

Docket No.: 14-0514
S.O.M.: 9-16-15
Deadline: N/A

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Commission

FROM: Jan Von Qualen, Administrative Law Judge

DATE: August 27, 2015

SUBJECT: Ameren Transmission Company of Illinois

Petition for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity, pursuant to Section 8-406 of the Illinois Public Utilities Act, and an Order pursuant to Section 8-503 of the Public Utilities Act, to Construct, Operate and Maintain a New High Voltage Electric Service Line in the Counties of Peoria and Knox, Illinois

RECOMMENDATION: Enter the attached Order granting the requested relief.

On August 21, 2014, Ameren Transmission Company of Illinois ("ATXI") filed a verified petition requesting a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity ("CPCN"), pursuant to Section 8-406 of the Illinois Public Utilities Act (220 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.) ("Act"), and an Order pursuant to Section 8-503 of the Act, to construct, operate and maintain approximately 40 miles of new high voltage electric service line along with a new substation at Galesburg and expanded substation facilities at Fargo, which together comprise the Spoon River Project ("SRP") in the Counties of Peoria and Knox, Illinois. The 345- kilovolt ("kV") transmission line ATXI proposes is one component of the Multi-Value Project-16 ("MVP-16") approved by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator ("MISO") in 2011. The second component is a 345 kV transmission line in Rock Island, Mercer, Henry, and Knox Counties, Illinois which is the subject of a petition for CPCN filed by MidAmerican Energy Company ("MidAmerican") in Docket No. 14-0494.

Petitions for leave to intervene were filed by the Bethany Baptist Church, Joyce and Roger Best, Citizens Against Route B ("CARB")¹, Joyce Kingdon, Knox County Landowner Intervenor ("KCI"), John Kunkle, Carol and William McMurtry, Thomas Palmer, Peoria County I-74 Landowner Intervenor ("PCI"), Kathleen Sherman, Ralph Sherman, Robert Sherman, Janet and Matt Shipley, Grace Shissler, Everett G. Shissler, Everett L. Shissler, Kellie and Trent Tomlinson, and Charles and Annette Zelnio. All petitions for leave to intervene were granted. Staff participated in the proceeding.

¹ CARB consists of approximately 132 property owners and interested parties.

Staff finds that the SRP satisfies Section 8-406(b) of the Act because it will promote the development of an effectively competitive electricity market that operates efficiently and is equitable to all customers by providing access to lower cost generation to fulfill renewable portfolio standard requirements. Staff recommends approval of the CPCN for the SRP, conditioned on approval of the MidAmerican CPCN in Docket No. 14-0494. This recommendation is uncontested.

There is great disagreement among the parties as to which of the routes proposed by ATXI is least cost. ATXI's preferred route, Route A, primarily follows Interstate 74 ("I-74") with the exception of each end of the route and a few deviations away from I-74 near a rest area, communication tower, and residences. Route B goes east from the Sandburg substation, then southeast joining Route A until approximately one mile west of the Spoon River, where Route B diverges. Route B continues east primarily following local roads, U.S. Highway 150, and half section lines until it turns almost directly south towards the Fargo Substation site. Modifications to the routes were proposed by Staff and Mr. Zelnio to Route A, and by KCI to Routes A and B.

A Proposed Order was issued finding Route B with KCI's Alternate 1 modification is the overall least cost route when all costs and benefits are taken into account. ATXI, CARB, SP Parties, and Ms. Tomlinson filed briefs on exception ("BOEs"). In addition to exceptions to the approval of Route B, ATXI requests several technical additions or changes. Staff filed a BOE correcting scrivener's errors. ATXI, SP Parties, Ms. Tomlinson, and Mr. McMurtry filed reply briefs on exceptions ("RBOEs").

The attached Order finds that the proposed construction of the transmission line along Route B will promote the development of an effectively competitive electricity market that operates efficiently, is equitable to all customers and is the least-cost means of satisfying the service needs, and is, therefore, in the public interest and should be approved. The attached Order incorporates the corrections and technical additions or changes proposed by Staff and ATXI. The Order also finds that the transmission line is necessary and authorizes, directs its construction pursuant to Sections 8-503 and 8-406 of the Act. The approval is conditioned on the CPCN requested by MidAmerican in Docket No. 14-0494 also being granted.

There is no deadline for Commission Action.

JVQ:jt