

**Town of La Pointe  
Alternative Energy Committee  
February 5, 2016**

Members present: Larry Bean, Chair by speakerphone; Tom Banner, Glenn Carlson, Zach Montagne and Marty Curry

Members absent: Carl Frederickson

Town Board members present:

Town Staff present: Lisa Potswald, Town Administrator and Planning and Zoning Administrator; Kristen Larsen, Town Foreman

Public present:

**1. Call to order.**

Larry Bean, Chair called the Alternative Energy Committee (AEC) meeting to order on Friday, February 5, 2016 at 10:00am. A quorum of the committee is present as shown above.

**2. Public Comment.**

Glenn would like to commend Larry for getting us to this point. This has been frustrating at times but it looks like we have the potential of getting the PV (Photovoltaic) system at basically no cost to the Town so we really do not have to do a cost/benefit analysis when that is the case. Thank you all around. Larry said Vince Lombardi, the Green Bay Packer coach had a sign above the door the players used to run out on to the field that said, "Good luck is when preparation meets opportunity". La Pointe certainly is prepared as anyone for this opportunity and so now we have the good luck of actually receiving these funds.

**3. Minutes of the following meetings to be considered for approval:**

**A. November 5, 2015.**

Motion by Tom to approve the November 5, 2015 Alternative Energy Committee minutes as presented. Second, Marty. All in favor except for Zach who abstains. Motion carried.

**4. Review and Discuss Requests for Proposals (RFP) for the Design and Installation of one 18kW net metered solar array to supply power to the Madeline Island Library and Health Clinic buildings.**

Three proposals have been received for the Request for Proposal for the Design and Installation of one 18kW net metered solar array to supply power to the Library and Clinic: Alternative Trends, (\$72,777.00) Kettle View (\$74,504.00) and North Wind (\$83,960.00).

Questions/Considerations:

Two of the proposals have asked for a considerable deposit as early as this month as well as in March.

The contract date has been moved from May 26th to June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Weight limits could be an issue. Concrete could be an issue.

One proposal will use pilings instead of concrete. Larry said this is viable. The architect that designed his house said pilings would be much stronger and better than cement. Question of how to put pilings in if the frost is in the ground. Kristian said so far this year has been warm and there is not that much frost so he thinks the frost will come out quick so the road limits could come off early.

Question if Lisa and Kristian's score sheets can be included. Larry said the Town Board can take input from anyone they want. The committee makes a recommendation to the Town Board

but the Town Board does not necessarily have to take the recommendation. Looking at this from a bidding perspective as well as requirement from the State, the committee agrees that Lisa and Kristian be included in the discussion but to not include their score sheets.

Larry said the requirements are to take lowest bidder of the highest scoring RFP.

Larry has Alternate Trends as the lowest bidder at \$72,777.00 and the highest score.

North Wind had pointed out a fixed racking system would be \$21,000 cheaper but a fixed system was not included in the RFP so cannot be considered. We must stay with the manually adjustable system.

Lisa does not think Alternative Trends provided the information we requested.

Glenn rated Alternative Trends the lowest. Committee members all agree.

Larry said the biggest concern with Alternative Trends was the time frame which is a month later than North Wind. Alternative Trends has been in this business for five years, has a small workforce and they have provided all the information in #5 (Equipment Section) as well as their licenses. The company is not the most qualified but they did have the lowest bid. Larry gave Alternative Trends 18 out of 25 points for qualifications and experience. Alternative Trends did not say who their contractors were or include references but said they would provide references upon request. Glenn said the RFP said references were to be included.

Larry has a 2 point difference between Alternative Trends and North Wind. He scored Kettle View the lowest at 81 points. Larry said without question he likes North Wind and if money were not an issue he would rank North Wind first but North Wind lost 10 points on price.

Glenn thinks there could be some confusion on scoring as Glenn gave everyone under the available project amount of \$95,000.00 a full 15 points. Marty did also.

Glenn said there are two criteria: 1. The highest rated not including cost. 2. The lowest cost. He does not think you can include cost in the highest rated because you would be including cost twice. Larry said it is good to have different perspectives; that is the value each of us brings.

Larry does not have a problem changing his score as to what Glenn has suggested. That would put North Wind at the top.

Question if any committee member ranked North Wind second or third. Everyone ranked North Wind first with Kettle View a close second.

To be noted, North Wind is putting back 112% of our load; Kettle View 106%. Alternative Trends did not have a figure. Marty said Alternative Trends is referencing a battery system that has not yet been rated with photovoltaic systems. He did like Alternative Trends referencing the tax credit the Town would receive. Committee members pointed out this is in error. The Town cannot receive a tax credit.

Glenn said he did not give any company a score on #3 (Ability to coordinate and work with subcontractors – 15 points) because one company used a master electrician, and others might not use a subcontractor.

Glenn scored North Wind at 85 points, Kettle View at 78 points and Alternative Trends at 58 points. Again, these points do not include the 15 points in #3 (Subcontractors).

Marty said he scored both North Wind and Kettle View at 99 as he liked the visual harmony aspect spelled out in their proposals. Alternative Trends is very limited. North Wind and Kettle View had very good, well versed crews working for them. One company was stronger in wind than photovoltaic. He gave Alternative Trends a 98.

Zach rated North Wind at 90, Kettle View at 84 and Alternative Trends at 81. Two of the companies did not include diagrams. Kettle View had grid mounted inverters. North Wind had the inverters and future battery storage inside the buildings and Zach does not know if there if

there is enough room in the buildings to accommodate the inverters and batteries or if there will be a need for an accessory building. North Wind has the panels 3 feet off the ground which is good for mowing and snow removal. The other companies have them a foot and a half off the ground. Zach likes the higher payback for North Wind and the grid mounted system. Kettle View has disconnects and service panels.

Marty said there was no mention of hooking up the Library, no trenches shown between the Library and Clinic.

North Wind will have the project finished on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Glenn said he is going with North Wind because they are the best, not because they are the cheapest. The RFP does say that we have the right to negotiate.

Discussion of snow removal. Kristian said this will be trial and error.

Kristian likes the likes the North Wind racking system which seems strong, more northern Wisconsin like. Zach said we might be able to get the panels up another foot. To be noted - North Wind has the highest wind rating at 125mph. Larry said that was one of his high points with North Wind as they talked about risk categories. None of the other companies did. Zach said North Wind gave a snow rating of 56/60lbs but did not say if this was per square foot.

Marty brought up fencing as all our utilities are fenced. Lisa said the Kettle View proposal said there was no need for a fence. Fencing could get in the way of snowplowing. Will have to wait and see what the array will look like. Marty said we do not want a truck running into the collectors. Kristian suggested a concrete column like you see at the lift station or gas stations.

Tom rated North Wind at 95, Kettle View at 91 and Alternative Trends at 80. Glenn said he needs to add 15 points to each of his scores so all the score sheets are based on the same criteria. Lisa said she is looking at the score sheets from the viewpoint of protection for the Town as well as from a contract and problem solving perspective. Lisa likes North Wind because they have been in business for a long time. Lisa said she had trouble with Alternative Trends because she was concerned about how to write a contractor for them based on the information they gave us. Lisa was fine with Kettle View as they have also been in business for a long time. Tom said North Wind has installs in Northern WI, northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula.

Kristian said he rated North Wind the highest. He likes their proposal and likes the fact that they included the resumes of just about everyone who worked at North Wind. North Wind has multiple electricians on hand whereas other companies had one or none. Kristian also likes their mounting hardware and rack system.

## **5. Recommendation to the Town Board for Contract for RFP of the Design and Installation of one 18kW net metered solar array.**

Motion by Glenn that the Alternative Energy Committee recommends to the Town Board that North Wind get the contract for the Design and Installation of one 18kW net metered solar array with the caveat that either Kristian or Lisa check one or two of the references that North Wind listed. If the references check out the Alternative Energy Committee recommends North Wind to the Town Board.

Larry would like to add that North Wind was the only company that he received a recommendation. The recommendation came from Chippewa Valley who spoke quite highly of North Wind.

Second to the motion on the floor by Tom. All in favor, all aye, motion carried.

Lisa will write a letter to each company to say that the committee has recommended North Wind to the Town Board. The Town Board will consider the recommendation on Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. Lisa will also contact North Wind to start the contract process to see if we could have a

contract in place for the Town Board on February 9<sup>th</sup>. She will mention load limits and then hand the baton to Kristian. If anyone has questions or concerns let her know.

Zach asked if there would be any amendments to this proposal before we enter into a contract. Kristian said he would like to discuss the location of lines, panels, etc. Larry said North Wind has proposed coming to the site on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Discussion of the North Wind down payment request of \$68,000.00 for equipment by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Lisa said we will have to negotiate this as she does not know if that can come before the Town Board by that date.

Larry said North Wind wants to start construction on April 11<sup>th</sup> and be finished by April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Will negotiate the inverter locations and to make sure they know the Library is part of this project. Larry requests that his score sheets be changed to reflect his updated scores: he needs to add ten points to North Wind in the 6<sup>th</sup> category – Project Cost. Lisa will make that change, initial and date.

#### **6. Public Relation Notices.**

Once we break ground public relation notices should go out as this project is very important to the area. Larry said the date North Wind has proposed for cleanup and installation is April 22, 2016, Earth Day so could tie in with that date. Marty suggests contacting Hope McLeod, The Ashland Daily Press reporter. Lisa said one of the Duluth TV stations has also expressed interest in the project. Larry said Tom Wojciechowski, UW- Extension in Ashland has been convening the Energy Independent Communities and had been talking about meeting this winter. If someone would be interested in representing the Island, Larry could provide Tom with that name. Glenn said he would go depending on the date. Larry said he would forward all communication with Tom to Glenn.

Larry and Lisa will work on a press release that can be sent out to the media once the construction date is set, most likely March or early April.

Larry said he is really indebted to the Town Board, staff and the past and present members of the AEC for all the support to get us to this point.

#### **7. Set next meeting and agenda.**

Meeting to be set at a later date.

#### **8. Adjourn**

Motion by Tom to adjourn, second, Marty. All in favor, all aye. Motion carried.

Goodbye Larry and Thank You!

Meeting adjourned at approximately 10:55am.

Minutes taken from recorder and respectfully submitted by Kathy Erickson, Clerical Assistant.  
Minutes approved as presented May 26, 2016