



# UNION COUNTY B2H Advisory Committee

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## Union County B2H Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes- January 13, 2016

**ATTENDANCE:** Ted Taylor- Chair, Brad Allen, Anna Baum, Joel Goldstein, Terry Edvalson, Irene Gilbert, George Mead, Norm Paullus, Ray Randall, Scott Hartell & Darcy Carreiro

### **I. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman, Ted Taylor opened the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

### **II. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS:**

Ted asked that all members present to introduce themselves as well as all in attendance.

### **III. COMMITTEE & ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

#### **A. Approval of the Agenda**

Ted reviewed the packet that was given to each Committee member. The Draft Minutes from January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 will be approved at the next meeting. All members will review the minutes on their own time and contact the Planning Department with any changes or discrepancies.

The Committee approved the Agenda as presented unanimously.

#### **B. Action Item Status**

1. Google Earth Tour of B2H routes through Union County- Scott will deliver this presentation.
2. Ted did submit a letter to The Observer to the Editor & was published.
3. Scott & Irene are working on a letter/notice for landowners with a potential impact. They are working to create a Land Ownership contact list. Scott is working with the Commissioners to create a budget for the Advisory Committee, (i.e. postage, misc. costs) since currently there is not a budget now.
4. Scott followed up with Shelley. Ex-parte contact only applies to quasi-judicial decisions. Therefore, the B2H Advisory Committee members can have contact with any members of the Community that would like to report back to the Committee.
5. GIS B2H route review will be done as part of the Google Earth Tour.
6. Scott did get clarification from Commissioner McClure. The No Action Alternative vs Need, both issues are still on the table and can be discussed.
7. Scott & Irene are working on direct mailing to affected land owners

8. Jeff Maffuccio will give a presentation to follow up on right of way discussion.
9. Jeff Maffuccio will share videos & photos illustrating all construction processes involved in constructing the high voltage lines Idaho Power.

#### **IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

##### **A. Presentation of Right of Way issues by Jeff from Idaho Power**

Jeff Maffuccio presented video, photo and statistical examples of past projects, construction and procedures they follow. Jeff provided many explanations of their processes based on various landscapes. Jeff shared information regarding Safety concerns, environmental concerns, gave examples of fencing boundaries, roadway construction & rehabilitation of vegetation, construction of the high voltage lines. Jeff answered many questions from the Committee and offered to return to the next meeting.

##### **B. Review of Overlays of Alternative Routes and Land Ownership- Google Earth Tour.**

Scott gave a GIS & Google Earth presentation of the 3 proposed routes as well as the Environmentally Preferred Route. He fielded many questions from the Advisory Committee. The Committee discussed this topic in great depth including review of the DEIS Comments in regards to each route and the “no route option”.

Recess: 7:11pm

Re-convene at 7:18 pm

Scott asked if there is anything further the Committee wanted to see on the Google Earth tour. The Committee would like to look closer at the current existing 230 line route. Scott then showed the GIS mapping tour, with detailed distances, topography and landmarks. The Committee asked Scott many questions about the existing 230 line that already runs through Union County. The Committee is curious why this line couldn't use the same line. Scott said that Idaho Power would need to answer these questions. Scott indicated that the PUC would need to field a lot of the questions the Committee had as well. He explained that the County Commissioners would like to avoid any new lines that would enter the City of LaGrande view shed. Scott said that Max Woods of the Oregon Dept. of Energy should be able to take care of a lot of these concerns when he attends the February meeting.

#### **V. DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE ROUTES:**

The Committee reviewed the routes on the GIS maps in great depth. Brad Allen shared his research results from working with BLM to create an “alternative” route. The Committee appreciates his work and compromise to create an alternative route. Brad shared his review of the Public Comments that were submitted to the DEIS. He said that the main concern that he found was the fact that Idaho Power has not done a good job explaining the need of the line. Secondly, was the impact on fish and wildlife & forestry, timber harvest. Third were the potential visual impacts of Morgan Lake, bald eagle habitat at Morgan Lake.

Lastly, was concern of the possible impact on the Oregon Trail. Brad said that he has worked with Don Gonzalez at the BLM and says that all of these routes are permissible but may need some micro-siting. EOU would like to preserve the natural resource. Norm shared that the City of LaGrande main concern is the view shed. Anna and Irene said that the general consensus they found was either no line or to follow the existing 230 line. Ted said that he read all of the comments as well and agreed with Brad & Norm's take on it. Ted also said that Scott met with the Commissioners and that the Commissioners indicated they are open to looking into each route, as well as the "no action option". Terry suggests that it would be beneficial to get a hold of the Elkhorn Wind Farm, eagle studies that were done. George agreed that the main concern he read from the DEIS comments were that the EIS study was inadequate for almost every concern that was listed.

The Committee decided to "name" each of the lines, created a worksheet to evaluate each line equally. They are using the following route names "Preferred Environmentally Route, Glass Hill route, 230 Route". They reviewed each route individually.

Recess 7:50 pm

Re-convene 7:56 pm

The Committee worked through the worksheets provided to evaluate each route one at a time. Scott indicates that George brought up a good point. The Committee is up against a time crunch and that it's a raw deal. But this Committee has to evaluate the 3 routes presented and make a tough decision with the limited information they have at the time to make to best decision as a suggestion for the Commissioners in this time crunch we have to make our Comment to the BLM.

Norm shared that the City of LaGrande is working with a land owner where they proposed "230 line" would run, to create a subdivision. This line could greatly affect that. Scott showed a detailed map to illustrate the properties Norm was speaking about. Norm shared that this proposal for a subdivision has the City of LaGrande working with Union County on a potential shadow plat UGB expansion. Scott showed many detailed maps for each route at the request of the Committee members to include land owners, property lines, relative homes potentially affected, etc.

The Committee tried to determine which direction the residents up Morgan Lake face as their view shed. It was agreed upon by the Committee, that the residents in the Morgan Lake community homes primarily face Mt. Emily to LaGrande for their view shed.

Recess 8:53 pm

Re-convene 9:06 pm

## **VI. COMMITTEE BUSINESS (Motions, Resolutions, Action Items, etc.)**

Motion by Terry Edvalson, second by George Mead, approved: 5 YES votes, 4 NO votes

The Boardman to Hemingway (B2H) Advisory Committee, at a scheduled meeting on Jan. 13, 2016, makes to the Union County Board of Commissioners the following Motion regarding the Agency Preferred Route for the B2H Transmission Line, and recommends that

the Board of Commissioners approve and transmit this Motion to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The Advisory Committee reviewed three Routes, including the Environmentally Preferred Route, the Glass Hill Route, and the 230kV Line Route. The Advisory Committee reviewed comments submitted on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) by Oregon state agencies, Union County, and the public, reviewed and discussed information contained in maps and Geographic Information System (GIS) presentations and overlays, and accepted comments from members of the public who attended the meeting.

The advantages and disadvantages of each route were thoroughly discussed, and the Advisory Committee completed a worksheet on the alternative routes that contained factors that were considered in the DEIS and are considered by the Oregon Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) in evaluating transmission line projects.

The Advisory Committee ranked the routes, and recommends the 230kV Line as the Agency Preferred Route for the following reasons:

1. Many of the impacts of construction and operation of the B2H transmission line have already been incorporated into the 230kV Line;
2. Public commenter preferences, as stated in DEIS comments, were for the 230kV Line;
3. Timber impacts will be minimized as little commercial timber property will be impacted;
4. Wildlife and Threatened and Endangered Species impacts are very low;
5. Recreation impacts are very low;
6. Because existing access roads can be used and the 230kV Line is located away from remote areas, security and fire control issues will be minimized.

Irene Gilbert would like our first alternative in the motion to be “no line/no need”. Ted said he would not accept this. Joel would like to include Irene’s statement in the meeting minutes as a Committee consensus. Terry and George suggested that it be included as a “letter of concern”, possibly a cover letter.

Ray Randall was clear that there was disadvantages to the “230 line” and that we should list these within the motion. Ray, Joel and Irene think we should preface our choice with of this “preferred” line with a statement reflecting the Committees question of any benefit of this line to Union County. Brad Allen suggests that we not list the disadvantages with the 230 line unless we are going to list the disadvantages of all other lines.

The Committee informally voted 5-3 to include a paragraph expressing “No action/No line” to be included in Ted’s cover letter to the County Commissioners. Ted asked Joel to complete this paragraph referencing the need of no line. Joel agreed to do this for the

Committee after he receives the letter that Ted had already drafted. This will be completed by tomorrow morning.

Recess 9:27 pm

Re-convene 9:32 pm

The Committee voted 5-4 to recommend the “230 line” as the preferred alternative route for recommendation to the County Commissioners. Terry read the Department of Energy provisions to the applicant that state they have to consider all comments for the need of the line. Joel expressed his confusion with this vote to not include the “‘No Need’ as the first alternative with the 230 line as the most tolerable alternative.”

Irene made a Motion to amend the previous motion, to include the first paragraph of the letter that goes to the Commissioners, reflecting that the bulk of the Commenters support the “no action” alternative; although, after review of these three routes, the Committee prefers the “230 line as the most tolerable.”

Chairman, Ted Taylor said that Irene could not make this amendment to the prior motion made by Terry, as this amendment is a separate main motion. Irene’s motion may only be offered as a new motion.

Irene moved to make a Motion to state: “The bulk of the Commenters on the DEIS and the majority of the Advisory Committee supports the ‘No action’ alternative.”

Ray Randall seconded this motion. Joel states that he would have supported the first motion made by Terry, if this would have been included in the first Motion.

Irene added a list of reasons as an amendment to the motion above. She moved to amend the motion; Idaho Power proposal fails to:

- Fails to look at current energy options: such as micro grids
- Small nuclear generation modules that can service small communities
- National security risk- due to the fact that it’s a large line
- Increasing emphasis on locally generated power sources
- Idaho Power focus is on providing cheap power to Idaho with no benefit to Oregon customers
- There is not economic evaluation of the effect on Oregon paying customers.
- Loss in timber production
- Environmental impacts of wind & solar power generators who will connect to the line, are not being evaluated as impact of this line
- Oregon creates more energy than we consume. We are a net exporter of electricity
- Bonneville Power does not need additional wind generated energy
- Pacific Corp Power can achieve 86% of their additional power needs by conservation

The Committee voted 2-6; the amendment did not pass.

Anna Baum moved to table Irene’s motion until the February meeting, Terry Edvalson seconded this. The Motion that Irene made will be discussed and voted upon at the meeting February 4<sup>th</sup>.

This motion is not amendable, it is not debatable, it will require a majority vote and it may not be reconsidered. The Committee voted 8-0 unanimously to table this motion to the February meeting.

**Action Item:**

Ted Taylor is to provide a draft of the letter he prepared to attach to the Motion for the Board of Commissioners, to Joel Goldstein by tomorrow morning.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Doug Osborn, Union Oregon. He thinks the votes the Committee took to choose the best alternative route, in quasi legislative approval to Idaho Power for their line. Due to the fact that the need has not been established by Idaho Power for this line, due to the fact that Oregon will receive no benefit other than a couple hundred thousand dollars in taxes, this project will leave a blithe on the landscape of Oregon. He feels that Idaho Power is prostituting our ground for their benefit & gain. He doesn't feel it's necessary. He feels this Committee should pick a no action alternative, deliver it loud & clear to our County Commissioners, who can deliver it loud & clear to Idaho Power & Oregon Department of Energy and the facility Siting Council.

Lois Barry, 60688 Morgan Lake Road, LaGrande, OR, Lois handed out a 1 page summarized series of criticisms of Idaho Powers application proposal for each Committee member. She apologizes for not listing citations for each bullet point on the list. Lois knows this Committee likes factual basis. There have been such dramatic changes in power deliver since 2007, when this started. She feels that the statistics in the Idaho Power IRP are inadequate, even Idaho Power agreed with these changes. Lois read some of the bullet points she lists on her hand out and feels very strongly about these contradictions. She hopes that the Committee will follow up with these topics with Idaho Power and consider these.

Terry asked is Lois Barry could provide the citations for her list she gave to the Committee, so that the Committee can have rational conversation based on data. Ted asked if Lois could produce links to her data for the next meeting for consideration at the next meeting for discussion.

Gary Smith, 1802 Gemini Drive, LaGrande OR, read an article from the Observer December 16, 2015, quotes from Tom Eckman, Director of Power Planning for the Council. He submitted this article for reference; Darcy provided copies to all Committee members.

Fuji Kreider, 60366 Marvin Road, LaGrande, OR. She understands that a lot of these time frames are being pushed because the Cooperating agents are meeting, Scott being the attendee representing Union County, who is directed by the Union County Commissioners. She feels that the cooperators are gathering to process technical information and make their best alternative to give to BLM, so that BLM can put forth the final EIS. In this there is a gap, that is why everyone is talking about the "no action alternative". She doesn't think that it is because we just don't want it in Oregon; she feels it is because there is a huge gap in the EIS. She feels that there is a lack of data, it hasn't been thoroughly assessed. She thinks the Cooperators should be encouraged to look at the actual need. She says the only data that's been evaluated is Idaho Power's information. She feels if you read the whole IRP, it

contradicts the EIS that was released. She says go to the Commissioners and ask them to have the Cooperators look at this. She also says in follow up, she would support the 230 as a secondary option.

Jim Kreider, 60366 Marvin Road, LaGrande, OR. He thanked the entire Committee for the hard work they have put in reading the Comments and doing all of this. He read the entire Idaho Power planning statement. They have 4 routes that do not include the B2H line. They list 4 other routes; 3 of them include de-commissioning a coal fire plant, one does not. It will cost a little more money, but they will meet their energy needs. Idaho is not doing well with solar energy. There is a proposal to develop solar energy plants around the Mountain Home area, but they are not developing them. Idaho PUC recently allowed Idaho Power to not sign 20 year contracts, limiting it to only 2 years. So they cut off outside capital investment for solar energy, no one will build a solar plant if they only have 2 years. He challenges the Committee to ask the Idaho Power representative next time he is here about these topics and hold them accountable. He and his wife are going to Boise this week to meet with a cooperating partner that helped develop this Idaho power plan assessment. He hopes that when they come back they will have more information and share with the Committee. He wants to have an honest conversation about need. He wants to know what Pacific Power is paying 54% of the cost of this line. In any documents he has read Pacific Power is not receiving any of the energy. Why would they do this? He has read Idaho Power will take full power in the summer; in the winter months they will only need 40%, then they will ship energy back to us. He has many questions about this. Jim provided a handout; Darcy will make copies for each member of the Committee.

**VIII. NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE**

The next regular Committee meeting will be Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup> 2016 at 6:30pm in the Earl C. Misener Conference Room.

**IX. ADJOURN**

Ted adjourned the Union County B2H Advisory Committee meeting of January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 10:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Darcy Johnson Carreiro  
Senior Department Specialist II