

Hamlin Wind Tower Committee *Minutes*  
Tuesday, March 20, 2007  
7:00pm

The regular scheduled meeting of the Hamlin Wind Tower Committee was held in the Hamlin Town Hall located at 1658 Lake Road, Hamlin and was called to order by the Chairman Mark Reeves at 7:00pm with the location of the exits and defibulator explained for those present.

Present: Jerry Borkholder, Linda DeRue, Ed Haight, Dave Lukas, Glen Quetschenbach, Mark Reeves and Andy Simpson.

Excused: Ed Evans

Also present: Town Supervisor Denny Roach, Councilperson Mike Marchetti, Planning Board member Tom Jensen, Conservation Board member Tom Breslawski, residents Ann Burns, John DeRue, Sandy and Don Nichols, Jack and Chris Shelvin, Aaron LaFaro, Troy and Tricia Nesbitt, Dick and Jane Noski, Diane Grimm, Bruce Butcher, Tony Callari, Nicholas Breslawski, Judith and Edward Doan, Ted and Kathy Habgood, Renee Cliff, Lorraine Haight, Joyce Bender and several other interested residents.

The Town Supervisor announced that last Friday he regrettably accepted Art McFarlane's resignation from the Committee. Art had gathered a lot of information and had a lot of knowledge pertaining to wind towers. Art voluntarily resigned but would be available to help the committee with any fact-finding projects if they needed it. Supervisor Roach explained that the Charter states that the Chairman can appoint a Co-Chairman. He has asked Mark Reeves to pick up the reins and be the Chairman of the Committee as it moves forward. Supervisor Roach also announced that the Town Board has enacted a moratorium on wind towers. This increases the pressure on the Town to enact some regulations. He asked the Committee to look at the 8 objectives in the Charter and focus on them. He thanked the Committee for all of their hard work and dedication and he appreciated all of their efforts and everything they are doing for the Town Board and the residents of Hamlin.

Chairman Mark Reeves thanked Supervisor Roach.

Dave Lukas wanted to clarify his statement from the last meeting regarding the \$1,000. What he meant by his statement was that he would rather pay his fair share of taxes then receive \$1000.00 of hush money from a wind tower company and give up his rights. He referred to a contract that he has seen that pays the residents in return they can not complain about the living conditions due to the wind towers.

A motion was made by Glen Quetschenbach, seconded by Linda DeRue to approve the minutes from the March 6, 2007 meeting with Dave Lucas' explanation added. Members polled, all ayes.

## **CHARTER DISCUSSION**

Chairman Mark Reeves stated that he would like the committee to break down each of the objectives from the charter and focus on what needs to be done. He would like to have each member sign up for a specific objective to work on and gather information and set a deadline for when the information should be presented to the committee so they can present a completed outline to the Town Board with credible and concise data so the Town Board can make a final decision regarding wind towers in Hamlin. All of the data collected should be referenced to a specific book or website where the information was obtained. It should contain only facts not opinions. He suggested setting up a schedule at the next meeting. He would send out an outline and timeline to all of the members through email. The members could sign up for the objectives that they wanted to work on and they could move forward with their task of recommending regulations to the Town Board. Linda DeRue stated that she was confused because she has already signed up for a topic and she has been working hard on that topic gathering information. Jerry Borkholder mentioned the list that he handed out at the last meeting. He feels that those items on the list need to be addressed before they can look at the objectives. He needs to fully understand the concept before he can work on setting regulations. Mark explained that the objectives will be broken up into sub topics and each area will be discussed and then the objective can be addressed. Jerry stated that the objectives are too general and he disagrees with the plan. Linda stated that she signed up for an objective and she has been working on it now she doesn't know how she can work on other topics on top of that. Mark explained that each member will work on a different task that they sign up for and once the topic is researched and presented they can move on. Jerry stated that this is a backwards way of doing it. Mark stated that otherwise they would be answering the noise topic and other topics more than once. This way it gets addressed once and we can move on. Jerry stated that he would like to come to a conclusion on topics so regulations can be set. Dave Lukas stated that he has listened to both Mark and Jerry and he is confused. He feels that Mark's way is putting the cart before the horse. He would like to work on a topic and beat it to death then move on to the next before he can make any conclusions. Mark discussed his outline and stated once he sends out the outline form it will be easier for everyone to understand. He explained that each topic will be discussed and answered using the outline and references for facts. Once all of the questions have been answered they can pass the data on to the Town Board that makes the ultimate decision. Dave stated that he would like to understand everything on the list. They should review the issues and have a good list of topics to work on first. Mark stated that if the outline isn't followed topics tend to be repeated and they are running out of time to complete their task. The outline will show the project plan. They need to start to write regulations by September or they won't be done by December. He will take the list and break it down by subtopic and send out the outline to everyone. Jerry asked Mark if he was flexible with this idea and if they try it and it doesn't work is he willing to try something different. Mark stated he would think about it. He believes this is a good working plan.

## **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

Dave Lukas mentioned that at the last meeting Art stated that no other company was interested in putting up wind towers in Hamlin then the next day he received an email from Allegheny Energy Inc. who has contracted to install a transmission line from Pennsylvania through West Virginia. The project will increase potential for new generation projects including wind power. So more and more companies are showing interest.

Jerry Borkholder discussed old business and mentioned Mark Reeve's suggestion from the last meeting on keeping track of the public's questions and answering their questions at the following meeting. Mark stated that he would like to add "after committee review" to that statement in case they need to have someone else like the Town Engineer to answer the question. Mark stated that he sent out an email that listed the residents name and their question and he asked the Board their feeling on whether these questions should be addressed. Some members could not open the email sent by Mark. Mark stated that he would send out a test spread sheet to see if everyone could open it.

A motion was made by Jerry Borkholder, seconded by Linda DeRue to reserve meeting time for answering the public's questions from previous meetings. The Chairman will schedule agenda time for this. Members polled, all ayes.

Linda DeRue asked about the motion that was made at the last meeting regarding sending a letter to all of the residents. Supervisor Denny Roach stated that the Town Board has not met to make a decision on that yet. Mark Reeves suggested a recommendation letter should be sent to the Town Board requesting them to review these items. Supervisor Roach stated that regarding the hiring of Mr. Spitzer motion he stated that Mr. Spitzer would not be hired by the Town as a consultant. He will wait until the Town decides what they want and then he will assist in writing the regulations. Dave Lucas disagreed and said when he spoke to Mr. Spitzer he stated that 90% of his work is done as a consultant. Dave stated that he would be happy to have a conference call with Denny and Mr. Spitzer. Denny agreed since they got two different answers.

Jerry Borkholder commented on an article that was written by a Committee member. He feels that Committee members should not be writing articles to the paper and should only be passing on factual information. Mark stated that he disagreed and he hoped that an article was written every week. It shouldn't be censored and everyone should be able to comment as it is his or her right. Jerry stated that the comments should be accurate and a balance of good and bad points should be maintained. Mark brought up the comment of removing and limiting the information on the website. Jerry stated that he wanted the Committee to have a say as to what was put on the website and maintain the balance of pros and cons. Mark asked Jerry if he received an email form the Supervisor on February 16 regarding the links and who has permission to put things on the web page. Jerry stated that he wasn't sure if he received it. Mark stated that at the last meeting Jerry stated that he didn't know who put the links on the web site and in the email Denny stated that he put the links on the web page. Supervisor Roach stated that all of the links have been removed form the web page so the committee can move on and address other issues.

Jerry Borkholder stated that at the first meeting a model of a wind tower was available. He suggested having one available at the Town Hall so everyone can get a visual of what is being proposed. Mark stated that the model wasn't proportioned so the perception of the tower's size was not accurate. The model gave a false sense of the size. Mark stated that the barn was under the tower and maybe a 6' tall man should be next to the tower to actually show the size of the tower accurately. Jerry asked what the problem was with having a model available. Mark stated that there wasn't a problem but the representative model should be accurate. Andy Simpson agreed that the model needed to be made to scale. Glen Quetschenbach agreed to build a model. Andy asked if setbacks should be determined for the model. Mark asked the purpose of the model. Jerry stated so everyone could see what we are talking about. Ed Haight suggested that the model should depict the character of Hamlin.

Dave Lukas stated that he had some questions for Ed Evans regarding his assignment but he would wait until the next meeting to ask them when Ed was present. Mark suggested sending him an email asking him the questions. Dave stated that they are public questions. Mark suggested an email so Ed can be prepared at the next meeting.

Jerry Borkholder discussed the decision of having the Public Forum at the end of the meeting instead of in the beginning. Mark thanked Jerry and stated that he would be arranging the agenda and he feels that having the Public Forum at the end of the meeting allows for the committee to discuss subjects calmly. Jerry stated that he disagrees. Mark stated he would note that.

Linda DeRue asked if Mark would be appointing a Co-Chairman. Mark stated that he would like some time to think about that decision.

### **OPEN FORUM**

Chairman Mark Reeves explained the new sign in sheet that allowed everyone wishing to speak to indicate it on the sign in sheet. One resident stated that when she signed in she didn't want to speak but after listening to everything that was discussed now she does want to speak. Mark stated that they have an opportunity to sign up to speak until 8:00.

Troy Nesbitt of 52 Cook Road stated that he liked the model idea. It was good so people can visualize the scope. He suggested putting a 6' man at the base of the tower to show the size. Mark stated that he suggested that also. Mr. Nesbitt stated that at a previous meeting it was discussed that the wind tower meetings would be advertised on the front sign and asked why that wasn't happening. Mr. Nesbitt also asked how the Chairman was selected according to the Charter. Mark read the Charter regarding the Chairman. Mr. Nesbitt stated that there should be a process. It should be a Committee vote if for some reason the Chairman can not continue. That would be the fair thing to do.

Tom Jensen of 1 Roadside Drive stated that he agreed the model should be to scale. The previous model was not. Jerry Borkholder suggested making the model tower and having

moveable structures that could be placed at different distances from the tower. The location for the model and where it would be kept was discussed. The height of the structure was discussed. Mark stated that no proposal has been made yet. Glen stated that he would make the model tower 400'. Jack Shevlin suggested taking something that is stationary in town and building the model to scale and having moveable markers for the different setbacks. Mr. Callari suggested having a house next to the tower so you can get the feel of the size of the tower. Mark suggested that the house meet the town regulations for height also.

Diane Grimm of 430 Redman Road stated that the model was a good idea. She also wanted to commend the Committee on their efforts. This is a huge job and very emotional for the residents that live in the area. She asked that the Committee stay focused on the main objective and that they reach out to the community.

Kathy Habgood of 142 Cook Road stated that at the last meeting Committee member Ed Evans had some pictures of Cook Road. She passed around pictures from her house on Cook Road of the birds flying over the MET tower. She stated that Mr. Evans refers to the towers as wind mills when in fact they are 400' wind turbines. The noise is a tonal frequency and she referred to a study done in England that concluded that constant noise makes people sick. The noise is felt from their feet to their chest. Noise isn't measured in decibels. Mark asked Mrs. Habgood to forward the study to Heather to get to the Committee. Mrs. Habgood commented that when she visited the towers the noise was actually a result of having a number of wind mills together. It is an annoying constant noise. She asked the Committee to research the effects the towers have on the migratory birds in the area. Hamlin is a path area and a stop over area for many migratory birds and the area should be protected. Conducting a 3 year study of the birds was suggested. The effects the towers have on these birds is a concern to her. The towers will destroy their habitat and the wetlands and will effect the birds. Mark asked that she forward the information to Heather and he will have the Conservation Board discuss it also.

Joyce Bender of 1288 Moscow Road stated that she was confused about the discussion because she wasn't aware of the charter. She also stated that many people may develop questions after they sign in and should still have the opportunity to speak. She asked if copies of everything that is being discussed can be made available to the public. Mark stated that the charter and the minutes are on the website or a copy can be obtained from the Town Hall. The agenda is also on the website. She suggested having a sign for the sign in sheet so everyone is aware of it. Mark stated that copies of the agenda were available tonight and on the agenda the sign in sheet is mentioned for anyone wishing to speak. Mr. Callari suggested mentioning the sign in sheet when the exits are explained in the beginning of the meeting. Mark stated that he will do that.

Judith Doan of 1263 Redman Road stated that she has attended every meeting and the Committee needed to be careful what they said. There has been no proposal made yet. She attends the meetings because she wants to hear both sides. She wants to hear the bad and good points and she hasn't heard any of that so far. She challenges the Committee to objectively go out and look at the bad and good points and draw up a good code that

everyone can live with. She wonders if the committee can do this. Glen stated that they are trying to do the best they can. Mrs. Doan stated that she has yet to hear any objectives so far just a lot of arguing. She wonders what the Committee is working on.

Randy Robb of Gallup Road came to the meeting because he has read a lot of articles and he was interested in getting some information but after an hour discussion the Committee has accomplished nothing. He suggested going to area towns that have wind towers and talking to the Town Officials and asking them what they received as a Town for putting in the wind towers. He stated that so far the Committee has just argued over the bad points and no good points have been mentioned. He would like to see some research done on land values. He stated that the distance from the towers would determine the noise levels and that could be controlled with the setbacks.

Matt MacDonald of 43 Cook Road stated that he has a background in noise and several issues effect the sound of noise when it is recorded. He had a couple of articles to share with the Committee explaining this. He suggested visiting the towers at night because that would effect the sound of the noise. Jerry stated that his input on trips would be very available to the Committee and asked if he would be willing to go with the Committee. Dave asked the ratio of noise transmittance of evening vs. day. Mr. MacDonald stated that it is very complicated. The weather effects it also but it is about a 6 decibel difference. That doesn't sound like a lot but it really can be. Mark asked that Mr. MacDonald get the articles to Heather.

Nick Breslawski of N. Hamlin Road stated that when it is quiet out the towers don't turn. When it is windy and cold no one is outside to hear the towers. They don't have a red light on top. There is currently a cell tower in Braddocks Bay and no birds are being killed because of it. Birds can see the towers and they go around them. He stated that this is not working and if he was on the Committee he would be very disappointed. Dave asked what documentation Mr. Breslawski would accept regarding the effects the towers have on birds. Mr. Breslawski stated that there are no dead birds under the towers. That is the proof. Mark stated that the Committee would get information pertaining to the effects on birds and present it.

Ed Doan of 1263 Redman Road suggested talking to the Supervisor from another Town and asking him the number of birds that have been killed due to the towers. Get documentation from other towns in the area instead of from England. Mrs. Habgood stated that the article from England was about noise not the birds. She stated that Hamlin is a migratory path area for the birds. The rotation of the blades is an issue for the birds. Birds can not detect the blade action. Mrs. Habgood also commented on the remark that the Conservation Board would discuss the bird issue. She stated that a member of the Conservation Board asked her how she liked her birds he liked them well done. Troy Nesbitt stated that several studies have been done regarding birds and thousands are killed by the towers. The placement of the towers is very important. He referenced a famous study in California. Mark asked Troy to supply the information to Heather about the study.

Jack Shevlin of 768 Redman Road stated that it's all about perspective and who is effected. It's a huge job and there is tons of information out there. These are complicated issues. He lives across the street from the proposed site. He is concerned with both positive and negative issues. He is hopeful that the committee appreciates that the residents live there and have invested everything into their homes. They have real concerns. He loves this Town but he sees it breaking apart. He asked the Committee to put themselves in the resident's position. We are a Town. We should work together for everyone.

Matt MacDonald stated that at first he was a critic of the Committee also. This is a very complicated issue. He asked the Committee to review all of the information and do a good job.

Mr. Callari agreed with Mr. Shevlin. He also lives across the street. He moved here from the city. His house is his retirement and he is worried about the effects the towers will have on property values. He understands the need for alternative energy. Fenner has 2,000 acres. Hamlin has 60 acres. So many people are effected. He believes there is another location that would be better for the towers to be located. Mr. Doan stated that it effects more than 60 acres. A number of land owners have been approached.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mark Reeves, seconded by Andy Simpson to adjourn tonight's meeting barring any further business. Members polled, all ayes. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Heather Norman  
Clerk to the Support Boards

**The next Committee meeting will be April 3, 2007 at 7:00pm.**