



EB-2013-0031

IN THE MATTER OF the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*, S.O. 1998, c.15, Schedule B;

AND IN THE MATTER OF an application by Wainfleet Wind Energy Inc. for an Order or Orders pursuant to subsection 41(9) of the *Electricity Act 1998*, S.O. 1998, c. 15, Schedule A, as amended, establishing the location of Wainfleet Wind Energy Inc.'s distribution facilities within certain public right-of-way and street owned by the Township of Wainfleet, Regional Municipality of Niagara.

BEFORE: Paula Conboy
Presiding Member

Peter Noonan
Member

DECISION AND ORDER

June 27, 2013

BACKGROUND

Wainfleet Wind Energy Inc. (“Wainfleet Wind” or the “Applicant”) filed an application dated February 4, 2013, with the Ontario Energy Board (the “Board”) under subsection 41(9) of the *Electricity Act*, 1998, S.O. 1998, c. 15, Schedule A, as amended (the “*Electricity Act*”) for an order or orders of the Board establishing the location of Wainfleet Wind’s proposed distribution facilities within certain road allowances owned by the Township of Wainfleet (the “Township”).

The Board issued a Notice of Application (“Notice”) on March 13, 2013.¹

Following the publication of Notice, Ms. Katherine Pilon applied for intervenor status and requested an oral hearing. The Applicant objected to her intervention request on the basis that her proposed intervention was directed at issues outside the scope of subsection 41(9) of the *Electricity Act*. The Board deliberated, and subsequently denied Ms. Pilon’s request to intervene upon the grounds that her proposed intervention dealt with matters that are outside the Board’s jurisdiction under subsection 41(9) of the *Electricity Act*. However, the Board allowed Ms. Pilon to file materials in this proceeding as letters of comment. No other person applied to the Board for intervenor status.

The Board decided to proceed by way of a written hearing process in this matter. Procedural Order No. 1 was issued on April 26, 2013 to set out the process for the conduct of the written hearing.

SCOPE OF PROCEEDING

As stated in the Board’s Notice, the scope of this proceeding is limited to determining the location of the Applicant’s Distribution System within the road allowances owned by the Township.

THE APPLICATION

Wainfleet Wind is an Ontario corporation which carries on the business of developing renewable wind energy generation projects. It has partnered with Rankin Construction Inc., a local contractor which carries on the business of building renewable

¹ The original Notice was issued on March 6, 2013 and a revised Notice was issued on March 13, 2013.

infrastructure. Wainfleet is a distributor of electricity within the meaning of the *Electricity Act*.

The Applicant has entered into a contract with the Ontario Power Authority (“OPA”) and is in the process of developing a 9 MW wind power generating facility with five wind turbines, located in the Township and the Niagara Region.

As part of the project, the Applicant is proposing to construct a 27.6kV underground system (“Distribution System”) that will collect power from the turbines and deliver it to a switching station, proposed to be located on private lands along the unopened road allowance of Sideroad 22 (also known as “Brawn Road”) in the Township. The Applicant proposes to install the Distribution System underground under private and public lands in the Township and elsewhere in the Niagara Region. This Application is made only in reference to the public lands within the authority of the Township. Wainfleet Wind states that its proposed Distribution System is necessary to transmit electricity from the wind turbines to the distribution system, in order to comply with its contractual commitments to the OPA.

The Applicant asserts that it has been unsuccessful in negotiations with the Township to obtain an agreement for the location of the underground Distribution System, including high voltage cables, associated ducts, and a communications cable along and across Concession 1 Road and across the unopened Sideroad 22 road allowance at the location of a municipal drain within the Township. Pursuant to subsection 41(9) of the *Electricity Act*, the Applicant requests that this Board determine the location of structures, equipment and other facilities to be installed under or on Concession 1 Road and unopened Sideroad 22.

In particular, the Applicant requests that the Board determine the location of an underground diagonal crossing of unopened Sideroad 22. The Applicant also intends to carry the Distribution System underground across private lands until the Distribution System intersects Concession 1 Road. The Applicant therefore requests that the Board determine the location of a concrete encased duct bank or directional bore crossing for a perpendicular crossing of Concession 1 Road. Finally, the Applicant requests that the Board determine the location of the Distribution System to be constructed underground within the road allowance of Concession 1 Road to its point of intersection with Station Road, a municipal road under the jurisdiction of the Regional Municipality of Niagara. The project for which the Applicant seeks the approval of this Board is described at

Exhibit B/Tab 2/Schedule 1 and shown on applicable engineering drawings² at Exhibit B/Tab 3/Schedule 1/Appendix A, of the application.

Wainfleet Wind states that the proposed cable installations of the Distribution System are designed to meet or exceed the requirements of the Ontario Electrical Safety Code Standard C22.3-#7, Underground Systems and permanent buried cable markers will be installed at either end of the road crossings as recommended by the Canadian Standards Association. Additional details are provided in the construction notes contained in applicable drawings.

THE RECORD

The record consists of the application, letters of comment submitted by members of the public, interrogatories of Board staff, the Applicant's response to Board staff interrogatories, and the submissions of Board staff and the Applicant.

Although the Township did not apply for intervenor status the Board granted leave to the Township to intervene in this proceeding. However, the Township did not take the opportunity to participate or make any submissions on the issues before the Board. Accordingly, the Applicant is the only formal party in this case.

The Board received a number of letters of comment from Ms. Katherine Pilon. The letters of comment filed by Ms. Pilon relate to her opposition to the wind generation project rather than to the issues pertinent to the decision that the Board must make under subsection 41(9) of the *Electricity Act*. Accordingly, the Board has not relied on any of the letters of comment except for a portion of Ms. Pilon's submissions of April 27 and April 30, 2013 in which she, like the Applicant, provided some additional information on the public utility of Station Road as background information about the project.

Pursuant to Procedural Order No. 1, Board staff submitted interrogatories to Wainfleet Wind. The Applicant provided satisfactory responses to all of the Board staff interrogatories.

On May 27, 2013, Board staff filed a written submission. Board staff observed that the Township staff were consulted about the proposed location of Distribution System and

² For the purpose of this application, the applicable drawings are: Drawing #'s: 123901C1.0, 123901C1.1 to 123901C1.4, 123901C1.14 and 123901C1.15

that the Township has not provided the Applicant with any concerns about the proposed location. The Board staff submission noted that: "In the absence of information to the contrary, the route selected appears to staff to be the most efficient and least invasive."

On June 3, 2013, Wainfleet Wind filed its reply submissions. Wainfleet Wind submitted that its application establishing the location of the Distribution System on road allowances owned by the Township should be approved.

Additionally, Wainfleet Wind also requested that the Board consider an award of costs against the Township. Wainfleet Wind noted that it was forced to bring this application because it was unable to reach an agreement with the Township and that the Township's conduct has inflicted unnecessary costs and inconvenience on Wainfleet Wind. The Applicant submitted that the Board should exercise its discretion to award costs against the Township in favour of Wainfleet Wind in the amount of \$3,500.00 plus the Board's cost of the Application. Wainfleet Wind stated that its request for costs only covers the publishing costs that it incurred as a necessary part of this application.

BOARD FINDINGS

The Applicant is the only formal party in this case. The Township received notice of this application but chose not to seek intervenor status or participate in the proceeding even after the Board, of its own motion, granted leave to the Township to intervene. Ms. Katherine Pilon filed several letters of comment but her concerns were directed at the wind generation facility project which is outside of the scope of this application. None of her comments were specific to the Applicant's request to locate the Distribution System within the Township's road allowances. The application by Wainfleet Wind pursuant to subsection 41(9) of the *Electricity Act* is essentially unopposed.

The Applicant has established that it is a distributor of electricity and that it has a statutory right to place its Distribution System within a municipal road allowance pursuant to subsection 41(1) of the *Electricity Act*. The Board finds that the Applicant and the Township have been unable to agree upon the location of the Distribution System within the road allowances that are the subject of this application. The Board notes that satisfactory responses have been made by the Applicant to the interrogatories posed by Board staff. The engineering drawings for the location of the distribution line and related structures have been considered and the Board finds that they are satisfactory. Therefore, the Board finds that the Applicant has satisfied the

burden of proof under the *Electricity Act* to demonstrate that the proposed location of its Distribution System in the municipal road allowances is appropriate and the application is approved.

In order to ensure that adequate regulatory oversight is provided for this project the Board has decided that the following conditions to its approval will be imposed on the Applicant:

- 1) The Applicant shall advise the Board's designated representative of any proposed material change in the location of the facilities as described in the Plans and Profiles as set out at ExB/T2/S1 and Ex B/T3/S1/Appendix A of the application and shall not make a material change in the Plans and Profiles without prior approval of the Board or its designated representative.
- 2) The Applicant shall designate a person as Project Manager and shall provide the name of the individual to the Board's designated representative. The Project Manager will be responsible for the fulfillment of the Conditions of Approval on the construction site.
- 3) The Board's designated representative for the purpose of this Condition of Approval shall be the Manager, Electricity Facilities and Infrastructure Applications.

As to the question of costs, the Board has decided that this is not an appropriate case in which to award costs. The Township chose not to become a formal party to the Board's proceeding, as it was entitled to, and therefore did not add any delay or cost for the Applicant in this proceeding. Clearly, the Applicant is frustrated by its dealings with the Township and the Board is aware that other legal proceedings have taken place between the Applicant and the Township. However, the Board cannot take cognizance of those matters for the purposes of determining costs in this proceeding. We note that the Applicant requested in its Reply that the question of costs not delay the Board's decision, which would clearly be the result if the Board established a process to determine whether a non-party in the context of this case could, and should, be subjected to an award of costs. All things considered, the Board declines to make a cost order in this case.

THE BOARD ORDERS THAT:

1. The location of Wainfleet Wind's Distribution System on road allowances owned by the Township, as described in the application at Exhibit B/Tab 2/Schedule 1 and in the applicable drawings at Exhibit B/Tab 3/Schedule 1/Appendix A and subject to the Conditions of Approval set out in this Decision and Order is approved.
2. Pursuant to section 30 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*, Wainfleet Wind shall pay the Board's costs of and incidental to, this proceeding immediately upon receipt of the Board's invoice.

ISSUED AT Toronto on June 27, 2013

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Original Signed by

Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary