

September 23, 2021



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Bill Storm
Minnesota Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East, Suite 280
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: edocket #20-891, 21-189, 21,190, 21-191

Dear Mr. Storm,

The Clear Lake Township Board would like to enter the following comments in response to the meeting that the PUC held on August 31st at Becker high school. We would like to express our continued support for the project as presented by Xcel Energy and National Grid Renewables. Clear Lake Township has multiple solar garden projects within our jurisdiction ranging from one to five megawatts. We have always supported these projects as they are the voluntary wishes of the landowners and we have always supported our landowner's as long as the projects are permitted uses, this project is no different just larger. The township continues to see the economic and environmental value of these projects to our residents and to the township, and looks forward to the same benefits from this project.

The portion of this project in the jurisdictional boundaries of Clear Lake Township, borders the City of Becker. The City of Becker has never to our knowledge in a formal setting engaged the township in regards to expansion of their industrial/business park nor have we ever discussed annexation. Any claim of theirs that they have is false. The City of Becker has not contacted the township by U.S. mail, email, or phone to our knowledge to discuss this matter nor have they attended a Clear Lake township board meeting or been placed on an agenda. The township nor our landowners want to entertain a speculative and unsubstantiated claim that city can develop their land in the future when the landowner can voluntarily lease their land for Utility grade Solar project were the landowners and township can benefit immediately. The mention of annexation and expansion of their industrial/business park have only come to light with Clear Lake Township after this large utility project was brought before the PUC. Clear Lake Township understands that PUC may form, at its discretion an advisory task force to review this permit application. If such a task force is formed the Clear Lake Township board would like to be granted a seat at the table for these discussions.

Clear Lake Township as well as others see the environmental benefits of this project. Laying fallow this much land eliminates the pumping of hundreds of millions of gallons of irrigation water and the application of thousands of tons of commercial grade fertilizers and chemicals to the land over the life of the solar project. This results in our opinion, improvements to our ground water and environment. Also, a project of this size will provide clean renewable energy for generations to come.

Please do not hesitate to contact us by email clearlaketownship@hotmail.com if there is anything that you feel we can add to the process.

Thank you,
Clear Lake township Board

Chairman Gary H. Gray