

TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2018 AT TOWN OFFICES

TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT: Bernadette Costa, Jill Brewer, Eric Meth.

TOWN OFFICIALS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Holly Burbank, Jenny Monahan, Karen Foss, Peter Grote.

The meeting was called to order at 3:05pm.

APPOINTMENTS:

Town Budget review was postponed and is expected to occur at the next meeting.

SIGN/APPROVE:

The Board reviewed and approved the January 17, 2018 minutes and January 11 & 17, 2018 non-public minutes.

The January 25, 2018 Transaction List was reviewed and signed.

DISCUSSION:

The Board reviewed the 2018 Non-Profit Funding Requests, amending several requested amounts as deemed appropriate based on previous contribution amounts and the town's utilization of services. While reviewing the Franconia Notch Regional Chamber of Commerce (FNRCC) article, Holly said Barbara Ashley had inquired with her regarding what would be done with the current Visitor Booth outside of Town Hall if the FNRCC moves into the Sports Shop location on Main Street. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed that it should be removed as it isn't in great shape and they would like to gain the space for parking.

The Board then reviewed the 2018 Warrant Articles for Town Meeting (1-27). During the article review, Holly updated the Board on her meeting that day with Scott Leslie, Erik Rasmussen and Tim Blake regarding the implementation of the Director of Public Works plan (how Scott's time would be divided between departments and what Tim's duties as Foreman would be.) Holly said it was a very productive meeting and things were coming together.

Selectman Costa suggested adding an article that would give the Board of Selectmen authority to formally object on the Town's behalf if Northern Pass is approved.

Regarding Article 22 (Evergreen Apartments Demolition), the Board discussed the options for proceeding with the sale of tax deeded properties. After some discussion, all members were in agreement that sealed bid auction was preferred and the sale of the Evergreen Apartment property (192 Main St.) should include a condition that the purchaser must demolish the structure. Jill Brewer said she would like to see the town send notification letters soon to begin the 90 day process of putting the properties to auction. The Board will not auction the land behind the Transfer Station at this time.

Selectman Costa made a motion to auction six of the tax deeded properties by method of sealed bid. Jill Brewer seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passes.**

Eric Meth mentioned Easton's Northern Pass related articles prohibiting horizontal drilling and geothermal backfilling. He has already discussed them with the Planning Board. After discussion, the Board was not sure how those articles may affect other construction projects so no action was taken.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE: Holly Burbank said she is almost finished with the town budget and will focus on its completion over the week. She anticipates having it for presentation to the Board at the next meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Conservation Commission: No update, next meeting on 1/23.

CIP Committee: No update.

Energy Commission: No update.

Planning Board: No update, next meeting on 01/30.

Northern Pass: Eric had an ad from the Boston Globe posted by Conservation Law Foundation addressing MA Governor Charlie Baker regarding their opposition to Northern Pass. The ad is attached to these minutes. Eric also had an InDepthNH.org article regarding the ad, also attached to these minutes.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Peter Grote commented that he was working on the town's Northern Pass annual report, possibly for inclusion in the Town Report. Eric Meth said he thought it should be included in the Town Report as it has been an issue of interest to residents and the town has expended funds on fighting the Northern Pass transmission project. Peter will submit the report to Eric for review.

With no further discussion, the Board adjourned at 5:44pm on a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary

NPT

Dear Governor Baker:

Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) has been pleased to work with your cabinet to keep New England on the path to a carbon-free future.

We see at a critical crossroads, and the decisions your administration makes next will shape the future of your environment and energy legacy. Our state is poised to move forward on the next generation of clean energy, from large wind power developments to hydroelectric imports. Now, your team is tasked with choosing which projects to support. And while CLF has filed detailed comments on the process, one bidder simply should be disqualified from consideration.

The **Evermore/Northern Pass proposal**—a 192-mile project slicing through New Hampshire, communities and scenic, precious landscapes—is unacceptable for its environmental impacts alone. But even these concerns are overshadowed by the company's dishonest and disdainful treatment of communities and regulatory agencies in the permitting and bidding process. Some examples:

- The Northern Pass bid claimed the project would be fully approved by the end of 2017. In reality, **Northern Pass has not received permission** from the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee, **has not received a number of necessary authorizations** to begin construction on the line, and **has not even applied for certification** by the U.S. Department of Energy or state regulators for their proposed 192-mile project.
- The Northern Pass bid claims the transmission line will be in service in 2020. Even if Northern Pass's bid claims about regulatory approval were true, **construction will take a minimum of three years once the project is fully permitted.**
- Northern Pass claims the project has broad public support in New Hampshire, but the opposite is true. **Of the 1,550 public comments submitted, more than 80 percent oppose the project.**
- Northern Pass claims the project would reduce electricity costs for businesses and families. As evidence, they pointed to a **proposed contract that was quickly declared illegal by the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission.**
- Northern Pass falsely claimed that the project finance would not support burial of any meaningful segment of its 192 miles of wire. While changing their wire several times, they remain insistent that significant burial is impossible. **At least one competing bidder has promised full burial from the start.**

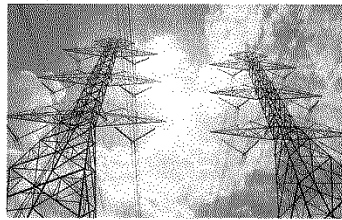
Balancing competing interests is never easy, but it demands candor and respect for the public and your administration. **Disqualifying Northern Pass is essential to the integrity of this important decision.**



InDepthNH.org | (<http://indepthnh.org/2018/01/21/conservation-law-foundation-to-mass-gov-baker-disqualify-northern-pass-mass-rfp-bid/>)

Conservation Law Foundation To Mass. Gov. Baker: Disqualify Northern Pass' Energy Bid

By Nancy West 13 hours ago



Conservation Law Foundation website

By Nancy West, InDepthNH.org

In a full-page ad in the Boston Globe on Sunday, the Conservation Law Foundation told Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker that the proposed Northern Pass project should be disqualified from the Mass. Clean Energy RFP aimed at reducing carbon emissions because it lied in its bid.

The open letter to Baker said the proposed 192-mile high-voltage transmission line that would cut through New Hampshire from Pittsburg to Deerfield is unacceptable for its environmental impacts alone.

"But even these concerns are overshadowed by the company's dishonest and disdainful treatment of communities and regulatory agencies in the permitting and bidding process," the Conservation Law Foundation ad said.

Melissa Birchard, a staff attorney for the CLF New Hampshire, said Northern Pass misrepresented a number of facts in its Massachusetts energy bid.

"They said the project had broad public support in New Hampshire, but it doesn't. In fact, Counsel for the Public, a neutral party, described in briefing last week 'overwhelming opposition to the Project expressed by intervenors, municipal governing bodies, legislators, and the public,' 22 of 31 host municipalities have opposed the project at the SEC, and 1500 public comments ran 1:1 opposition," Birchard said.

Northern Pass also told the Massachusetts bid reviewers that they expected permits for the mixed wind-hydro proposal by the end of 2017, but they haven't even applied for permits for that project, she said.

"The New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee has made clear that it is only reviewing an all-hydro proposal in the current permitting proceeding. And in their DOE Presidential Permit application, Northern Pass specified that the project would transmit 98% hydroelectricity," Richard said.

Northern Pass submitted two proposals, one that is all hydropower and the other a mix of hydropower and wind in Massachusetts. But the Northern Pass proposal before the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee deals only with Hydro-Quebec electricity.

According to the Boston Globe ad, Northern Pass falsely claimed that the project finances could not support burial of any meaningful segment when at least one competing bidder has promised full burial from the start.

"Balancing competing interests is never easy, but it demands candor and respect for the public and your administration. Disqualifying Northern Pass is essential to the integrity of this important decision," the CLF ad said in addressing Gov. Baker.

Deliberations coming

The Conservation Law Foundation is an intervenor opposed to the proposal that is presently before the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee. Seventy evidentiary hearings have been held on Northern Pass' application and the committee is scheduled to begin 12 days of public deliberations on Jan. 30 in Concord.

Northern Pass didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The open letter to Gov. Baker was published in the Boston Globe two days after Eversource Energy/Northern Pass Transmission filed its final brief to the SEC stating it has met the four requirements in New Hampshire to be awarded a certificate to build.

On Friday, Northern Pass filed its 429-page brief saying it has the financial, technical and managerial capability to construct and operate the project; it will not unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region; will not have unreasonable adverse effects on aesthetics, air and water quality, historic sites, the natural environment and public health and safety; and that it will serve the public interest.

"The Project will provide over \$3 billion in economic stimulus in the state by reducing the electricity costs of New Hampshire customers by more than \$50 million annually, producing more than 2,600 New Hampshire jobs at the peak of construction, generating an estimated \$600 million in local, county and State tax revenues over the first 20 years of operation, providing \$200 million in funding for community betterment, economic development, clean energy and tourism through the Forward New Hampshire Plan, sponsoring the \$7.5 million North Country Job Creation Fund, and partnering with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation ("NFWF") to restore and sustain healthy forests and rivers in New Hampshire. Correspondingly, the Project will reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions by more than 3.3 million tons per year, which will help New Hampshire achieve the goals of the New Hampshire Climate Action Plan and the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

"The Project benefits will be achieved without monetary contribution by New Hampshire customers and with no demand on government services during operation of the Project," the Northern Pass/Eversource brief stated.

Mass. Clean Energy RFP

Next week, the three major electric distributors, including Eversource, and the Mass. Department of Energy will announce which of 46 proposals will be selected to negotiate long-term contracts to produce to terawatt hours of clean, renewable energy over the next 20 years.

After the Mass. Clean Energy RFP selection committee makes its recommendations on Thursday, the projects have until March 27 to negotiate long-term contracts before they are presented to the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities in April.

Selecting the winner does not follow a normal procurement process as the ratings will not be known until the contracts go before the Department of Public Utilities by April 25, but does reflect the varied interests of the major distributors.

The Mass. Clean Energy RFP resulted from Massachusetts legislation that emphasizes new renewable energy sources and transmission systems to deliver "clean power" to southern New England.

Last November, Conservation Law Foundation president Brad Campbell sent a letter to the Mass. RFP selection committee saying that while CLF supports giving preference to blended projects, Northern Pass' bid that includes hydro power and wind misrepresents its permitting status.

"The bid claims to be nearly done with permitting and ready for an in-service date of 2020 when, in fact, there are no major permitting applications pending that include the Northern Pass: Hydro + Wind proposal," Campbell wrote.

SEC Motion denied

The Conservation Law Foundation, Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust and the Appalachian Mountain Club filed a motion seeking a declaratory ruling in November from Site Evaluation Committee Chairman Martin Honigberg about the combination hydro/wind bid that Eversource/Northern Pass submitted to the Mass. RFP. *(An earlier version of this story mistakenly said the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests was a co-filer, and failed to say that the Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust was in fact a co-filer.)*

"The Applicant has not sought to amend its Application to include transmission of wind generated electricity. A determination on the scope of a Certificate or any conditions can only be made after consideration and deliberation based on the complete record," Honigberg said, denying the joint motion.

The Site Evaluation Committee will begin public deliberations at 49 Donovan St., Concord, on the following days: January 30 and 31; and February 1, 6, 8, 9, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, and 23. A verbal decision is required by the end of February and a written decision by the end of March.

The written decision triggers a 30-day window for Eversource or the intervenors to ask the SEC to reconsider its decision.

Jack Savage, spokesman for the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, said the two states have different decisions to make when asked about the ad in the Boston Globe.

"The Mass. RFP is about Massachusetts deciding what they think they want. NH's decision-makers need to consider what's best for New Hampshire," Savage said.