our support for both the power plant and related transmission project. We ask that our resolution be entered into the record.

Respectfully,


Brad Roos
General Manager

Enclosure

Resolution #55**A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE BIG STONE II PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the City of Marshall, acting by and through the Marshall Municipal Utilities Commission is a member of Missouri River Energy Services (MRES), and

WHEREAS, Marshall purchases supplemental power needs from MRES to support its community growth and growing energy needs, and

WHEREAS, MRES has determined that additional base load resources are now necessary to meet the growing needs of all its member municipal electric systems, and

WHEREAS, the Big Stone II Project (BSP II) has been judged to be the most cost effective option to meet the growing needs of Marshall and other MRES members to ensure rate stability and service reliability on a timely basis, and

WHEREAS, BSP II will incorporate highly efficient technology that will result in a cleaner environment, including a substantial reduction in mercury, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides emissions, and

WHEREAS, BSP II will construct new transmission facilities in the region to improve reliability and in conjunction with other transmission projects in the state will also accommodate development of 800 – 1,000 MW of additional generation beyond that supplied by BSP II, including potential new renewable generation facilities, and

WHEREAS, Marshall finds this project consistent with its environmental record of 21% hydro power and the balance from the cleanest possible base load generation,

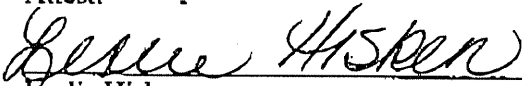
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Marshall Municipal Utilities fully supports the Big Stone II Project generation and transmission facilities, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Marshall Municipal Utilities urges its state legislators and all state regulators to support the BSP II project based on the base load energy needs of Marshall and the region, the environmental considerations being shown by the project, the potential for future resource development created by the additional transmission capacity proposed by the project and the cost stability and system reliability BSP II would bring to the area.

The resolution was adopted this 19th day of April 2006



Daniel J. Baun
Chairman of the Commission

Attest:


Leslie Hisken
Secretary of the Commission

*** RX REPORT ***

RECEPTION OK

TX/RX NO	6145
RECIPIENT ADDRESS	507 537 6836
DESTINATION ID	
ST. TIME	10/04 10:16
TIME USE	00'30
PGS.	3
RESULT	OK