

MAY 13, 2008 SESSION  
OF THE  
WALWORTH COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Walworth County Board Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order by Chair Russell at 5:04 p.m. in the County Board Room at the Walworth County Government Center, 100 W. Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin.

**Roll Call**

Roll call was conducted and all Supervisors were present except Supervisors Hawkins and Schaefer.

Presentation by the American Transmission Company (ATC)

- Mary Carpenter, Local Relations Representative

Ms. Carpenter said that the American Transmission Company owns the transmission lines, which transport electricity here in Walworth County, taking electricity to where it is consumed. The American Transmission Company owns, operates, maintains and upgrades the transmission system in the eastern two-thirds of Wisconsin, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and small portions of Illinois and Minnesota.

Ms. Carpenter said that the ATC was formed in January 2001 and was the first transmission-only company in the country. She said that their rates are regulated by FERC and are paid by the utility companies that use their services. She said that transmission costs are about 6 percent of a customer's utility bill. Ms. Carpenter said factors that influence rates are fuel, demand, infrastructure investment, environmental compliance, and price caps.

Ms. Carpenter explained the upgrades that ATC has done and outlined new major projects which are approved or under construction. She said that Walworth County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state, which means the transmission system needs to be upgraded. She explained the route of the new lines that are being constructed, and those that are being planned for construction in Walworth County.

Ms. Carpenter distributed a map with the route of the transmission lines in Walworth County and the neighboring counties to the Supervisors. Supervisor Kilkenny expressed concern regarding citizens who are worried about easements and the high voltage. Supervisor Van Dreser asked what kind of work was being done to bury the lines. Ms. Carpenter said that although it is relatively easy to bury lower voltage neighborhood lines, high voltage transmission lines require complex engineering and deep duct packages, ten feet by ten feet, which is very expensive, between 5 and 10 times the cost of overhead facilities, and there are liability issues if you have a fault or an outage. She said underground does not work as well at this point and there is very little undergrounding across the country above 200,000 volts; only about 1% of ATC facilities are underground at this time. Supervisor Van Dreser said he feels bad for the people in the areas

where the lines and poles are being put in and he thinks ATC should be looking diligently into burying the lines especially since these people are not getting any benefit from the high wires at this time. Ms. Carpenter said that they realize it is difficult and they do try to work as closely as they can with people.

Ms. Carpenter said that one of the major projects that ATC is involved in is tree-trimming along the easements. This causes a lot of concern for the people along the route but has to be done to prevent outages. Other projects are interconnections between municipal lines and upgrades to lines. The final type of project involves planning a new right of way. ATC is required to present two routes to the Public Service Commission and then the Public Service Commission chooses the final route. Determining the route takes from 18 months to two years before it is submitted to the Public Service Commission. She said their goal is to help people understand why the construction of the lines is necessary.

On motion by Supervisor Weber, seconded by Supervisor Van Dreser, the Committee of the Whole adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

Kimberly S. Bushey  
County Clerk

STATE OF WISCONSIN     )  
  )SS  
COUNTY OF WALWORTH)

I, Kimberly S. Bushey, County Clerk in and for the County aforesaid, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings of the County Board of Supervisors Committee of the Whole for the May 13, 2008 meeting.