



**Village of Cambridge
ENERGY SUBCOMMITTEE Minutes
Thursday, March 4, 2021, 6:30 p.m.**

Due to the CCOVID-19 Pandemic, Including Federal, State and County Emergency orders limiting crowds, this meeting is being held via teleconference. Member of the Village Board and public may attend by:

Dial-in number (US): (701) 802-5156

Online meeting ID: bgoeckner

Join the online meeting: <https://join.freeconferencecall.com/bgoeckner>

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call:** Rose called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Members present: Rose, Kumbier, McNally, Franklin and Milsap. Other present: Barb Goeckner, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer/Administrator; Tracy Fillback, Marcia Barnes, Dean Lund, Lowell, Lund, Mary Gjermo, Scott Irwin, Joe Schulz, Eric Wittwer, Rob Danielson, Roxy Engelstad, Kayla Sipple, Aidan O'Conner – Invenergy, Shane Glinski, Karyn Saemann – Hometown News, Steve Wetzel, Laurie Schammel, Marren, Jon Kille, Dan Litchfield – Invenergy, Christian Rober, Paul Hausz, Chris Reed, Janet Hutchens, Bill Roelofs, Richard Nelson, Christy Horstmeyer, Tara Vasby, Jeff Stein, Amanda Reed, Peter Perry, Heidi Elliott, Heather Allen – Renew Wisconsin, and others
2. **Proof of Posting:** The agenda was posted on the doors of the upper and lower level of the Amundson Community Center, Cambridge Post Office, Hometown Bank, and the Village Web Site.
3. **Public Comment**
Mary Gjermo stated many will have questions after Invenergy's presentation and they are hoping to not have a series of meetings with Invenergy as we need to focus on our own business.
Rose stated he has compiled the questions which were submitted through the online survey and submitted them to Invenergy to have them answered as part of the presentation this evening.
4. **Approval of Minutes from February 18, 2021:**
McNally made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Kumbier. Motion carried.
5. **New Business:** Discussion and Possible Action Regarding:
 - a. Presentation from Invenergy
Aiden O'Conner with Invenergy provided a PowerPoint presentation as an overview of the solar project. (attached) It will have a 2100-acre footprint with panel coverage. There is specific ground cover planned to reduce erosion and stormwater runoff as well as increase soil organic matter, microbial activity, and land productivity. Along with a pollinator habitat and grazing potential for sheep/goats. They filed the engineering plan in December 2020 and plan to file the application mid-April of this year. They will have many opportunities for public input and will have a joint development agreement.

Construction is estimated to occur 2022-2024 with the project fully operational in 2024. They anticipate the creation of 300 construction jobs during peak construction and estimate it will produce enough sustainable energy to power 60,000 homes. O'Conner also reviewed the process with the Public Service Commission for the application, which will include public hearings.

Questions and discussion:

Is there is any guarantee the land would return to agriculture? O'Conner – the intention is for the land to return to agriculture at the end of the life of the project. The leases have a maximum term of up to 50 years and are expected to be in use approximately 35 years.

Is that the entire State's energy use for all the utilities? O'Conner – enough electricity to provide 50% of the State's needs.

Question/discussion on dealing with the fact it would only generate during the sunlight hours. Energy use as a society is focused during the day.

Will there be barrier walls and if so, how tall? O'Conner – there will not be barrier walls. Will be fenced and propose a wooden post, woven wire deer fence. Substation requires more security and would have a chain link fence with barbed wire on the top.

If solar farm is sold to a third party are the leases still valid? O'Conner – Yes, all agreements remain valid.

How have property values been affected in similar projects? O'Conner – they will be including information from a property value study in their information.

What long term studies have been done on soil fertility after a project? O'Conner – number of studies that creating grassland and prairie is a good thing for building up the soil, which makes it more fertile in the long term.

O'Conner - They are working on an updated map and will share it when it is complete. It will be materially different than what was included in the engineering plan so they can show they are not impacting all the things the DNR is concerned about. They are required to propose a site that is 25% larger than what they are going to use, and some areas will be labeled as alternates, which gives them some flexibility.

Discussion of the application to the PSC and sharing it before submittal.

Discussion of not pulling out the posts after the project. Dan Litchfield with Invenergy noted the concern. Rose asked about studies on the affect to wildlife? O'Conner said a number of studies exist that focus on birds. These are fields that were sprayed with pesticides in the past. We are now allowing the land to rest and not mass applying pesticides and allowing biodiversity to return to the land. Discussion of ground temperature under the panels while they collect sunlight etc. A little cooler than the land right next to it. It creates a micro-climate, a little more humid than the area around it. They will have a solar panel at their local office if anyone would like to see/touch it and see what the temperature is.

McNally asked about Invenergy posting a bond to insure there is money available to handle the decommissioning of the project in the estimated 35 years. O'Conner confirmed they would be willing to do that but does not see a reason to do that at the outset. This is a large capital-intensive project and if the company went bankrupt someone else will come and buy that.

Layout of project has not been proposed yet. Encourage everyone to stay tuned and be open when they have their layout ready to share.

Kumbier expressed concern for the village of Cambridge being able to develop further after this project. Wittwer asked reason for storage of excess power in batteries instead of hydrogen. O'Conner – not well versed on hydrogen markets. Battery storage is a proven technology they are very comfortable with and know how to work with it.

b. Possible Future Steps:

i. Compiling questions/comments/concerns

Rose – Hoping to compile all questions into a list and get answers to them for a quick reference/fact sheet for future use. Requested Invenergy answer the questions he had already compiled and sent to them as well as additional questions he will send from this meeting. Dan Litchfield with Invenergy stated some had been covered tonight and all the information will be in their application. Rose stated he would like to have it in a quick fact sheet on their main questions of concern. Litchfield will wait for guidance from them and then can prepare the written responses. They can answer in two sentence answers and say what part to see in the application also.

ii. Creation of Fact Sheet - above

iii. Letter of Intent to Petition PSC

Discussion of when letter to PSC needs to be submitted. Concerns of once the application is submitted by Invenergy it is too hard to change it. Further discussion of hiring an attorney. Kumbier mentioned the intervening process available with the PSC. Rose – The letter can be vague. Received response from Claire Silverman at League of Wisconsin Municipalities and will forward to committee members. McNally proposed member Milsap work with Rose and Administrator Moen to prepare the first response. No need for an attorney at this point – no funds budgeted for this purpose and the Village Board did not authorize hiring one.

c. Set Date for Next Meeting: Rose will work with Administrator Moen to contact the other communities to see when they can meet for setting a date within the next two weeks.

6. Update/Other Items for Future Consideration - None

7. Adjournment: Kumbier made a motion to adjourn, seconded by McNally. Motion carried. Rose adjourned the meeting at 8:21 p.m.

Barbara K. D. Goeckner, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer/Administrator