(8) Alison Hagerstrom

Kibby Expansion Expedited Petition Hearing
March 17, 2010

Good morning Commissioners. Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

My name is Alison Hagerstrom and I am the Executive Director for the Greater Franklin Development Corporation located in Farmington. My primary purpose is to create jobs through business attraction.

TransCanada has been a pleasure to work with since they first started to investigate the potential for a wind project in Northern Franklin County. Their communications have been open and frequent.

We, Franklin County, are very fortunate to have them as an employer, tax payer, and community member now that the Kibby project is being constructed and partially operational.

The list of TransCanada's efforts to develop our economy and our community is long, but I thought I would focus on two things: the Kibby Boot Camp and the TIF… Tax Increment Financing.

Though I was not directly involved in the Boot Camp program, I have heard fantastic things about what it did for the ten youth involved. Training opportunities that bring our young people directly into contact with emerging industries like wind power are priceless. There is no better way to develop our workforce than to give young people a chance to see and do the tasks our newest employers need done. All ten were offered employment and two chose to enroll in the community college system as a result of what they learned at the Boot Camp.

Speaking of future employers and opportunities, my organization has been tasked by the County Commissioners to manage the Tax Increment Financing program that they established for the Kibby Wind Power Project. As the balance of the project goes online, the millions of dollars in economic development funds will begin to flow to Franklin County. So, we have been busy establishing the guidelines for deciding which applications for tourism planning and marketing, scenic byway improvements, public safety equipment, matching grants, etcetera, we will be able to fund. The committee we have established for this purpose has created an excellent opportunity to grow our economic development networks in tourism, education, agriculture and others especially in the Unorganized Townships of Franklin County. With the funding and relationship building the TIF has made possible, we expect to be able to grow our economy and continue to add new businesses in the coming years.

Neither of these successes would have been possible without TransCanada. So, thank you LURC for your unanimous decision to grant permits for the Kibby project. I hope you will approve their petition to add acreage to the expedited permitting area to give them the flexibility and opportunity to expand a great project, add more jobs, and continue to benefit the people of Franklin County. I have been up there and everyone I speak to about it agrees that this is an appropriate location for wind power.

Thank you again for your service to the State of Maine. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have for me now or in the future.