

May 20, 2014

SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

As a result of the joint meeting on October 17, 2013 we were informed verbally by BSSE that the PUC requested that they give consideration to those having residences within a half mile of the proposed line, but may not have actual property on the line. We thank you for that. The results have been mixed. I was verbally informed last fall that BSSE was proposing moving the 3 ½ mile line on 120th St, east of Westport SD, a half mile north of 120th St to the quarter line which would place the line on some of our property. This resulted in moving the project farther from some homes and closer to others, but still leaves the line within a half mile of seven residences. Being partially compensated does not change the issue for the following reasons.

With no written information being offered, my wife and I requested a meeting in an attempt to learn more about what they were proposing. We met on April 17, 2014 at which time an option form and information was presented. We had a great deal of discussion on the issue, but what it boiled down to was that I did not have a problem with the power poles on the ag land, we already work around that, but I did have a problem with the line being close to our home, approximately within 800' of our new house we built in 2010. It would also run within 600' of my sons home across the road. They plan to run the line 120' north of the quarter line because of trees so we would not be compensated for this property with the house on it. We would be compensated for the bare quarter section to the east. This discussion ended with the fact that we would continue to visit with them about the proposal if they would further discuss the impact of devaluation on our home. I was assured that they would discuss it at one their regular meetings. In a telephone conversation on May 7, 2014 on another issue I asked if the devaluation was discussed. The response was, "we asked ourselves is there a loss of value to a residence because of UNSIGHTLY poles nearby?" "The answer would be a DEFINITE yes!" "We just don't know how much value to place on it." We own 440 acres and we now have two transmission lines on those 440 acres, not distribution lines, these are transmission lines. Now the proposal is to add a third line. Add to that their comment that the "unsightly" poles will "definitely" devalue our new home is of grave concern to us. What direct financial cost should we bear to further this proposal? How much would you as individuals be willing to sacrifice for this project if you wanted to sell your home?

We were also told that if we did not go along with the above proposal, BSSE would go back to the original proposal. With that in mind, Arnold and Darlene Dennert and Carol Rydberg and I requested another meeting to discuss their original proposal. We met with representatives on May 13, 2014. Our discussions centered on some of the reroutes we proposed in our packet of October 17, 2013. All three of us feel that the proposals in that packet still have a great deal of merit. As of this date we have not received any response on those proposals other than under consideration. Arnold & Darlene would allow a diagonal across two quarters of land to keep it further from their residence and Carol would allow it to border 10' from the quarter line going south for one mile instead of having it out onto her

land in the original proposal. The landowner to the south of Carol for a half mile indicated just recently he would allow it along one quarter of his land, but he is also the lessee on the next quarter. It is his intention to purchase that quarter and would like to have some input as to the routing of the poles on that quarter if this route were selected. As this just came up recently, details on the remaining quarter have not been discussed. With that it brings the line to the 2 ½ miles of unimproved township road going east to once again meet up with the original line. With this proposal there are only two residences within a half mile of the line, one that has requested the line come through his land and the last residence has no change in distance with either proposal. This also has merit from the standpoint that six residences would not have to deal with the devaluation of their homes as was indicated to me. As you can see we are so close to making this work for everyone. The representative we met with said they would discuss it, but indicated that their meeting with the PUC was in June and time was a factor. Arnold said if they went back to the original proposal there would probably be 3 large land owners in the immediate vicinity that would go through condemnation and that would take a great deal of time also, probably more time than looking at this proposal. Their representative also stated that they should have moved the original line coming from North Dakota many miles west of here and turned east somewhere near Aberdeen to meet up with the line going east. That indicated to us at the meeting that their selection of the route in this area was by their own admission not a good decision.

It would be our request at this time for the PUC to delay any approval until such time as more discussions and agreements can be worked out between BSSE and the landowners. If BSSE indicates to you, the PUC, that any delays in approval would be a cost to the project, it should not be a factor in your decision. By their own admission the preferred line should have been many miles west of here and a great deal of savings would have been obtained from land values alone. At the October meeting last fall I asked why they did not consider the diagonal line through the Coteau Hills, possibly along an existing rail line and probably save 80 million dollars. I have since been in touch with that rail line and they indicated three times they would be very interested in discussing it with BSSE and would look forward to a meeting with them, but they have not been contacted. That indicates to us that money is not a factor. It is acceptable to proceed with a bad decision as long as the PUC allows it. It would also be acceptable to BSSE, by their own admission, to incur devaluation to our homes if the PUC allows it. It would be regrettable if the PUC did not consider the needs of the landowners and homeowners over two public utilities from other states when possible solutions for the benefit of everyone can still be achieved.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. I know that the landowners in this area would be willing to meet any time to obtain a workable solution beneficial to everyone.


Lyle Podoll

(605-290-0735)

11957 390th Ave

Westport SD 57481