

Village of Lee
Regular Board Meeting
on
September 13, 2020
Village of Lee Fire Barn

Meeting come to order:

Village President Josh Carlson-- present
Trustee Martha May – present
Trustee Jesse Blackwood – present

V. Treasurer Linda Korth – absent
V. Clerk Julie Griffith – present
V. Attorney Cassandra Gottschalk – absent

Trustee Thomas Kapraun-- present
Trustee Jean Michels – present
Trustee Mike Schafer—absent
Trustee Jessica Moser – present

Visitors and Communications:

Visitors: Norm Beeh, Mike Woodbury, Matt Hantzman, Terri Voitik, Gloria and Denny Stehl, Ali Huss, Blair Faber, Doug Sanderson, Dee Duffy, Josh Waddell, Norm Beeh

Resident Julie Griffith requested the board to consider a set-back for the solar farm of at least a half-mile if not the distance away that the windmills are.

Resident Terri Voitik moved from Aurora to Lee recently and presented some questions and concerns about the Steward Creek Solar project based on best practices for solar projects in the U.K.

1. This Steward Solar project is one of the biggest in the country.
2. Hexagon Energy received ppt money which was intended for small businesses.
3. The project is being put on prime agricultural land.
4. The project should be sensitive to local landscapes.
5. The project should minimize visual impact.
6. Hexagon Energy should engage the community in advance of planning.
7. The project should encourage biodiversity.
8. The project should do as much local buying as possible.
9. The project should demonstrate solar stewardship.
10. The project should seek local perspectives.
11. Would Hexagon Energy consider an education center to educate children about the project?
12. At the end of the project will the land be returned to its former state?
13. The project is being planned for a relatively high elevation. Lee is 938' above sea level, and the panels can be 12-15' at the top of the tilt angle.
14. Will the birds confuse the panels for water, or will a special material be used to prevent that?
15. Will the glare be a hazard for local aviation like spray planes?
16. The lighting on the project should be international dark sky association approved.
17. The revenue will be \$21,000-\$42,000 per acre per year yielding \$155,000 million in profits, yet Hexagon Energy offered the Village of Lee \$25,000 per year which Resident Voitik stated is not enough especially considering the construction and degradation of landscape.
18. Will the power generated be supported by the grid?

Matt Hantzman responded to point #1 that he built one in Texas of a similar size with his previous company and to point #2 that the company only has 11 employees. With regard to point #18, it is being studied.

Resident Voitik requested the following amendments to the resolution: a setback of at least ½ mile, non-reflective, non-glare panels, dark-sky approved lighting, leave any existing hedge rows, replace any removed tree with another tree, and \$100,000/year for the Village of Lee.

Resident Gloria Stehl wondered when the project would start. Hantzman said late 2022 in about a 24 month time period. Stehl agreed with the set-back being ½ mile at least. She asked what would happen to the 300' set-back area. Would it be farmed? It maybe subleased for hay or planted to native pollinator species or native grasses and maintained by Hexagon energy. What road system would be used? Hantzman noted that there was a road use agreement with both townships to adhere to traffic management practices and repair to any damage done to the roads. Stehl asked if the land would be leased. About 5000 acres will be leased with 18 landowners participating in the project. Each lease is the same rate, but the amount is private information.

Resident Denny Stehl asked how the solar farm will be set up. Some landowners are not participating, so the acres are not contiguous.

According to Water Assistant Mike Woodbury, two branches coming from a neighbors are brushing the top of a roof on Viking Vie. The branches should be cut down rather than fall through the roof. Trustee Thomas Kapraun asked if the branches were cracked. The windstorm may have damaged it.

Josh Waddell has dealt with energy companies professionally for 15 years, and Hexagon is the only company that has passed his "muster." He also took ppt, and it was a surety to pay their staff and keep them working and not a mark against Hexagon.

Doug Sanderson lives on Herman road within mile and half radius. He owns some property and will have solar panels all four sides. He sees the tax base and the good financial base for schools and the fire department as advantages. His is the 6th generation on his farm, and projects like this would help the stability of family farms. He requests an affirmative proposal.

The Blair Faive family owns ground on Herman. Faivre is in favor. He says that the grass underneath will be better for erosion. Byron is going down, and so there will be extra space on the grid. His family passed on the windmills because they didn't want shadow flicker, but the solar panels don't flicker or make noise and are fairly unobtrusive. This is a lot of revenue that may help Illinois.

Matt Hantzman noted that community projects and feedback are important and that Hexagon Energy isn't trying to hide anything. Lee County has one of the best ordinances that he has seen around the country. Lee County requires a 50 feet setback from residences and 15 feet setback from roads. Hexagon has committed to a 300' setback from homes and 50' setback from county lines and roads. The best practices in U.K. are worthy and are addressed by the ordinances in Lee County and the state of Illinois. Decommissioning is required at the end of the project's life. Hexagon has also made a commitment to landowners and the county. Annual taxes would be raised from from \$200,000 to \$3.5 million dollars per year. Steward asked that some of the money go to the villages. A Community Fund will be 50/50 split between Steward and Lee. The Steward annual operating budget is about 100,000/year, so \$25,000 is significant. In conclusion, Hantzman noted that the issue is going to the

Lee County zoning board of appeals and that Hexagon Energy is bound to Lee Country solar ordinance.

Trustee May asked if there will be a written commitment for funding Lee and Steward. Hantzman responded that the testimony at county meeting on October 1st would be binding in court.

Resident Voitik asked if Lee would be able to get an aggregate price of a rate of 3.5 or 4.1.

The project will tie into an extremely high voltage line which already exists.

Village Engineer Norm Beeh gave an update on the following four project parts:

1. Relocating the water tower from from Mendota to Lee
2. Water distribution improvements to add production and supply for fireflow
3. Drilling and development of a new well on site
4. Work within the old well house

Engineer Beeh suggested that the village keep going, because at some point the Adria owner will decide what he is going to do with the property. The new line could be brought into the south end of the building.

Village President Josh Carlson let the board know that Weaver Construction found Adria a property out of town, and he is going to rebuild the packing house on it. The old building is still under investigation by the state fire marshall, so it can't be written up just yet. Engineer Beeh has been in contact with the lawyer once a week, and he will continue to do so. The loan has been pre-approved, and each contract will have to be approved as it comes up. Engineer Beeh suggests to go ahead with part one, which is the water tower. It is possible the federal government might decide to put more people back to work and make the money available.

Trustee May asked if the lot is cleared enough to do a survey, and Engineer Beeh responded that it is.

Old Business:

Trustee Kapraun agreed the 300' set-back on the Hexagon Energy Steward Creek Solar Resolution may not be enough.

Trustees Moser and Michels asked if residents in DeKalb County would receive any tax benefit and they won't. What the village passes directly affects farmers within a 1.5 mile radius.

Trustee Kapraun asked: What is the life of the foundation, and will it be a 50/50 split?

Hantzman responded that the 50/50 split is the intention, and that the foundation will escalate at 2% per year during the life of the project.

Trustee Kapraun made a motion to pass Resolution 9-14-20, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE STEWARD CREEEK SOLAR PROJECT WITHIN THE 1.5-MILE RADIUS SURROUNDING THE VILLAGE OF LEE, LEE COUNTY, ILLINOIS. Trustee Jesse Blackwood seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, Trustees Kapraun, May, and Blackwood voted yes, and Trustees Jean Michels and Jessica Moser voted no. Resolutions must pass with a recorded majority of the total membership according to Google. Village President Carlson will call the lawyer to see if 3 votes of 5 when 5 are present makes it pass. Trustee Moser said that she voted against because the solar farm is too close, and she is not opposed to a solar farm, but she does not want it in her back yard.

Village President Carlson called for another motion to pass Resolution 9-14-20 with further west setbacks. Trustee Michels made a motion to pass Resolution 9-14-20 as revised. Trustee Blackwood seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, it passed unanimously.

Trustee May stated that the fact finding sheet is wrong and that the village had to pay for lawyer fees for the rezoning. She thinks we should send the bill to Hodge, owner of the rezoned property. Hodge was not at the meeting, and the fact finding sheet should not say so. Hodge didn't pay \$35 with his request, which he should have done. President Carlson said that the presented paper made his request "present" event if he wasn't physically present. Treasurer Korth will send Hodge the bill. President Carlson will call the lawyer about the accuracy of the fact finding sheet.

There is garbage strewn around at 351 Kirke Gate again. The neighbor should contact the health department. Resident Jasmine Demunn will be sent a letter and will be charged \$25/day until the problem is fixed.

Agenda items 9 and 10 will be put on next month's agenda.

Review and Approval of the Minutes, Treasurer's Report and Bill List:

Trustee Kapran made a motion to approve the August minutes. Trustee May seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

The treasurer's report will be done next month.

Trustee Moser made a motion to approve the bills. Trustee Michels seconded the motion, and it carried.

New Business:

Regarding a curfew for minors, the village goes by the country which has a 11:00 curfew on weekends and 10:00 curfew on weekdays according to Trustee Michels. There is nothing about a curfew in the Lee ordinances.

Leading Lee Forward would like to purchase a portable tank that could be hauled behind a pickup truck. The money would come from grant money. A possible purchase price will be gotten before the next village meeting.

It would cost \$4500-\$5000 to beautify the corner lot, but Trustee Moser doesn't think it will get a lot of use. She thinks we should use the grant money to build sidewalks. Sidewalks are about \$10,000/block. If the village put in some money, then the Skole and Hardanger sidewalks could be fixed for bus stop kids. When the water lines go in, that part of the street may get torn up again. Handicapped access ADA has to be followed. Trustee Moser will make a map of the sidewalks that she wants to be fixed. Any new sidewalks will need to be 4' wide.

Adjournment:

At 9:20 PM, Trustee Moser made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Trustee Kapraun seconded the motion. All were in favor.