

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of the Application of Grain Belt)
Express LLC for an Amendment to its Certificate)
of Convenience and Necessity Authorizing it to)
Construct, Own, Operate, Control, Manage, and) File No. EA-2023-0017
Maintain a High Voltage, Direct Current)
Transmission Line and Associated Converter)
Station)

**GRAIN BELT EXPRESS LLC’S RESPONSE TO MOTION REQUESTING LOCAL
PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Pursuant to 20 CSR 4240-2.080(13), Grain Belt Express LLC (“Grain Belt Express”) files this Response to the November 1, 2022 Motion Requesting Local Public Hearings (“Motion”) filed on behalf the Missouri Landowners Alliance, the Eastern Missouri Landowners Alliance d/b/a Show Me Concerned Landowners, Norman Fishel, Gary and Carol Riedel, and Dustin Hudson (collectively referred to herein as “MLA”).

I. Background

1. On August 24, 2022, Grain Belt Express filed its Application to Amend its Existing Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (“Application”) to construct, install, own, operate, maintain, and otherwise control and manage an approximately 800-mile, overhead, multi-terminal ±600 kilovolt (“kV”) high-voltage, direct current (“HVDC”) transmission line and associated facilities including converter stations and alternating current (“AC”) connector lines (the “Project”). The Application identified a proposed route for the AC connector line in Missouri, which is referred to as the “Tiger Connector.”

2. On October 28, 2022 the Commission issued its Order Setting Time for Responses to Motion for Summary Disposition and Setting a Procedural Conference (“Order”). The Order directed the parties to appear at an electronic procedural conference on November 10, 2022 at 9

a.m. The Order also directed the parties to file a joint or individual proposed procedural schedules no later than November 17, 2022.

3. On November 1, 2022 the MLA filed its Motion.

II. Argument

4. As authority for its Motion, MLA cited to 20 CSR 4240-2.015, which states, “A rule in this chapter may be waived by the commission for good cause.” The Motion does not identify a rule to be waived and does not explain how 20 CSR 4240-2.015 authorizes the Motion.

5. Even more confounding, the MLA does not explain why the Motion is necessary, given the Commission’s Order Setting a Procedural Schedule Conference. Each party will have the opportunity to file a proposed procedural schedule by November 17, *after* they meet to discuss the possibility of a jointly proposed procedural schedule on November 10. There is no justification for MLA ignoring the Commission’s instructions on this point.

6. Grain Belt Express has already indicated that it will agree to local public hearings related to the Tiger Connector in its Reply in Support of Its Request for Waiver of the 60-Day Notice Requirement, filed on October 14, 2022.¹ The location and format of the local public hearings will be discussed when the parties meet on November 10. If there is any disagreement about the parties’ preferences for the local public hearings, the parties will address those issues in filings on or before November 17.

7. MLA’s Motion is improper because it conflicts with the Commission’s instructions for the parties to meet and confer prior to filing their positions on the procedural schedule and it forces the parties to respond to a procedural issue before the November 17 deadline established by the Commission’s Order.

¹ Reply in Support of Its Request for Waiver of the 60-Day Notice Requirement, ¶ 24.

III. Conclusion

WHEREFORE, Grain Belt Express respectfully requests the Commission deny the Motion Requesting Local Public Hearings so the parties may address the procedural issues in accordance with the Commission's previously issued Order Setting a Procedural Conference.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Andrew O. Schulte

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ATTORNEYS FOR GRAIN BELT EXPRESS LLC

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing document was served upon the parties listed on the official service list by email, this 9th day of November, 2022.

/s/ Andrew O. Schulte
Andrew O. Schulte