

Meeting Notes

Bow Lake Wind Project Community Liaison Committee Meeting #1

Date/Time:	July 23, 2014 / 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Place:	Obadjiwan Conference and Convention Centre Hwy 563 & Hwy 17, Batchawana Bay
Next Meeting:	November 26, 2014 (Tentative)
Attendees:	George Browne (CLC Member), Dominique Eckhardt (CLC Member) David Euler (CLC Member), Ruth Fletcher (CLC Member), Alex Syrette (CLC Member Designate), Bryan Tripp (Nodin Kitagan), Justus Veldman (CLC Member)
Absentees:	Karen Bird (BFN)
Facilitator:	Michael DiAngelo

Item:

Greetings

- Michael DiAngelo welcomed the public to the meeting and Elder Margaret gave a blessing for the opening of the meeting.
- The panel introduced themselves and gave a brief outline of their reasons for involvement on this committee.

Welcome Remarks

- Michael DiAngelo provided an outline of the purpose for this committee, essentially it being to provide timely communication and education while fostering ongoing relationships with the local community, stakeholders and First Nations.
- The objectives and code of conduct for these meetings was provided.
- It was noted that if a question could not be answered during the meeting, the answer would be provided at a later date through the committee or through online postings.

- Advance notice would be required for consideration of any item that should be placed on future agendas. Any presentation material would be required in advance as well.

Project Update

- Bryan Tripp, Project Development Lead (BluEarth Renewables Inc.) outlined the makeup of the project partners and the reasons for engaging the community throughout the process of construction and operation.
- A project update was provided including a wind power overview, construction schedule, project status and safety.
- This project will be located approximately 80 km north of Sault Ste. Marie, mostly on Crown Land. It will produce 60 Megawatts of renewable energy with 36 wind turbines. This is one of the largest economic partnerships between a First Nation and a wind energy developer in Canada.
- Bryan provided a site plan and layout for the project.
- The first components should arrive in October 2014 with 12 being completed in Phase I by Christmas. Work is expected to halt for the winter and start again in the spring of 2015 with completion of the 36 turbines expected by the end of August 2015.
- Bryan touched on hunting and traffic safety aspects during the construction stage, noting that everyone should be aware that this work is ongoing in the area and care should be taken while hunting or using the public access roads.
- Some of the local investment and employment benefits will include approximately 80 full-time employees during construction and 6-7 FTEs during operation. Other local investment includes things such as supplies, materials, etc.
- Community Investment was introduced by Bryan, noting that they are seeking ideas for community investment opportunities. This is part of the overall commitment by the partnership to support non-profit activities and events by providing financial assistance, product or in-kind contributions.

Feedback from CLC Members

- Justus Veldman proposed that it may be beneficial to have a budget for the community investment initiatives so co-ordination could take place during construction. There may also be an opportunity to add some tourism dollars.
 - Bryan was not prepared to share budget information at this time. The money would be available at Operation in 2015 and would likely be limited for 2014.
- George Browne cautioned that interpretive centers have not been particularly successful in the past if that is an avenue being considered for investment.

- George noted a concern regarding a washout on Trim Lake Road at about Km 4 and questioned the timeframe to mitigate.
 - Bryan responded that the washout had occurred before the company arrived but confirmed that a permanent crossing will be installed by next Monday.
- An instance of speeding by earth moving equipment was reported.
 - Everyone is expected to operate safely and Bryan will follow-up with the operators. The onsite contact for this type of issue is Shane Corbett, Construction Manager, MasTec Renewable Construction. Shane can be reached at 705-256-0129 or shane.corbett@mastec.com. George will disseminate this information to his contacts.

Questions from Public Gallery

- Question about power lines
 - The location of the power lines was indicated on the site plan and it was confirmed that they don't need to be enhanced to handle the new energy.
- Question regarding how the Batchewana First Nation was chosen as a partner over other First Nations.
 - Many First Nations were contacted regarding how or how much they wanted to be involved and it was BFN that responded with an expressed interest in the project.
- Question regarding domestic content requirements
 - It was confirmed that a certain portion must be made in Ontario and examples could be the towers, blades, hubs, etc. GE is the supplier and hence some components will come from the U.S. or other countries. The steel for these towers will come from Essar Steel.
- Question regarding shelf life of components
 - There is a 20 to 25 year life expectancy, although some parts will need to be repaired or replaced from time to time (i.e. gear box).
- Question regarding local employment
 - Position openings for technicians, supervisor, etc. have been posted locally. Other possible jobs that are not technical in nature are possible in the future (i.e. snow clearing).
- Question regarding discounts on power
 - That is not possible as the power goes into the grid and is sold directly to the Ontario Power Authority.
- Question about what happens after the lifetime of the turbines is reached

- The contract life is 20 years and after that time an assessment is made as to whether it makes sense to continue running the site. It could be re-powered at that time or it could be de-commissioned. If it is de-commissioned, there is a plan in place for removal of the equipment and restoration of the site. Reclamation has to follow Ministry of Natural Resources standards. The cost of this is borne by the company.
- Question regarding disposal of the trees removed from the site
 - The company has approval to cut and haul the wood from the Crown Land. The Hardwood is going to Boniferno in Sault Ste. Marie and the Softwood to Domtar. Some of the residual wood will be used for fuel wood in a number of areas, including First Nations elders.
- Question regarding entrance to site
 - The route will be Hwy. 17 to Dump Road. A turn lane from Hwy. 17 has been approved by the MTO.
- Question regarding schedule for transporting turbine segments
 - There are no specific times scheduled. General times could be provided on the website.
- Question about any situation where the location chosen turned out to be a bad decision
 - The methods used for choosing sites are very sophisticated and the industry has learned a lot over time.
- Question regarding bird deaths
 - The company is required by the MNR to monitor the site for bird/bat mortalities for three years. The MNR have set threshold rates and mitigation would be required if the rates are higher than this threshold.
- Question regarding effect on weather radar
 - Environment Canada has been consulted for their expertise. Environment Canada and the company have agreed to mitigation as well as ongoing monitoring plans. Bryan commented that there is low level scattering and low intensity interference over each individual turbine and in its' shadow.
- Question regarding metallic reflectors
 - There are no proximity requirements in Canada and the company does not anticipate saturation to be an issue. If there is a problem, adaptive management plans and commitments will be developed.
- Lack of education about renewable energy
 - It was suggested that Lake Superior Provincial Park has educational programs and it could be an excellent point for linkages in this area. The contact person would be Carol Dersch, Director of Educational Programs for LSPP.

- Question regarding washrooms on public access roads
 - Bryan agreed that facilities are required if the public is using these roads but cautioned that there may be complications because it is Crown Land and further approvals would be required.

Community Investment

- Chief Dean Sayers thanked everybody for coming. It took a lot of hard work but he is very appreciative of the benefit this partnership will provide for the BFN community, the regional economy and the environment as a whole.
- It was noted that a rink is required in the Village for the community youth and asked about possible donations for that.
- Ruth Fletcher suggested that a year-round permanent rest stop with washrooms is a definite need for motorists.
- George Browne noted a lack of baseline environmental sciences, particularly birds/bats studies. He knows people that could work to set baselines and possibly engage BFN students attending Sault College to work in this area during the summer to gain experience. Bryan Tripp noted that there are Aboriginal Clean Energy bursaries and internships available. Ruth Fletcher suggested High School and Elementary students should also be engaged as early as possible.

Next Steps

- An e-mail address specific to the Committee will be created so people can pose questions/concerns that can be included for discussion at a future meeting.
- Meeting notes will be posed at <http://www.bluearthrenewables.com/bowlakewind/CLC>
- The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 26, 2014. Venue to be determined.

Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.