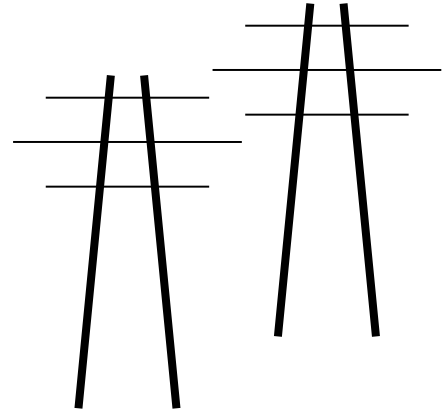


Legalelectric, Inc.

Carol Overland Attorney at Law, MN #254617
Energy Consultant—Transmission, Power Plants, Nuclear Waste
overland@legalelectric.org

1110 West Avenue
Red Wing, Minnesota 55066
612.227.8638



December 22, 2023

Ryan Barlow
General Counsel
Public Utilities Commission
121 – 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

email only: ryan.barlow@state.mn.us

RE: **Data Practices Act Request**
External Planning Meeting - Grid North Partners Congestion Relief
Projects, Permitting Efficiency Stakeholder Meeting Report

Dear Mr. Barlow:

As I was listening to a recent Commission webcast, during a transmission agenda item, I heard at least twice, comments from the dais, essentially, **“What can we do to speed this along for you?”** **“What can we do to streamline this permitting process.”** Over the years, I’ve observed and challenged the utilities’ reliance on MISO “approval” as demonstration of the statutory “need” for projects. I’ve observed the Commission’s acceptance of “MISO approval” with disregard and exemption of Certificate of Need criteria and failure to independently assess statutory need. As you know, the Commission has also been called on its restriction and its failure to encourage, and outright blockage, of public participation.¹

The majority of these utilities are **regulated** monopolies, and the Commission is the regulator.

I’ve been working on transmission issues since 1996 and have worked against legislative “streamlining” efforts under several state and federal administrations. Too often, the public and those affected are left out of discussions.

After raising some of these issues this week at the Power Plant Siting Act annual hearing, I see the January 3, 2024 notice for the next transmission build-out deemed “congestion relief,” and **“Permitting Efficiency Stakeholder Meeting Report.”** This “streamlining” train may be freewheeling down the mountain, without public notice, knowledge, or participation.

¹ [OLA Report on PUC](https://legalelectric.org/f/2020/07/OLA-Report_PUC2020.pdf) July 27th, 2020; https://legalelectric.org/f/2020/07/OLA-Report_PUC2020.pdf

At this time, I request:

- Commission's charge to the "Permitting Efficiency Stakeholder" committee(s) and Commission source and authorization of this effort (beyond that of 8/22/2023)
- Docket number for this "Permitting Efficiency" effort.
- Documents of solicitation of "stakeholders."
- Lists of organizers and participants, their emails, meeting agendas, and locations of "stakeholder" meetings.
- Emails of full or partial group members re: group issues/discussion between meetings.
- Meeting packets for all "stakeholder" meetings.
- Meeting notes from all "stakeholder" meetings regarding "permitting efficiency."
- Ex parte reports of communications regarding "permitting efficiency."
- Deliverables from this process, including but not limited to legislative proposals and/or agenda, rulemaking, guidance, and other policy proposals, reports, recommendations, and/or agreements, including final and drafts.
- Agenda and packet for the Commission's January 3, 2024 Special Meeting.
- Such other discoverable documents regarding "permitting efficiency" of transmission permitting.

If a file review would make this request more convenient for Commission staff, let me know so we may schedule a time.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



Carol A. Overland
Attorney at Law

cc: Will Sueffert will.sueffert@state.mn.us; Bret Eknes bret.eknes@state.mn.us
Louise Miltich louise.miltich@state.mn.us; eFiled in PPSA docket PR-23-18