

**Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency  
Alternative Energy Ad hoc Committee Meeting Minutes  
May 10, 2023**

**Present:** Paul Warneck, Chair; William Johnson, John Condino, Christine Powers

**Excused:** None

**Also Present:** David Zembiec, Marshall Weir, Robin Stephenson, Jay Matteson  
Sackets Harbor School: Jennifer Gaffney  
Zoom: South Jefferson School: Cora Harvey, Christina Chamberlain  
Town of Watertown: Joel Bartlett, Roger Tibbetts

**I. Call to Order:** Chair Warneck called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

**II. Greens Corners Solar Project and potential PILOT discussion:**

Mr. Warneck started the meeting explaining that the State had released on 5/9/23 approved a mandated model to evaluate solar/wind projects. He proceeded to explain it 3 ways; Original model, leased land, and owned land. One major change was the removal of the REC credit (\$14.98/MWHR) as a revenue stream which impacts the overall value of the project. Mr. Warneck shared examples showing that the Greens Corners Solar project assessed at \$88M under the previous model. Under the new state model it assesses at \$46M.

Mr. Warneck did state that Greens Corners project covers mostly Sackets Harbor school districts and a smaller area for South Jeff School.

Mr. Tibbetts pointed out problems with the amortization and how it won't work because it loses a year, and one can't back-date a project. Timing is also an issue with March 1<sup>st</sup> (taxable status) for towns and county but schools not until September.

Discussion on the tax cap focused on the concerns of schools as it relates to PILOTs since schools need voter approval to exceed the tax cap. Ms. Gaffney talked about how HCAs look more favorable to the schools because of those tax caps.

Mr. Warneck also said that he was not aware of Boralex filing any updated paperwork with the state for the use of the funds, but Mr. Warneck expects that to happen soon, especially with the approval of the valuation model.

Mr. Warneck explained how our current PILOTs work for 20 megawatts or less is \$5,500/MW and inflates each year at 2% for 15 years. Then we invert the payment schedule. Some of the developers want a 25 or 30 year discounted calculation but our PILOTs would only be 15 years.

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Mr. Warneck asked Ms. Harvey about “Field of Dreams”. She said they were left out of any discussions and only brought in at the “11<sup>th</sup>” hour to get their blessings.

Mr. Warneck suggested that all taxing jurisdictions should work together to make sure that we are all on the same page to get the best benefit. If an entity agrees to do a 487 exemption, then the PILOT cannot happen for the other two.

Ms. Harvey asked to know exactly how much area the Greens Corners Solar project covers because their school district is in part of the Town of Henderson. Mr. Zembiec said he will provide a map that will give them a bit of an idea of what it covers. Mr. Warneck explains that when talking to the developers that is a question that should be asked as well as how much megawatt will be in the towns and in the schools’ districts.

Mr. Bartlett said he sent in an application for intervenor funding for the Town of Watertown, and they got nothing. Mr. Warneck suggested he appeal it and state the need to cover legal costs.

Ms. Gaffney asked what would be the timeframe for this project to be completed. Mr. Warneck and Mr. Condino said that there is still a lot of paperwork (at least another year’s worth) before this would get started. The original plan projected energizing in late 2024. Sometime in 2025 now sounds more likely.

Mr. Warneck reiterated that we are here to help get something that works for everyone. He even stated that if an entity goes with a 487 exemption, they should make sure their attorneys look into PILOT mortgage to cover them if there is a default.

Mr. Matteson said he spoke with Ron Robbins and Ron was told by Boralex that they were thinking about doing this project in phases. The general consensus was that Boralex would have to go and change and reapply for their permits with the state.

Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Warneck what the total cost of this project would be. Mr. Warneck said we don’t have any final numbers but for a 5 MW project in Chaumont was \$11 million so expect a project that is 20 MW to go more like \$130 million.

Mr. Warneck said that the Greens Corners Solar project has been issued a permit by ORES and has a lot of work to do in order to proceed.

**III. Other/Unfinished Business:** None.

**IV. Adjournment:** With no further business before the committee, Mr. Warneck adjourned the meeting at 4:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Robin Stephenson*