

**TOWN OF PRAIRIE DU SAC
SAUK COUNTY, WISCONSIN**

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-07

ADOPTED: September 2nd 2026

**A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE BELL CENTER-COLUMBIA-SUGAR CREEK-
ILLINOIS/WISCONSIN STATE LINE (BECI) 765 kV TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the Town of Prairie du Sac, is a town government located along the Wisconsin River in the southeast portion of Sauk County, Wisconsin, with responsibility to protect the health, safety, welfare, rural character, natural resources, agricultural lands, local infrastructure, and orderly land use of the Town; and

WHEREAS, guiding principles, goals, objectives and initiatives found in the current Sauk Prairie Comprehensive Plan, a collaborative effort by the Town of Prairie du Sac, The Village of Sauk City and the Village of Prairie du Sac, focus in part on the protections of agriculture operations, natural resources, learning environments, natural recreation and overall health, economic resources including agriculture industry, the local airport, natural areas, tourism; and

WHEREAS the Town of Prairie du Sac participates in numerous intergovernmental efforts, working cooperatively with multijurisdictional planning committees, commissions, Sauk County, Sauk Prairie School district, neighboring towns and municipalities; and

WHEREAS, Midcontinent Grid Solutions, a joint venture of Transource Energy and BHE Transmission, is developing the Bell Center-Columbia-Sugar Creek-Illinois/Wisconsin State Line (BECI) Project, described by the developers as approximately 190 miles of new single-circuit 765 kilovolt transmission infrastructure in Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, publicly released preliminary corridor information indicates that the BECI Project is being evaluated through Sauk County, and no final route has been selected; and

WHEREAS, the proposed facilities would introduce extra-high-voltage transmission infrastructure on a scale materially larger than customary rural distribution and transmission facilities, together with towers, conductors, access routes, easements, vegetation management, construction traffic, and long-term maintenance obligations; and

WHEREAS, potential routes through or near the Town burden productive prime farmland, businesses, forest land, residences, farm operations, viewsheds, wildlife habitat, water resources, cultural and historic resources, and the Town's rural landscape, and could create uncompensated or inadequately compensated effects for affected citizens, businesses, habitats, landowners and neighboring properties; and

WHEREAS, the agriculture industry continues to have a major impact on State, county and local economies and people; and

WHEREAS, land ownership and management, the agriculture industry, working lands, and related businesses do not follow political boundaries and are regionally connected; and

WHEREAS, many agriculture producers along segment 14 are zoned Exclusive Agriculture or Agriculture Preservation and participate in Farmland Preservation programs; and

WHEREAS, Town of Prairie du Sac area residents, are employed in and benefit from local and area food productions, conservation, agriculture research, agritourism, and many various agriculture related businesses; and

WHEREAS, stray voltage is known to stress dairy cows and other livestock affecting milk production, immune systems, growth rates, and more; and

WHEREAS, the large scale, extra-high-voltage transmission infrastructure in segment 14, and other segments of the study areas, shows lines bisecting fields and other working lands, livestock lands, and research areas, creating hardship and harm to the existing and limited working lands, crop and livestock productions, research, agritourism and agriculture related businesses; and

WHEREAS, The Sauk Prairie Airport, lying on within the Town at the edge of the Village of Prairie du Sac, serves businesses, the agriculture community, the tourism industry, Healthcare and individuals living and working in the area including but not limited to The Town of Prairie du Sac and other communities in Sauk, Columbia and Dane Counties; and

WHEREAS, the Town notes that BECI has not provided final tower coordinates of Segment 14, tower-pad elevations, or final structure elevations or heights or how these may impact protected airport airspace; future runway development; or hazards to aircraft operating in the vicinity of the Airport; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Prairie du Sac supports the Airport in protecting its current aviation operations and the Airport's ability to implement its future development plans; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Prairie du Sac is a part of the Sauk Prairie School District and many grade school aged students attend Tower Rock Elementary School located on Denzer Road in the Town of Honey Creek near segment 10; and

WHEREAS, utility proposals to site high-voltage infrastructure, specifically 765 kV transmission lines featuring 175-foot towering structures with 180 ft wide (or greater) transmission corridor, in proximity to the school property threaten to permanently alter the rural viewshed and compromise the sensory and ecological integrity of these outdoor learning environments; and

WHEREAS, 765 kV transmission lines can generate significant electrical corona thereby introducing persistent, industrial noise that will actively degrade the quiet acoustic baseline of the outdoor learning spaces; and

WHEREAS, 765 the area around the kV transmission lines in segment 10 contain several species of rare, threatened and endangered species, migratory birds and may overlap with a critical habitat and would permanently alter the ecological integrity of the environment

WHEREAS, being able to recreate, research or otherwise experience open, outdoor, natural & green spaces, cultural and historical sites, has long been recognized as contributing to overall health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Prairie du Sac lies along Lake Wisconsin, the Wisconsin River, and is part of or nearby to notable significant natural and cultural features including but not limited to Bald Eagle, Whooping crane and other migratory birds habitats and flyways; the Baraboo Range a National Natural Landmark which is recognized by local, state, federal and global agencies and organizations for its outstanding biological and geological qualities; government and non-government preservation and research areas; areas of rare, endangered, threatened, sensitive, or significant species and features; the Ice Age Trail; several local, County, and State Parks and Natural Areas; and

WHEREAS, Sauk County continues to have one of highest economic impacts from Tourism in the State of WI. including direct (employment) and indirect (services provided from state, county and local taxes) economic benefits of outdoor recreation, research, tourism, eco-tourism, conservation, and agritourism industries; and

WHEREAS many Town of Prairie du Sac residents benefit from local and area outdoor recreation, research, tourism, eco-tourism, conservation, and agritourism destinations in both Sauk County and Columbia County; and

WHEREAS, the large scale, extra-high-voltage transmission infrastructure study areas, including, but not limited to segments 14, 10, and 13, 17, 16, 12, 9 and 11, show lines bisecting natural and culturally significant areas, areas with outstanding vistas, recreation and tourism destinations; **creating permanent hardships** for the environment, impacting overall health and wellbeing of persons and wildlife, and the economic vitality of the tourism industries; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board is concerned that the asserted regional benefits, cost allocation, need, load-growth assumptions, reliability justification, and **reasonable alternatives have not yet been demonstrated** in a complete evidentiary record accessible to the Town and its residents; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin Stat. section 196.491 establishes the state certificate process for high-voltage transmission lines and requires the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to evaluate need, public interest, alternatives, economic factors, reliability, safety, individual hardships, environmental factors, and land-use impacts before approving a project; and

WHEREAS, local governments and residents must receive timely, meaningful opportunities to examine route alternatives, underlying studies, property and agricultural impacts, environmental information, construction plans, and ratepayer consequences before decisions become irreversible; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board, after consideration of the interests of the Town and its residents, supports neighboring landowners and municipalities in their concerns regarding the proposed the BECI 765 kV Transmission Line Project; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board finds that avoidance of the Town and neighboring lands is the most effective means of preventing the identified local harms and preserving the Town's economic vitality, health, land-use priorities and community character; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board, after consideration of the interests of the Town and its residents, determines that it is in the public interest to state its opposition clearly and at the earliest practicable stage of project development.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Board of the Town of Prairie du Sac, Sauk County, Wisconsin, as follows:

1. **Formal opposition.** The Town Board formally opposes the BECI 765 kV Transmission Line Project as presently proposed and opposes the location of any BECI transmission line, tower, access road, staging area, or related facility within the Town of Prairie du Sac.
2. The Town Board formally opposes the BECI 765 kV Transmission Line Project as presently proposed and opposes the location of BECI transmission lines, towers, access roads, staging areas, or related facilities in areas in or adjacent to the Town or found within Sauk County or within neighboring Counties.
3. **Be It Further Resolved** that the Board strongly urges that any necessary grid expansion prioritize the utilization of industrial corridors and **existing established utility corridors**, rather than creating new infrastructure corridors through rural areas and working lands.

4. Request for denial. The Town Board respectfully requests that the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin deny any application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for the BECI Project unless the applicant proves, on a complete and transparent record, every requirement of Wisconsin law, including that the project is needed, is in the public interest, and is superior to reasonable lower-impact alternatives. The Town's present position is that those showings have not been made.

5. Avoidance if review proceeds. If state or regional review of the BECI Project proceeds notwithstanding this opposition, the Town requests that all proposed routes and associated facilities avoid the Town of Prairie du Sac and that applicants prioritize existing utility and transportation corridors, co-location, system upgrades, demand-side measures, storage, generation alternatives, and other options that reduce new land disturbance and community impacts.

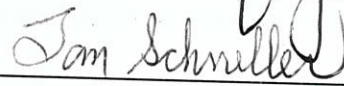
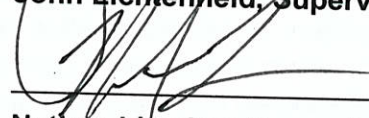
6. Full disclosure and consultation. The Town requests prompt disclosure of detailed route maps, structure designs and heights, right-of-way widths, access and construction plans, need and cost-benefit studies, Wisconsin ratepayer impacts, agricultural and property-impact analyses, environmental studies, and all reasonably available alternatives. The Town further requests direct consultation before any route is advanced through or adjacent to the Town.

7. Protection of participation rights. The Town Clerk and Town Chair are authorized to monitor project notices and regulatory filings, submit this Resolution to the project developers and reviewing agencies, request placement on all applicable notice and stakeholder lists, and take reasonable administrative steps to preserve the Town's opportunity to comment, intervene, or otherwise participate. Any expenditure, retention of professional services, or substantive filing beyond transmittal of this Resolution remains subject to separate Town Board authorization.

8. Distribution. The Town Clerk shall transmit a certified copy of this Resolution to Midcontinent Grid Solutions, Transource Energy, BHE Transmission, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, MISO, the Sauk County Board Chair and County Clerk, and the Town's state legislative delegation, and may transmit it to other affected local governments and interested agencies.

9. Effective date. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

Adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Prairie du Sac, Sauk County, Wisconsin, at a duly noticed public meeting held on September, 2 2026.

Vote	Ayes	Noes	Abstentions	Absent
Total	4	0		
 Janine Godfriaux-Leystra, Chair				
 Tom Schneller, Supervisor II				
 Adam Weiss, Supervisor IV			ATTEST:  Courtney Beuthin, Clerk	