

Testimony to Senate Health and Welfare
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Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you about GMP's Kingdom Community Wind Project. We are very proud of this project – from the amount of energy it produces, the incredible value it offers our customers, the care to which we built and continue to manage the property, the 2,800 acres of wildlife habitat that we conserved to mitigate the 134 acres of impact we had, and most importantly, to the level of community support we've enjoyed from inception to operation.

Back in 2009 when we met with the Lowell Select Board to talk about the project, after a good conversation they said they wanted the townspeople to vote on it. To which I said great, and we will respect the wishes of the town. If they vote yes we will proceed with the exploration and if they vote no we will go away. They were surprised by this, but pleased because it showed that we respected the wishes of the community. When the vote occurred, 75% of the town's people voted in favor of it. The town clerk reported that it was the largest voter turnout that she could remember. After the project was built and operating for a couple of years there was another town vote. This time it was an amendment proposed by opponents of the project. That amendment was defeated by 80% of the voters. This seemed to support a growing sentiment that support for the project has grown. I believe that the main reason that support has increased is because concerns that were raised about wind energy – and there was a very long list - including sound problems, did not materialize, at least not to the extent purported.

I have a copy of the Lowell Town Report. Children were asked to submit drawings of their town. In this report you'll see a lot of their drawings include wind turbines in the background. This demonstrates at least to me that KCW has become an integral part of the town's identity. Something they are proud of and welcome as part of their landscape.

In the summer we conduct tours of KCW – we get between 1,200 and 1,500 people every summer visiting Lowell for these tours and the local businesses appreciate the traffic. At the local restaurant – the Cajun – they know when it's tour day because the restaurant is full.

Conducting these tours is a highlight of my summer. It not only gets me out of the office it gives me the opportunity to show people, mostly Vermonters, what an operating wind plant looks like. I want them to see, hear and experience for themselves the facility so they can compare to what they might have heard and draw their own conclusions about the impact. And I can

confidently say that the vast majority leave with a more favorable impression. This is true when winds are light and the turbines are barely moving, as well as when the winds are high and the turbines are producing at their maximum output.

We will be starting tours in June. People can sign up at the GMP website.

I have the list of questions that you asked me to respond to regarding GMP's protocol for responding to and addressing complaints. I will preface it by saying that we try very hard to resolve complaints by working with individuals directly.

I provided you GMP's Complaint Resolution process that's contained in KCW sound monitoring protocol as stipulated in our CPG. It spells out a procedure "to assure that concerns by neighbors regarding wind turbine noise are addressed in a timely manner, while, at the same time, preventing abuse of the complaint process."

I will respond to each of your questions:

QUESTIONS FOR GMP (owner/developer), PSD, and PSB

1) What procedure is in place for a person affected by wind generators (C) to file a complaint? If the process varies for different projects, please explain the differences.

Please have a description, in writing, for the record that addresses the following:

- Does your company have a written policy for public complaints? Please bring to the committees and/or send electronically prior to the meeting date.
 - Yes. GMP has a procedure approved by the Vermont Public Service Board for monitoring for sound and responding to any complaints. (Copy of Complaint Resolution provided to Committee members)
- Do you have separate procedures for sound as opposed to other types of complaints?
 - No, our process for managing sound complaints is the only complaint with a specific, PSB-approved protocol.
- Does your company have a single telephone #, email and person to respond within a specific timeframe?

- yes
- Who does the public contact?
 - Preston Gregory, KCW Site Supervisor. However, some prefer to contact the Public Service Department directly.
- Who answers the phone/email?
 - Preston Gregory at GMP
- Is it recorded, where, and by whom?
 - We do not record the conversation but we keep a record of every complaint.
- What response to the situation can be expected?
 - When the call is received by GMP the response is often immediate. When the complaint is directed to the department, we respond within 1-2 business days of notice to GMP.
- Who has the burden of proof?
 - Our first priority is to work to resolve issues; this includes a site condition analysis during the timeframe in question, followed by offering residents sound monitoring at their home.
- Does (C) know what is going on?
 - Yes – we stay in touch and work to resolve any issues.
- Does (C) know when the resolution/closure is achieved?
 - Yes. We maintain an open dialog and continually work to find resolution.
- Who is responsible to make all of the above happen?
 - Preston Gregory is the front line person. He receives the complaint, gathers the data – operational and weather data – to verify if there were any anomalies that would have caused increased sound. As outlined in our protocol we offer sound monitoring at a home to assess the sound levels.
- Who pays for the system around this?

- GMP
- What does it cost to implement the complaint system (including any monitoring required in your CPG)?
 - There is no additional cost, it is a part of doing business with the staff we have. We work as a team to resolve issues as quickly as possible.
 - The two years of monitoring as required in our CPG cost \$232,000 – this included \$8,200 spent to monitor sound at a home who took us up on our offer.
- What is your company timeline for completing work on any complaints?
 - If we have indication that there is a problem as shown by data from our weather measurement instruments or from a call from a local resident, we take immediate action. Our dispatch center monitors weather and performance data closely and if icing is likely they can turn turbines off remotely. When a complaint comes through the PSD, we respond within 1-2 business days as required, then gather data and follow up with person.
- Is that information provided to the PSB and within what timeframe?
 - Any monitoring that we undertake is required to be submitted to the PSB, PSD and complainant. One household accepted our offer and we provided them the full report that showed we did not exceed the sound level. (Subsequently they sold their home and the new owners have no complaints.

2) How is the remedy to complaints designed, documented, and implemented?

- By whom and in what timeframe? Who oversees compliance?
 - Remedy designed during CPG and documented in the handout
- How does (C) and the public know what is happening?
 - Strong relationships with the community. We maintain a contract with a local couple who is always available to answer questions and pass along concerns.
- Who pays for it and how does the public know how much?

- As the developer and owner of the project GMP pays, and all our expenses are scrutinized by our regulators. How much? This is all about public engagement and something that many of us are involved in as needed.
- How many complaints have resulted in satisfactory resolution to complainants?
 - We had an incident early in our operation of the plant where we received a number of complaints. We learned that the increased sound was due to snow build up on the blades. To rectify this we purchased sophisticated weather monitoring equipment and cameras to monitor the condition at the turbines. Now we know when the potential exists for snow buildup, we monitor closely and shut them down if there's a problem.
 - Complaints have trailed off significantly since that first year of operation.
 - In 2013, the first full year of operation we had 77 complaints from 12 different households, most coming from 3 households. 38 from one, 19 from another, 8 from another
 - In 2014, the total number of complaints reduced to 25 from 12 different households – majority coming from 3 households
 - In 2015, the total number of complaint was 6, 3 from 1 household and 3 from a hunting camp
 - In 2016 – we've had no complaints
- Are individuals with recurring complaints treated differently from new complainants?
 - We treat everyone equally. However, residents who had recurring complaints may receive more attention in order to help us understand the issues and how we can address them.
- Please provide examples of responses to complaints.
 - offering sound monitoring at people's home
 - provided multiple cell phone numbers

- offered to come to any home when there's a complaint so we can experience it with them

3) How is compliance with CPGs monitored and enforced? (Seems these questions are geared for PSB and PSD)

- By whom? GMP was responsible for the sound monitoring and results were reported to regulators
- Who pays? GMP
- How frequently – in terms of site visits or other?
- For what time period
- What happens when companies do not comply?
- Where is the burden of proof?
- How does the public know? Is this information posted for public access?
- How is it documented, by whom, and where? What records are kept with respect to monitoring and compliance activities?
- How does (C) complain when it is believed that compliance is not happening? How can the public initiate a compliance inquiry/investigation? How does the public know that the request is acted on, resolved, or not appropriate for investigation?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR JUNE TIERNEY – PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

1) **What are the PSB policies and procedures for monitoring and enforcing CPG compliance? Are these in PSB rules?**

- Is this information posted for public access?
- How many complaints has the PSB received? Acted on?
- How many open dockets are there on wind turbine noise complaints? What is their status?
- What are the possible satisfactory resolutions for complaints?

QUESTIONS FOR COMMISSIONER HARRY CHEN – DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Please have a description, in writing, for the record that addresses the following:

- What procedure is in place for a person affected by wind generators (C) to file a complaint?
- Does the DOH have guidance documents relating to potential effects of sound on public health? Do any relate to wind? Has information from other countries been used to develop the DOH's information?
- How and when is DOH involved in complaint proceedings for wind generation facilities?
- Do "expert witnesses" vetted by DOH become neutral consultants?
- Where is DOH regarding potential effects of wind generation facilities on neighbors' health?
- How many complainants has DOH interviewed?
- How are other variables eliminated when issues around wind are identified as public health concerns?
- How, where, and by whom are all of the above records kept and are they available to the public?