

DRAFT

Grafton Special Economic Committee Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2016, 4:30 pm

Attending: John Turner, Bob Donald, Hardy Merrill, Pieter van der Made (via phone)-
Committee Members
Kate and David Muelrath - public

Mr. Turner called the meeting to order at 4:36 pm in the Town Offices.

Agenda for the meeting was adopted.

Minutes of the August 29 meeting were unanimously approved.

Mr. Turner reported that Brian Case has submitted a letter of resignation from the Committee due to scheduling conflicts. The resignation was accepted.

Discussion followed on calculations that several members had done using the State of Vermont-Department of Taxes Property Tax Adjustment Worksheet. All agreed that this worksheet is the best tool for evaluating changes in individual homeowners' municipal property tax bills resulting from an industrial wind project.

Mr. Merrill had previously done some analysis on the impact of wind turbines on Grafton's Grand List and municipal tax rates under three scenarios (analyses attached to these minutes). It was unanimously agreed by the Committee to utilize these three scenarios of potential future municipal tax rates to create three matrices of the annual municipal tax savings per household based upon various income and property value levels. Mr. van der Made agreed to calculate the values for these three matrices utilizing the State Tax Department worksheets.

Mr. Merrill noted that his research has revealed the following: Grafton has 462 housing units; 213 of these units file as Homestead; 162 of these 213 units received a property tax rebate/adjustment from the state; and 142 of these 162 are eligible voters.

On the subject of local job impacts, no response has been received from Iberdrola on the data requested by the Committee on September 8. Data that is available is 'soft.' Based upon other projects, some but not many local jobs may be created, for short periods. Gravel haulers, etc. Not many.

Studies on property value impact from wind are conflicting. All committee members to continue research on most relevant studies available.

As regards issues relating to wind turbine construction, Mr. Turner, Mr. Merrill, and Ms Kim Record have held phone conversations with four communities with completed wind projects: Lowell, Sheffield, Milton, Georgia. No significant problems were mentioned.

Mr. Donald agreed to begin a preliminary draft of a Committee report to residents. Mr. Merrill will contribute. Some major subject headings will include:

- What the committee did, what it found.
- Property Value impact from Wind
- Job impact from Wind
- Property Tax impact from Wind.

The next meeting of the committee was scheduled for Wednesday, September 28 at 4:30 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

R Donald
Acting Secretary