STATE OF ILLINOIS PIATT COUNTY ZONING BOARD

## PROSPERITY WIND, LLC APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL USE PERMIT

August 30,2023
5:30 p.m. to 9:12 p.m.

PIATT COUNTY ZONING OFFICER:
Ms. Keri Nusbaum
HEARING FACILITATOR:
Mr. Scott Kains, Esq.
PIATT COUNTY ZONING BOARD MEMBERS:
Mr. Loyd Wax, Chairman
Mr. William Chambers

PIATT COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS:
Todd Henricks
Michael Beem
Gail Jones
Kathleen Piatt
Paul Foran

COUNSEL FOR THE PIATT COUNTY BOARD:
Mr. Andrew J. Keyt, Esq.

COUNSEL FOR THE APPLICANT:
Ms. Amy Antoniolli, Esq.
Mr. Jerald Hess, Esq.
Mr. Ryan Granholm, Esq.
APPLICANT - PROSPERITY WIND, LLC:
Mr. Alan Moore, Senior Development Manager
Mr. Adam Carlson
Mr. Jason Conley

COURT REPORTER:
Ms. Jamie J. Mumm, CSR
Official Court Reporter
Piatt County Courthouse
101 W. Washington
Monticello, IL 61856
(217)762-5861
jmummreports@gmail.com
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Page\#
ROLL CALL.......................................... . 4
TESTIMONY, STATEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION:

1. DAVID LOOMIS

Examination by Mr. Granholm................ 10
Questions Posed by Dr. Wax.................. 23
Questions Posed by Mr. Chambers............ 26
Questions posted by Susan Ryan............. 29
Cross-Examination by Mr. Keyt.............. 31
Further Questions Posed by Mr. Chambers.... 32
Further Questions Posed by Dr. Wax......... 34
2. EDDIE DUNCAN

Direct Examination by Ms. Antoniolli....... 36
Questions Posed by Dr. Wax.................. 44
Cross-Examination by Mr. Keyt.............. 48
3. JENNIE GEIGER

Direct Examination by Mr. Hess............ 49
Questions posed by Mr. Chambers............ 56
Questions posed by Dr. Wax................. 57
Further Questions posed by Mr. Chambers....58
4. MIKE MaROUS

Direct Examination by Mr. Granholm......... 60
Questions posed by Mr. Chambers............ 63
Questions posed by Dr. Wax................. 68
Questions posed by Claudia Coil............ 73
Questions posed by John Hannah............. 75
Further Questions posed by Mr. Chambers.... 78
5. JACOB RUNNER

Direct Examination by Ms. Antoniolli....... 81
Questions posed by Dr. Wax................ 83
6. ERIC HANSEN

Direct Examination by Ms. Antoniolli....... 85
Questions posed by Dr. Wax................. 87
Questions posed by Mr. Chambers............ 91
Re-direct Examination by Ms. Antoniolli....93
Further Questions posed by Mr. Chambers....95
$\qquad$
I $N \quad D \quad E \quad X$ (cont'd.)

## Page \#

7. ALAN MOORE

Direct Examination by Mr. Granholm......... 96
Questions Posed by Dr. Wax................. 101
Further Questions Posed by Dr. Wax......... 103
8. JOE RILEY........................................ 112 Questions posed by Dr. Wax................. 114
9. CHRISTIAN JOHNSON............................... 116
10. BRADEN EHRAT.................................... 122

EXHIBITS:
Applicant's Group Exhibit \#13 (Offered and Admitted) 37
Applicant's Exhibit \#14 (Offered and Admitted)......50
Applicant's Exhibit \#15 (Offered and Admitted)......82
Applicant's Exhibit \#16 (Offered and Admitted)......85

WORD INDEX
(Proceedings had on August 30, 2023)

DR. WAX: We'll call the meeting to order.

Miss Nusbaum, would you call the roll please?

MS. NUSBAUM: Larson? Harrington? Lovin?

Wax?

DR. WAX: Here.

MS. NUSBAUM: Chambers?

MR. CHAMBERS: Here.

MS. NUSBAUM: State's Attorney Perry?

DR. WAX: Any County Board Members here?

MS. NUSBAUM: Henricks?

MR. HENRICKS: Here.

MS. NUSBAUM: Edwards? Beem?

MR. BEEM: Here.

MS. NUSBAUM: Jones?

MS. JONES: Here.

Ms. NUSBAUM: Piatt?

MS. PIATT: Here.

MS. NUSBAUM: Foran?

MR. FORAN: Here.

MS. NUSBAUM: Thank you.

DR. WAX: Okay. We'll turn this over to you,

Mr. Kains.

MR. KAINS: All right. Thank you, Dr. Wax.

Good evening. Night three. I have a couple of things on my mind, but I'm just going to put on the record right now. One, last night there was questioning from a citizen and after each question that was asked, Mr. Hess, on behalf of Prosperity Wind, LLC stood up and raised an objection, and $I$ just want to state for the record that it's my opinion that Mr. Hess is doing his job. He's not intending to intimidate, harass or beat up anybody. He does his job. Prosperity has three very skilled attorneys over here, you know, and so, I just want to say that they're doing their job, and that the objections, you know, some of them $I$ sustained, and told Mr. Hartke to ask another question. Some of them I overruled Mr. Hess and allowed the question to stand. I call 'em as I see 'em. I'm basically like an umpire, and sometimes I get 'em right, sometimes I get 'em wrong, but the one thing that there may be a perception of that I got wrong last night was $I$ don't want anybody to think that $I$ was helping Mr. Hartke. He was asking questions that were objected to, and with good grounds for objections, and then $I$ made -- $I$ kind of jumped in and asked Miss Anderson a question that I thought Mr. Hartke was getting at. I was not doing that to help Mr. Hartke. I was not doing that to do anything to delay any objections by counsel. I was doing it to move the
hearing along. That's my job, is to be fair impartial and facilitate this hearing in an efficient way. So -and there may be someone who thinks that perhaps I jumped in and tried to take over for Mr. Hartke, that certainly wasn't my intent either. My intent was just to move the hearing along. Mr. Hartke was asking -they were questions that had a basis. He was having a hard time getting it to the point where it was a solid legal question that was not going to be objected to, and that's -- I only stepped in for that limited purpose, and $I$ did it two or three, maybe four times last night. I thought about it a lot last night and $I$ thought about it a lot this morning. So, I just wanted to let every one know that $I$ wasn't trying to help, $I$ wasn't trying to hinder Mr. Hartke. I wasn't trying to help

Prosperity's Counsel, and $I$ wasn't trying to hinder them. I was just trying to move the hearing along. All right. Enough on that.

Prior to calling your next witness, Miss Antoniolli, Mr. Hess, Mr. Granholm, do you have any preliminary matters you wish to raise before we have more testimony?

MR. HESS: Yes, sir, Mr. Kains. Thank you very much. I would like to make a very brief proffer like $I$ did yesterday to address a couple of questions
from the ZBA, which they had asked us to get information and get back to them, and specifically Dr. Wax had asked if we could provide a short summary of some of the statistics on Firetrace International's web site. Just to be clear for the record, these are all statistics from www.Firetrace.com. These are their statistics.

MR. KAINS: Okay. Now hang on a second.
MR. HESS: Yes, sir.
MR. KAINS: Firetrace is the name of the company that does the fire suppression -- detection and suppression system?

MR. HESS: Yes, sir.
THE COURT: This is from their web site?
MR. HESS: Yes, sir. Mr. Kains, Dr. Wax had asked for this. I'm well aware of your instruction on how we're going to treat the internet, so $I$ will defer to you on what you would like to do. We're just trying to be responsive.

DR. WAX: I appreciate that.
MR. KAINS: If it's from their web site, then this goes just specifically to statistics relating to?

MR. HESS: To their system that we have selected to install as the fire suppression system on each turbine.

MR. KAINS: Would this be in lieu of calling a - -

MR. KEYT: Can I make a suggestion at least from the County's perspective?

MR. KAINS: Sure, Mr. Keyt.
MR. KEYT: I think under the rule of completeness it would be easy to ensure that the record is clear, that we have whatever the print-out from the web site would be and to just mark it as evidence for the record.

MR. HESS: I don't have a print-out, but I can certainly do that and introduce that either tomorrow or whenever. I would have no objection to that.

MR. KAINS: All right. Why don't you do that, but $I$ am going to allow you to make your proffer. It will be brief?

MR. HESS: Quite brief.
MR. KAINS: All right. Go right ahead.
MR. HESS: The proffer would be the summary statistics, Dr. Wax. Firetrace International states they have installed twenty-eight thousand systems on wind turbines around the world. They have been in operation for over twenty years. The particular model that we have selected is rated to completely extinguish and suppress all four classes of fires in less than ten
seconds. It is certified to comply with the American National Standards Institute, Standard 2166, for the standards for self-contained automatic extinguisher units. That would be my proffer. I will provide print-outs.

MR. KAINS: All right. It's allowed. Anything else, Mr. Hess?

MR. HESS: I believe the only other proffer that $I$ was going to make is in response to a question from Mr. Harrington. Mr. Harrington had asked what is the manufacture's recommended inspection schedule. This is also on the web site. They recommend annual inspections.

MR. KAINS: An annual inspection?
MR. HESS: Yes.

MR. KAINS: All right. Very good. Thank you.

All right. I guess we're ready for testimony. Miss Antoniolli? Mr. Granholm?

MR. GRANHOLM: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Kains.
Good evening, Mr. Kains. Prosperity Wind, LLC calls Dr. David Loomis, who is our expert witness on the economic impacts associated with this Project.

MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you, Mr.
Granholm. Dr. Loomis, can you please raise your right hand to be sworn by the court reporter.
(Witness sworn.)

D A V I D
L O O M I S
called as a witness on behalf of the Applicant in the above-entitled cause, having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

MR. KAINS: Very good. For the record, Dr. Loomis, could you please state your name, spelling first and last names.

DR. LOOMIS: David Loomis, D-A-V-I-D, $\mathrm{L}-\mathrm{O}-\mathrm{O}-\mathrm{M}-\mathrm{I}-\mathrm{S}$.

MR. KAINS: Thank you, Doctor. Mr. Granholm, your witness.

## DIRECT EXAMINATION BY

MR. GRANHOLM:
Q. Thank you. Doctor Loomis, did you prepare a 42-page report titled Economic Impact Analysis for the Prosperity Wind Project?
A. My copy has thirty-eight pages, but we may be counting pdf pages versus numbered pages. So, yes.
Q. That's correct, Doctor. There are thirty-eight numbered pages with some titled pages.
A. I did prepare that.
Q. And is that Economic Impact Analysis included as

Appendix C.l to Prosperity Winds Special Use Permit Application?
A. Yes, I believe so.
Q. And is that Appendix C.1 a true and correct copy of your Economic Impact Analysis?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you have any corrections or revisions to make to that report?
A. No.
Q. And if you'll turn to page 34 and 35 of that Appendix C.1. Is this a CV that describes your educational and your professional background?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. And would you give a brief overview of your professional background beginning with your work as an Economics Professor?
A. Yes. So up until June first of this year, as a Professor of Economics at Illinois State University, I taught at the University for 26,27 years. During that time $I$ have been involved in energy and energy policies. We have both a graduate program in Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications, Economics, as well as $I$ was a part of a faculty group that helps create an undergraduate major in what's now called sustainable Renewable Energy at the University. I was also

Co-Founder and the Director of our Center for Renewable Energy, again also at Illinois State University.
Q. And Dr. Loomis, will you please give a brief overview of your work with your company Strategic Economic Research?
A. Yes. The company Strategic Economic Research really grew out of my academic research. I started to publish in the area of economic impacts of wind and solar, so I appear in publications as a part of that, and in probably the last at least ten years, fifteen years, I've done reports like this one presently here for Prosperity Wind, but I've also done reports for solar, transmission, natural gas generating plants, and other energy projects.
Q. Doctor Loomis, let's discuss some of the specifics here in your Economic Impact Analysis Report. Would you please turn to page one. Could you please describe figure one that appears on page one.
A. Yeah, figure one on page one in the Executive Summary, looks -- it is just a pie chart, and 1 believe it's the same or very similar to the pie chart that Mr. Moore presented on that first night, looking at the property taxes that will be paid by Prosperity Wind. This one is giving the actual dollar amounts, and the categories of entities, the jurisdictions that'll
receive those monies. The largest of those being schools at fifty-eight point five million, and then the next biggest slice would be the County at thirteen point three million, and then townships at ten point three million, but it also marks out Parkland Community College, fire districts, and other miscellaneous taxing jurisdictions.
Q. And what is the total of all of the property taxes that are provided in figure one over the life of the project?
A. So the total property taxes over the life of the project would be ninety-three point five million dollars.
Q. And how would you determine what each taxing entity that's listed on figure one, what is the relative share of the total property taxes paid would be?
A. So in Illinois we have a state-wide law that values with turbines in terms of their fair cash value and equalized assessed value. So we examine the fifty primary turbine locations, determine the taxing jurisdictions that are relevant to that parcel of land, and then apply that standard valuation in terms of the equalized assessed value to the number of megawatts for that turbine, the assessed value, and the tax rate that would be associated with that taxing entity, and then we
obviously sum those up across all of the turbines.
Q. On Monday evening Chairman Wax asked Mr. Moore some questions about this figure one, and one of his questions was about the variables that you assessed to calculate these figures. Are those the variables that you just described?
A. Yes. So in the -- there's a standard valuation formula. It accounts for two factors. One is depreciation. The other is a trending factor that adjusts for inflation on a year-by-year basis, and then of course over thirty years you need to make some assumption as to what the future tax rates are going to be for each of these jurisdictions. So that's in a sense another variable in the calculations.
Q. And each of those variables that you've been discussing, those are described on page thirteen of your report; is that correct?
A. Yes. That's correct.
Q. And for each of those variables, you've given us some of this information, but would you please walk us through how you determined what the appropriate figure was for each of those?
A. Yeah. So as was mentioned before, the fair cash value is determined by the State law, that's three hundred and sixty thousand dollars per megawatt of
capacity, but that was in 2007 dollars, and so it needs to be adjusted now for being 2023, and then we need to account for future inflation as well for what that would be. As I mentioned on that page in the second bullet point, I've assumed future inflation rate is going to be constant at two point three six percent annually, which I consider to be a very conservative view of future inflation considering that we had inflation at, you know, eight to nine percent in the CPI in the last year. I chose that number two point three six because it came from the latest update in the wall Street Journal of future a -- of Economists forecasting what their expectation of what future inflation would be. So that's why it's down to two decimal places. That's what I pulled out of the Wall Street Journal. And then the tax rates are the 2023 tax rates that are applied for the 2022 tax year.
Q. And those tax rates are set by the various taxing entities that have jurisdiction over the Project?
A. That's correct. So the school district would have jurisdiction control over the tax rate for their respective school district. The County would have jurisdiction over the County tax rate.
Q. And what did you assume would be the life of the Project?
A. I assumed a 30-year life for the Project.
Q. There was a question on Monday evening regarding what would happen if the Project operates for more than thirty years. In that situation, would the County and other taxing entities continue to collect tax revenues from the Project?
A. Yes, they would, as long as the wind farm is in operation. It would be taxed. And in fact, if you notice on page fourteen, table three, the later years of those taxes that are being paid actually start to increase. So in this summary table the beginning year total is four point eight million. So first year taxes across all those jurisdictions are four point eight million dollars, and then it declines due to a four percent depreciation rate that's built into the law. It's set. But there's a maximum depreciation such that you can't depreciate the wind farm more than seventy percent. So in other words, thirty percent of the original value. Once the wind farm is, therefore it hits that maximum depreciation, the only thing you controlling the valuation is inflation. So you start to see this trending factor up. So actually if we extended this analysis another ten years, you would see rising tax revenue come in for that next ten years. In an effort to be very clear and full disclosure, that's why

I itemize every year for the thirty years in the report, because it would be misleading to say oh, this wind farm is going to produce four point eight million dollars in the first year. Well yeah, but it goes down from there. And so you see the annual average there. The annual average over the thirty-year life is three point one million dollars, and so there's -- you can detail, you know, on a year-by-year basis, but it's front loaded. My point was, you get -- you start out at four point eight million and then it declines, and so over that thirty-year period you get three point one million on average.
Q. Doctor Loomis, you mentioned a couple of times the impact of inflation on tax revenue, and your two point three six percent assumption of inflation. What would be the impact on tax revenue from the Project if the inflation rate were higher than two point three six percent?
A. Then the tax revenue would be higher than what $I$ have in my report.
Q. Let's turn to one specific type of tax revenue that will be provided, the revenue that will be provided to the public schools. Chairman Wax asked some questions on Monday evening about the impact -- increased tax revenues from the Project on the amount of the
assistance that schools might receive from the State of Illinois. Does your Economic Impact Analysis address that issue?
A. Yes, it does.
Q. And that's covered on pages seventeen to nineteen?
A. Correct.
Q. Would you please give an overview of your conclusions regarding how school funding might be impacted by revenues from the Project?
A. So to be clear, the school districts receive money from the State of Illinois to help fund their operations, and so the concern that $I$ think was raised, was would -- even though they get this tax money from Prosperity Wind, would there be some type of off-setting reduction in State funding that went to the schools because now they have additional monies. To be clear, there is that possibility of a reduction, in theory, in general, but in this particular case, that is not relevant to these particular school districts. These particular school districts are what are classified as Tier 4 school districts, and I'm happy to clarify what that means, but ultimately it means that they are getting very little new money from the State of Illinois. In fact, $I$ itemized in the report on page
nineteen, in FY 23 the Blue Ridge School District received six hundred -- or was scheduled to receive six hundred and eleven dollars. Six hundred and eleven dollars. There's no descriptor on that like thousands. It's six hundred and eleven dollars from the State of new money. They get what they had in the previous year. That's under the hold harmless provision. So the only thing that might possibly be at risk is that six hundred and eleven dollars. Deland-Weldon was scheduled to receive one hundred and seventy dollars. Now that compares to table six, on page seventeen, to Blue Ridge would get one point eight million dollars in the first year from Prosperity Wind, and Deland-Weldon would get one point one million dollars. Okay? And so the new money at risk is, again, not at risk. They're still gonna get their six hundred and eleven dollars in new money because they're a Tier 4 school district and that's the least that they can get, to be what is going to be a Tier 4 school district.
Q. Doctor Loomis, you mentioned the tier funding concept, and that was something that Mr. Moore and Chairman Wax discussed on Monday as well. Would you please give us an overview of how that tier funding model works?
A. Yeah. The State of Illinois transitioned from
what they called a GSA, general state aid, to an evidence-based funding model a number a years ago, and the idea was that the State Legislature, over a ten-year period was supposed to allocate new money out of the State budget over and above what had been going to schools before, and each and every year they were supposed to do that. They have not, in fact, done that, but that's what the promise was in the original legislation. School districts were then put into four buckets or four tiers. The poorest school districts, those are Tier 1 school districts. Tier 2 is kind of the next level up, Tier 3 and Tier 4. The guideline for where you go from one to two varies from year to year, but a Tier 1 school district -- let me back up. To put those into different categories and say, well what's a poor school district, what's a rich school district, how do we determine that? The State looks at the student population that individual school needs to educate, and then they say this is how much you need to educate students in your school. Then they look at the local resources, local property taxes, the EAV, in the local area, Equalized Assessed Value, and says how much money do you have in local resources, and then they compare your local resources to what you need to educate your population, and they've come up with a percent resource
adequacy. So they say how much of your local resources can fund this. If your last year, I think it was seventy-three percent, if your resource adequacy was below seventy-three percent, you were a Tier 1 school district. If you were between seventy-three percent and a hundred percent, or ninety-nine percent really, you were a Tier 2 school district. If you had a hundred percent of your resource adequacy, you're a Tier 3 school district, and if you had over a hundred percent of your resource adequacy, you were a Tier 4 school district. So the two school districts that we're talking about here are Tier 4 school districts because their resource adequacy, and again, that is the Illinois State Board of Education term. I know schools never have enough resource adequacy, but that's their term. They have said that you have more than a hundred percent in your local resources in educating the population that you currently have at their school.
Q. In your opinion, for the Blue Ridge School District, and the Deland-Weldon School District, is the funding tier of either of those districts likely to change as a result of the property tax revenues associated with the Prosperity Wind Project?
A. No.
Q. Doctor Loomis, are there any reasons why local
tax revenue is a superior source of funding compared to State aid for school districts?
A. Yeah, there's a number of reasons why local resources are superior. The number one would be that it's subject to local control. As we just said, the local school district is going to determine the tax rate of all those properties within its taxing jurisdiction. So it's within its control then to raise the tax rate in order to increase the budget. So you have local control. There really is no local control when it comes to those State funds. The second would be that when you're reliant on local resources that comes through property taxes, in Illinois property taxes are typically billed out in two installments at regular times. You get your property bill for your residence or land, what not, and so the school district can kind of count on that money coming in, in terms of a cash flow basis, to say okay property taxes get billed here, here's when people pay their bills, here's when we will receive our money. In the case of State aid, there have been numerous cases, especially when we were going through State budget crises where we had no State budget, but also in other years where school districts received whatever they got from the State at the very end of a school year. So they've had to pay their teachers, do things, but the
fiscal year ends June 30 th and they're getting the money during the summer after they've already spent it. So you can imagine, you know, that that creates great headaches. So even if you're counting on that State aid you can never be sure when that's going to arrive. So, I think local resources are superior to State funding.
Q. Thank you, Dr. Loomis. Mr. Kains, we no further questions.

MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Granholm. Thank you, Dr. Loomis. Are there any questions for Dr. Loomis regarding his testimony from Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals?

DR. WAX: I have one comment, and a couple more questions, and by the way, I appreciate counsel asking my questions already for Dr. Loomis. You covered them extremely well.

QUESTIONS POSED BY
DR. WAX:
Q. I would switch to the earlier part of your document, and you've explained the school situation extremely well, the tier matter very well. I'm happy with that. As far as the job, we're back to what we've kind of thought of before. How do you actually determine
-- well, it's not how you determine. I'm assuming it's some sort of model from other areas. The jobs and the earnings that are accounted for, that are listed for, Piatt County will have this many jobs, and Piatt County will have this much income. Are you implying that these are Piatt County residents and Piatt County will actually receive this money? Or is this someone working in Piatt County who are non-residents and working, I'm sure some of that is the case, but roughly what percentage of what you list are actually coming to Piatt County residents and Piatt County?
A. Yeah, I did run two separate models. The Piatt County results are focused on Piatt County residents and not, you know, out-of-State workers that are only here for a short period of time. The software that I do use that comes from government statistics looks specifically at Piatt County. So it's looking at the existing employment, the existing industries, the existing businesses that are here in Piatt county, and we're matching that up with expenditures that Prosperity Wind will make in the community to build the wind farm for the construction results and then operation. So it is built on Piatt County specific, you know, economic data.
Q. Okay. Sounds good. Your last assumption on page thirteen. Tell me what that means. I'm having trouble
not thinking that that means it was strictly on the model from somewhere else and there's no actual taxes calculated.
A. Right. What I meant by, I think the phrase there that tripped you up was no comprehensive tax payment was calculated. And these calculations are only to be used to illustrate the economic impact of the Project. Really what I'm looking there is to say I relied and tried to be very transparent in the assumptions that $I$ used for this, and to the best of my ability this is -- these are the tax revenues that every jurisdiction is going to get. So in that sense it is comprehensive of what Prosperity Wind will use. The reason that -- and so I think for our purposes, you can think of this as a comprehensive payment. What happened in other cases is that people will take these property tax estimates and use them for other, you know, other purposes other than our economic impact in discussion of this. So $I$ want to prevent being sued for coming up with a number and then they say well for some other purpose, you know, for example, you know if a fire district goes out and files my report and says well we built a new fire house because of these numbers. Well I was not paid to estimate for that fire district and for that bond issue and so forth. So this is really to look at for

Prosperity Wind, what are going to be the economic benefits that flow to the community, not for other purposes.

DR. WAX: Very good. Thank you for your detailed report and your excellent explanation. MR. KAINS: Mr. Chambers?

## QUESTIONS POSED BY

MR. CHAMBERS:
Q. So I've got a question for you that will be along the same lines to Loyd's questions related to the employment numbers, the job projections there. So, you mentioned a little bit about where that data comes from, the government data on employment within Piatt County. The question $I$ would have is how granular is that data? Is it very specific on specific industries? And if so, does that factor into the actual projections that you've come up with, you know, because Piatt county would be heavily agriculturally focused, and $I$ was curious as to how that formula includes the projection.
A. Yeah. It is based on those industries within the County. The software in particular that $I$ use is IMPLAN, and they divide the $U S$ economy into, I think it's five hundred and forty-six different sectors of the economy.

So if you were, for example, to look at agriculture, it will have I want to say twenty different categories of agriculture. So it's not just here's agriculture. So you know, it's corn, soybean, vegetable, farming, you know, flowers, you know, all different kinds of agriculture, and it looks for those specific categories there. In this particular case what we're concerned about is things that Prosperity Wind, because you're going to build a wind farm and you're going to operate a wind farm, do the industries in those purchases exist in Piatt County, and if they don't exist, if there's no -no company that's in that industry in Piatt County, even if $I$ say oh, you know, Apex is going to spend "x" number of dollars in this industry, the software will say well there is no industry in Piatt County to be able to spend that money in there, and it will result in zero economic impact because that industry doesn't exist, and so it will handle those cases, you know, and is using Piatt County-specific data.
Q. So it only populates the numbers in where there is overlap being expected, expected impact and employment that actually exists in the County?
A. Correct.
Q. The only other question $I$ had is kind of a small one here that you may not be able to answer. So we've
got the different taxing districts for the schools these two being Blue Ridge and Deland-Weldon. The three spare locations are all within the Blue Ridge School District and not within the Deland-Weldon. I was curious if you had say in the event that spare locations are used rather than the preferred fifty locations, if there's a number for the potential swing in revenue change for those spare locations?
A. Yeah. I have not looked. I concentrated for these purposes on those fifty primary locations.

MR. CHAMBERS: That's all I have.
MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Chambers. Dr. Wax, anything further?

DR. WAX: No.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Questions for the witness from members of units of local government including school districts? Questions for Dr. Loomis from other interested parties? Members of the public opposed to the Application or neutral on the Application? Yes Miss Reed? I'm sorry, Miss Ryan? If you could please state your name, spelling the first and last for the court reporter.

MS. RYAN: Susan Ryan, S-U-S-A-N, R-Y-A-N.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Go right ahead, Ms.
Ryan.

QUESTIONS POSED BY
SUSAN RYAN:
Q. So did I understand, you used modeling again for those numbers for employment?
A. The economic impacts in terms of jobs that would be created or supported in Piatt County, yes, was modeled.
Q. We had this conversation last time, I think. I know that you testified in DeWitt County for Tradewind. I guess I'm surprised or curious because DeWitt County is one line down in the complex. So you didn't use any, because they're similar to Tradewind, you didn't use any actual numbers from DeWitt County, employment numbers using White Construction, the same company, you know, etc.?
A. No, I usually treat, you know, each project -certainly $I$ have industry knowledge and I've been doing this a long time, but for, you know, for proprietary and confidentiality reasons I don't take another company's data and apply it to a neighboring county.
Q. They just wouldn't give it to you, or you didn't ask?
A. So I did testify in DeWitt County of the proposed impacts, but it's actually very hard to get post
construction data. All right? To say how do you verify these employment estimates, and as an academic researcher $I$ would love to have that data. I always love to have data. The only time $I$ have had one instance here in Illinois, where $I$ was -- I got data post construction, it was in Macon County for a wind farm after it had been constructed, and $I$ was able to compare a report just like this that $I$ had prepared for that wind farm in Macon County at a hearing just like this before the $Z B A$, and $I$ think it was two years after construction be able to go back and look at the data. So because there was a lawsuit $I$ had access to a lot of data that $I$ wouldn't necessarily have access to. So, I had access to every construction worker that worked on that site because it was a union project and they kept scrupulous records, and the estimates were in terms of direct employment, were within five percent of what I estimated.

MS. RYAN: Okay. That's all. Thank you.
MR. KAINS: Thank you, Miss Ryan. Any other questions from the public for Dr. Loomis? Questions from Piatt County staff and consultants?

MR. KEYT: I have a very short one.
MR. KAINS: Yes. Mr. Keyt?
CROSS-EXAMINATION BY

MR. KEYT:
Q. You indicated it was within five percent. Five percent which way?
A. Five percent of the direct jobs impact was -- of what I predicted, was what $I$ was able to obtain from those local union records in terms of employment. I will say, the thing that $I$ did note in there was even though they hired the local union, where those union workers -they worked out of Macon County unions, but they didn't always live in Macon County.
Q. My question is five percent higher or five percent lower than your estimate?
A. I don't recall.

MR. KEYT: Okay.
MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Keyt. Re-direct, Mr. Granholm?

MR. GRANHOLM: No further questions.
MR. KAINS: Final questions from the Members of the ZBA? Dr. Wax? Mr. Chambers?

FURTHER QUESTIONS POSED BY

MR. CHAMBERS:
Q. Same question as Mr. Keyt, so that was just direct impact as in the construction and direct employment? That was not indirect as in any secondary impacts, correct?
A. Yeah. So, when you're doing the direct impacts, by definition those are employed by, you know, by the developer or the construction company that's acting on their behalf. The indirect impacts are difficult for you to observe and kind of tease out. But what $I$ was able to do is to say what did they actually spend on concrete. And in that case they set up a local site to mix, pour, you know the concrete local to the project similar to what we've been talking about here. So I was able to then say what did they spend on that concrete. What I have to still rely on the software to do is to say $I$ can verify that the wind farm company spent ten million dollars on concrete. What $I$ can't do is go to the concrete company and say for this specific job, or this specific task and that site, how many people did you hire. I have to rely on industry averages then to say well if you're gonna spend ten million dollars on concrete, you know, a concrete company has to do that.

And those statistics are going to be common to any concrete, right, by whatever way you get to that. So I was able to verify the spending that happened, but I still had to model how many jobs did that spending result in when it comes to those indirect impacts. Does that make sense?
Q. Sure. What I'm also getting at there, that post construction data that you were able to obtain to go over it, that was still confined mostly to the direct impact and not -- I think we're talking more long term here, but not long term, secondary impact jobs or the -I'm forgetting the --
A. Induced?
Q. Yeah. So there's nothing that you've been able to get ahold of really, post-construction assessment of those other permanent jobs?
A. Well, not in this way where you're going to do it on a small scale. Even though I'm retired, I'm working with still two econ students in the econ department, and our Project is to look at all hundred and two counties in Illinois, and we've traced back the economic activity for the last, I think we went back to 2010 . So we have the economic activity of 2010, and said of those counties which are the fastest growing so we can rank them, and then how many of those counties had a wind or
solar farm in them, and can we prove out a causal relationship and then show exactly well here's how much, you know, total employment has increased and so forth since the wind or solar farm came into existence. Yeah. So we've kind of ear marked here's the top ten, here's the top twenty growing ones, and quite a number of those had wind or solar farms in them, but we haven't gotten to the, you know, statistical model to then say, was that causal, was that incidental, and then what's the net effect. But we're kind of working that angle in aggregate.

MR. CHAMBERS: Okay. That's all.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you. Dr. Wax? DR. WAX: One last question.

FURTHER QUESTIONS POSED BY
DR. WAX:
Q. I don't know if it's even an appropriate question or if what $I$ 'm suggesting is ever done, but did you ever have an opportunity or did you take this model data, essentially the numbers and the pie chart information, and sit down with the Piatt County Supervisor of Tax Assessments and try to come to an agreement and say okay, I'm on track or I'm not on track?
A. Um, so I've done better than that. We collected data on every wind farm -- every wind turbine has its own property identification number, pin number. We've gone to every county assessor and asked for the pin numbers of every wind farm -- or wind turbine in their county. We also did for solar, but solar has been no new in terms of utility scale solar, so there's very few of those, and then $I$ employed some econ students to look up those individual property tax records on every tax web site to then say well here's what the formula has, what did these people actually pay in taxes, and we produced the report that summarizes. It goes along exactly with what I'm saying, large amounts of money has gone to fund schools. Counties like McLean County that has the largest number of wind turbines had, you know, a huge amount of tax revenue for a sustained number of years. So we do it similar to this report. Year by year, here's how much came in, pin number by pin number, to the various taxing entities and has summed that up.

DR. WAX: Thank you. Very good.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you Dr. Loomis. You may step down. However, you may be subject to recall either by counsel or perhaps by the ZBA at a future date.

Miss Antoniolli, do you have any other
witnesses?

MS. ANTONIOLLI: Thank you, Mr. Kains, yes.
Next on behalf of Prosperity Wind, I would like to call our sound expert Mr. Eddie Duncan from RSG.

MR. KAINS: Would you please state your name
spelling first and last names for the record?

EDDIE DUNCAN: Yes. My name is Eddie
Duncan, $\quad E-D-D-I-E, \quad D-U-N-C-A-N$.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Miss Antoniolli? (Witness sworn.)

E D D I E $\quad D \quad U \quad N \quad C \quad A \quad N$
called as a witness on behalf of the Applicant in the above-entitled cause, having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION BY

MS. ANTONIOLLI:
Q. Mr. Duncan, can you please state your job title and then briefly summarize your professional background and experience?
A. Sure. I am a Senior Director at RSG headquartered in White River Junction, Vermont, with offices around the country. I'm a Board Certified Noise Control

Engineer. My experience is a little over twenty years in the field of acoustics and acoustical consulting and noise control engineering, with a focus especially in environmental permitting and within the energy sector. So I've been working on wind farms for eighteen, nineteen years.
Q. Okay. Thank you. Now I have with me Mr. Duncan's CV, and that includes his educational and professional background. Ryan is going to kindly pass that around for your review, and then $I$ would move to admit that into the record as Applicant's Group Exhibit Number 13.

MR. KAINS: Are we on 13, Mr. Keyt?
MR. KEYT: Yes, sir.
MR. KAINS: Mr. Duncan's CV will be admitted
as Applicant's Exhibit 13. Go right ahead.

MS. ANTONIOLLI: Thank you. Mr. Duncan, you prepared a 64-page report titled Sound Modeling Report Prosperity Wind, correct?
A. I believe it was sixty-four pages. I don't recall off the top of my head, but that sounds about right, yes.
Q. And you have in front of you, a copy of the Appendices. If you could please turn to Appendix E.5? Okay, and is Appendix E. 5 to Prosperity's Special Use

Permit Application a true and correct copy of your sound modeling report?
A. Yes, it is. Sixty pages. Sixty-four if you're counting the covers.
Q. Okay. Thank you. Do you have any corrections or revisions to make to your sound modeling report?
A. I do not.
Q. And will you please give a brief overview of your work with Apex on sound modeling studies for wind farms?
A. Sure. We've worked with Apex Clean Energy for a number of years, assessing noise assessments for a variety of Projects, many of them in the wind energy sector. So in that work what we'll do is work with Apex to understand what the proposed Project is, we'll then do sound propagation modeling to project what the sound levels are and compare those sound levels to the applicable limits, depending on what the jurisdiction is, and then if we need to we'll work with them on siting and mitigation and things of that nature.
Q. Okay. And did you also work on a sound modeling study for the Goose Creek Wind Farm?
A. Yes, I did.
Q. So yesterday evening Mr. Gantz asked some questions to Miss Anderson about modeled sound levels at his residence, and you were in the room. Do you
remember the questions?
A. I do, yes.
Q. Did you perform the sound modeling?
A. Yes.
Q. Can you please explain now for us how the modeling results changed at Mr. Gantz' residence between the Goose Creek Project and the Prosperity Wind Project, and then some of the variables that caused that change?
A. Yes. So focusing in, I think, on the two critical bands, just as a reminder, we're modeling sound levels at full octave bands, from 31.5 Hz to 8 kHz because that is the IPCB regulation. So the two critical octave bands there are 500 Hz and 1 kHz . What I mean by critical is, given the wind turbine model, those are the sound levels that most closely approach the IPCB limits. The high frequency and low frequency sounds don't come close. So for those two critical octave bands, the sound level at 500 Hz was, I believe, 2 dB less than Goose Creek, and at 1 kHz , I believe, is $3 \mathrm{~dB}--3$ to 4 dB less than Goose Creek. So in Goose Creek, I believe Mr. Gantz' residence was 1 dB under the IPCB limit, and in this assessment it would be 3 to 4 dB left than the IPCB limits in those bands.
Q. And are those results in your report for Prosperity Wind?
A. They are. I did -- I forgot that I did not answer the second part of your question. Why.
Q. Okay.
A. So the reason why is, as Miss Anderson alluded to yesterday, it's related to updated information on the transformer. So we now have specific information on the transformers versus in Goose Creek we were using representative data for what they expected for a transformer. So it's a little different because now we have selected transformers to work with. We know what the dimensions are, we know what the ratings are precisely so we can then better calculate that. The difference primarily is related to the physical dimensions of the transformer. So given the representative transformer in Goose Creek, it was larger in terms of the physical dimensions than the transformer that's proposed here for Prosperity, and so that results in a lower sound power level.
Q. Okay. Thank you. And $I$ will get to the point in your report where it is, but first, we also heard a question from Mr. Harrington about the location of the transformers and whether that was at all an issue, or whether or not that was changed between the two projects.
A. Yeah, that's right. The location is the same as
it was in Goose Creek. It's modeled at the exact same locations.
Q. Okay. And where can we find this information on sound levels relating to Mr. Gantz' residence in your report?
A. So it would be on page 49 of the report. I believe the receptor ID number for Mr. Gantz' residence is 292. So, it's about a third of the way from the bottom of the page on page 49.
Q. Thank you. How did you verify that receptor 292 is Mr. Gantz' residence?
A. Yeah, so in that same appendix, prior to the table of results, there are maps of receptors throughout the Project area, and $I$ believe Mr. Gantz' residence is the closest residence to the substation. So, on page 39, figure 21, we can see it's a map of receptor locations, and it also shows wind turbine locations and substation locations. So the closest residential receptor to the substation is receptor 292 which is located to the east/northeast of the substation.
Q. Okay. Thank you. And will you please also walk us through some of the conservative assumptions that you used in modeling sound for Prosperity Wind?
A. Sure. The modeling assumptions, the conservative modeling assumptions we use are very much the same --
Q. I'm going to have you slow down just a bit for the court reporter.
A. Sure -- are very much the same as the standards as outlined yesterday in her presentation. The three primary factors, being the 2 dB adjustment factor that's added to the sound power level. That is the manufacturer sound level emissions. So the manufacturer says the sound level or the sound emissions from this turbine will be "x", and so we model "x" plus two. The other is that all residences are modeled as being down wind from the turbines. So it's as if the wind is generated at the turbine and every one is down wind. And then -- so, I forget what the third assumption is here off the top of my head, but there is another. I forget off the top of my head, but there are a number. The other one though that Miss Anderson did not mention was, and this applies mostly for the residences that are closer to the substation is that the transformers are modeled in what we call the ONAF condition. It's a cooling mode on the transformer, assuming that the fans that are on the transformer are operating. This would typically only happen during the day and when it's hot out. So we're comparing sound levels to the nighttime standard, but it's, you know, less likely that those fans would even operate at night.
Q. And those conservative assumptions that you mentioned, do those happen in reality? All of those assumptions together?
A. No, and that reminds me of what the third conservative assumption is, and that is that all of the wind turbines in the model are operating simultaneously at their maximum sound levels in each octave band. So that is not possible because the maximum sound levels in each octave band happen at different wind speeds, and it just doesn't happen that the turbines are operating at their maximum sound level simultaneously, especially when we're talking fifty wind turbines.
Q. Okay. Thank you. And finally, we heard a question from Mr. Hartke last night about the shape of sound pressure levels. The figure that he referred to, they didn't appear to be a perfect circle, but rather more elliptical in shape. Can you -- specifically he referred to figure 23, on page 54 of your report. And can you please explain to us why that might be?
A. Yes. Figure 23, what we see are two turbines, C12 and C13, and we do see concentric circles for that first sound level ISOlines. So these are lines of equal sound levels. So we do see a circle for the first line. It's the second line out from there which is 50 dB that is not a perfect circle, and the reason for that is the
turbines C12 and C13 are east to west from one another, and so the space between those two turbines, those sound levels will be additives. So it would look -- this is correct. It would look on the map as though the sound levels are traveling further east to west, because they're at -- the sound levels from one turbine are adding to another turbine. As we get further away to the south, we're not going to see that elliptical shape to the south because the turbines are oriented east to west in this location, not north to south.
Q. Okay. Thank you for that explanation. That's all the questions I have.

MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you, Miss Antoniolli. Questions for Mr. Duncan from Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals?

## QUESTIONS POSED BY

DR. WAX:
Q. I'll try one. I assume, sir, that you're familiar with groupings of where peoples' responses to various things and they've been placed into a vel curve, where a majority of the people fall into two responses, fall into the major part of the curve, and you have a few over on one end that are not affected whatsoever, and a
few on the other end that may be significantly affected. Wouldn't this apply to peoples' response to sound?
A. Yes. So I'm familiar with a concept of a vel curve and peoples' responses and certain percentage at one end and a certain percentage at the other. In some cases the data for response to sound fits a vel curve and in some cases it doesn't. I think there's a limit to how much I can speak to that because those responses are often getting into help studies. So it's a little different than what I'm dealing with within a noise assessment for a project.
Q. Okay. I'm trying to get at whether there could be, in response to sound, some people who are absolutely not bothered whatsoever. The majority of the people might be bothered a bit, but could live with the standards that are set. And there might be a very small percentage of one to five percent that they're extremely affected by and even cause health issues. Is that a possibility?
A. I can't speak to the health issues portion of it, but I mean $I$ can say that the population as a whole has different sensitivities to noise. So I can say that. We all have that experience, you know. Your spouse might be more sensitive to sound than you are, a certain sound than you are, but in terms of five, ten percent, the
specifics of that, and the health outcomes I can't speak to that. That's outside my area of expertise.
Q. Okay. Neither one of us are health experts on this thing, but sound could be heard by some people much more than others?
A. For sure. We know that the hearing thresholds for people vary. Yeah, some people will hear sounds that other people can't hear.
Q. May I ask a question then, in which you may or may not feel comfortable responding to, but let's assume that there is one or two percent, or a small percent of people, who hear sounds over and -- I mean that even the Illinois Pollution Standard levels they hear sounds that are outside your dotted lines that show they should not. What would be the company's response to a small percentage of people who believe they're severely affected by this because they have a sound problem, it's affecting their hearing and it's bothering them. I'm just wondering, is there a company policy that okay we're going to try to hear their complaint and try to take care of somebody who, the very small percentage who doesn't, you know, they don't fit within this category, the standards, but they're still having problems. What would be the company's response?

MS. ANTONIOLLI: I will give you a little
teaser that we are going to recall Mr. Moore to talk a little bit more about Apex's complaint and response procedure, and I think that would clear up a couple of things.

DR. WAX: Okay thank you.
A. And that would be my response. I can't speak for the company responses, but the company can. The one part of that question that $I$ just want to touch on is the ability to hear something, and the IPCB limits are kind of different things. So if one person can hear something and another person can't, the sound level's not different. The sound level's the same sound level. So, just audibility is different than sound level limits.

DR. WAX: Thank you.
MR. KAINS: So any other questions from the Board? All right. Very good. Questions for Mr. Duncan from members of units of local government including school districts? Questions for Mr. Duncan from members of the public opposed to the Application or neutral on the Application? Questions for Mr. Duncan from Piatt County staff and consultants?

MR. KEYT: I have one.
MR. KAINS: Mr. Keyt.

MR. KEYT:
Q. Okay. So if I understand it, there were fifty turbines sites that were sound modeled; is that correct?
A. That's correct, yes.
Q. In the Application it asked for approval fifty-three turbine sites?
A. That's my understanding, yes.
Q. Do we know which three turbine sites were not modeled?
A. I do not know off the top of my head, but I'm sure that Apex could answer that question.

MR. KEYT: Thank you.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Questions on
re-direct, Miss Antoniolli?
MS. ANTONIOLLI: No. No further questions.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Final questions come from the ZBA. Anything else? Very good. Thank you, Mr. Duncan. You may step down, subject of course to recall. All right. Miss Antoniolli, Mr. Hess, Mr. Granholm, your next witness?

MR. HESS: Thank you, Mr. Kains. We would respectfully call Jennie Geiger.

MR. KAINS: Ma'am, would you please raise your right hand and be sworn.

> (Witness sworn)

MR. KAINS: Could you please state your name, selling your first and last names for the record.

JENNIE GEIGER: Yes. My name is Jennie Geiger, J-E-N-N-I-E, G-E-I-G-E-R. MR. KAINS: Go ahead, Mr. Hess. MR. HESS: Thank you.

## DIRECT EXAMINATION BY

MR. HESS:
Q. Miss Geiger, please state your job title and give a short summary of your professional background and experience.
A. Sure. I am the Director of Environmental for Apex Clean Energy. My background is that I have a BS which is a Bachelor's of Sciences in Wildife Biology from the University of Georgia and a Master's in Environmental Policy and Administration from Colorado State University. My experience is varied, but after I graduated from college $I$ spent many years as an aid and field technician traveling around the country and doing various bird work, also being an environmental educator, teaching adults and students about birds and various
other wildlife things, and then as a sustainability in environmental health and safety consultant for the federal government, and the last ten years I've spent in the renewable energy realm, the past eight and a half years with Apex.
Q. Thank you, Miss Geiger. At this time, Mr. Kains, we're handing out a one-page document which is to establish Miss Geiger's written credentials to allow her testify as a wildlife expert, and we would ask that it be admitted as Exhibit 14 .

MR. KEYT: Exhibit 14.

MR. KAINS: Miss Geiger's credentials will be accepted into evidence as Exhibit 14. Go ahead, Mr. Hess.

MR. HESS: Thank you, Mr. Kains. Miss

Geiger, can you briefly talk about what your responsibilities are in general at Apex Clean Energy?
A. Yes. My overall responsibilities are generally to understand potential environmental impacts from our projects, and then work to reduce those impacts to the greatest extent possible.
Q. And are you familiar with Section 11 of Piatt County's Wind Ordinance?
A. I am.
Q. And Section 11 states that an applicant for
special use permit quote:
"Through the use of a qualified professional such as an ornithologist or wildlife biologist, shall conduct and avian habitat study, as part of the special use application process, to determine if the installation of WECS(s) will have a substantial adverse impact on birds and/or bats."

What steps did you take to comply with this provision?
A. Apex hired a qualified third-party professional company, Western EcoSystems Technology, to conduct wildlife studies throughout the Project area in order to assess potential risk to wildiffe from the Project.
Q. May I approach the witness to show you her a portion of our application?

MR. KAINS: Yes, you may.
Q. Mr. Kains, I'll state for the record that I've just handed Miss Geiger what's previously been admitted as Applicants's Group Exhibit Number 1, which is Prosperity Wind's Special Use Permit Application. Specifically I've handed her Volume 1 of the Appendices, and separately the narrative portion.

Miss Geiger, if you could look at Appendix E. 6
that is in Volume 1. What is this document?
A. This document is a summary of all the actions
that we have taken to assess and address potential risks to wildlife from the Project, and it includes an outline of all the correspondence with the U.S. Fish \& Wildlife Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources that we did, as well as studies that we conducted, and the measures that we are implementing with the Project based on the results of studies to minimize and avoid impact.
Q. At your request, did you have this document prepared?
A. I did.
Q. And who prepared this document?
A. Mr. Travis Brown from WEST.
Q. Have you worked with Mr. Brown at WEST before?
A. Many times.
Q. And based on your experience, Federal and State Regulators, and folks like Mr. Brown conducting these studies, they coordinate, they know each other? It's a pretty small world?
A. Yes. They very much trust WEST in their work.
Q. In this memo in the underlying studies of data, is this the type of work that Apex regularly conducts and shares with Federal and State wildife experts and regulators?
A. Yes.
Q. And is it Apex's regular course of business to rely on these types of wildife studies and data to demonstrate compliance with Federal and State requirements?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. Taking you back to Section 11, Piatt County's Wind Ordinance, and I've quoted before. It continues to say, quote:
"To determine if the installation of WECS(s) will have a substantial adverse impact on birds and/or bats." Will Prosperity Wind have a substantial adverse impact on birds or bats?
A. No. Based on numerous years of studies and coordination that we've had with both Fish \& Wildlife Service, and Illinois Department of Natural Resources, as well as the avoidance and mitigation measures that we have agreed upon with those agencies, the Project will not have a substantial adverse impact.
Q. I want to turn your attention now to the narrative portion of the Application, which is Prosperity Wind's Exhibit 1 . At this time if you would look at page 41 of the narrative portion, Prosperity Wind's Application, the second paragraph on page 41 states:
"Apex Clean Energy has been coordinating with the

US Fish \& Wildlife Service and Illinois Department of Natural Resources since early 2019."

Can you unpack that a little bit for the ZBA? What does this coordination look like?
A. Sure. We began coordinating with both agencies, Fish \& Wildlife and IDNR in 2019, when the Project was first developing to understand if they had any concerns with the general Project area, where we were siting the project, as well as to agree on studies that would be appropriate to assess potential risks or impacts to species of concern. After that, once we started doing surveys, we met with the agencies on multiple occasions to talk about the results of the surveys, make sure that they didn't have any questions or concerns, and take any recommendations that they might have for the Project. We have continued to coordinate with them. Even a couple of months ago we met with Fish \& Wildlife Service.
Q. Will this coordination continue going forward?
A. Yes.
Q. The next paragraph on page 41, and this is the last paragraph on that page, right before the table, states:
"Apex Clean Energy used the results from the studies, along with recommendations from the Fish \& Wildife Service and Illinois Department of Natural

Resources, to inform appropriate impact avoidance, minimization, monitoring, and adaptive management measures for the Project. Table 9.0-1 summarizes the measures that Prosperity Wind has implemented into turbine siting to avoid potential impacts to species of concern. Additionally, associated facilities have been designed to either avoid habitat or implement avoidance measures based on agency coordination."

The Application then provides a table, Table 9.0-1. Is that an accurate summary and table, an accurate summary of the avoidance and minimization measures Prosperity Wind has taken?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. So in summary, Prosperity Wind's wildife studies closely coordinated with State and Federal regulators and additional avoidance and minimization measures that are summarized in Table 9.0-1?
A. Yes.

MR. HESS: Thank you, Miss Geiger. Mr. Kains, I have no further questions.

MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you Mr. Hess. Questions for Miss Geiger from the Zoning Board of Appeals? Mr. Chambers?

QUESTIONS POSED BY

MR. CHAMBERS:
Q. A question $I$ have is, in the last hearings that we had, A significant public concern point was bird and bat populations and effects. The question $I$ have, there's going to be the post-construction surveys. Is there any plans to make those public, that the public would be able to see those reports?
A. At this point in time the only plans we have are to provide them to the agencies.
Q. Then a second question, so if incidental take permits are part of the way things would work, could work after construction, is there any particular species that if, hypothetically, if an incidental take permit is to take place, you would have a perception of what species that would likely be in this area?
A. Yeah. So bats is more of the concern here. So the species bat we would consider doing something like that for would be the only species here, and currently that's the Indiana bat and the Northern long-eared bat.
Q. But not, for example, a raptor species?
A. No. Incidental take permits are only for federally protected species or limited species, and there are no federally listed raptors in this area.

MR. CHAMBERS: Thank you.
MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Chambers. Dr. Wax, do you have any questions for the witness? DR. WAX: Just one.

## QUESTIONS POSED BY

DR. WAX:
Q. Please tell me if this is correct or not. I believe the manufacturer of the turbine that you're using offers an option of a bird and bat suppression system. Is that correct?
A. The only thing that I'm aware of that Vestas offers that we're putting on there is the opportunity to curtail the turbines for wildlife purposes. You can curtail it for other things also, but in this case we would be curtailing the turbines in the Fall for bats.
Q. To your knowledge, how does that system work?
A. It's been very effective. Fish and Wildlife Services is very supportive of it as is IDNR.
Q. It he's been very effective, but specifically do you know how -- what it does to scare away or discourage or whatever birds and bats?
A. Well this particular system just shuts the turbines down. So at certain wind speeds, it'll just
stop the turbines so there is no impact to the bats.
Q. Would it be correct then to assume that you're not utilizing that because of your surveys that indicate no -- neither birds or bats of great concern are near your facilities? Would that be correct?
A. It is true that there is no bat habitat in the Project area. As Miss Anderson said yesterday, that's more for Summer. During the migration period, similar to birds, bats also migrate. So during migration periods bats will be flying through the Project area. So we have committed to meeting IDNR's recommendation to curtail it, to stop the turbines during Fall migration at night to minimize that risk. I lost my train of thought there. So it will be -- it will have a benefit, and we are going to be curtailing. DR. WAX: Okay. FURTHER QUESTIONS POSED BY MR. CHAMBERS:
Q. Quick follow-up to what Loyd asked. I believe there is deterrent systems, but those would probably after market or third party. Are you familiar with those?
A. Enough. I'm not an expert by any means on that.

They exist. They work for some species, they don't work for some species. It really kind of depends what the issue is that you might want to use them for. Right now I don't anticipate we're going to need anything like that on this Project.
Q. That was going to be my next question, if you believe a system like that would be effective or have an integral impact in this Project space?
A. At this point in time, $I$ don't think that they're quite ready for deployment, and I don't see a need for it at this time.

MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Chambers.
Questions for Miss Geiger from members of units of local government including school districts? Questions for Miss Geiger from members of the public opposed to the Application or neutral on the Application? Questions from Piatt County staff and consultants? Mr. Hess, any re-direct?

MR. HESS: No, sir.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Final questions for
the ZBA? Anything you fellows have come up with? All right. Very good. Thank you, Miss Geiger. You may step down, subject to recall of course. Miss Antoniolli? MS. ANTONIOLLI: I would turn it over to Mr. Granholm.

MR. KAINS: Mr. Granholm, your next witness?
MR. GRANHOLM: Michael MaRous, our expert
witness on property values.

MR. KAINS: Please raise your hand and
be sworn.
(Witness sworn.)

MR. KAINS: Can you please state your name,
spelling first and last for the record.

MICHAEL MaROUS: Michael MaRous,
$M-I-C-H-A-E-L, \quad M-a-R-O-U-S$.

MR. KAINS: Very good. You may proceed, Mr. Granholm.

## DIRECT EXAMINATION BY

MR. GRANHOLM:
Q. I'm going to hand Mr. MaRous a copy of the exhibits to Prosperity Wind's Special Use Permit Application, which was previously admitted as our Exhibit 1 .

MR. KAINS: Very good. You may approach the witness.
A. Thank you.
Q. Mr. MaRous, before I begin this questioning, I'm going to acknowledge that the page numbers in this report differ. There's some Roman Numerals at the end.

So, Mr. MaRous, you prepared a 198 -page report, titled Market Impact Analysis, Prosperity Wind, Piatt County, Illinois; is that correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Is that market impact analysis included as Appendix C.2, Prosperity Wind Special Use Permit Application?
A. Correct.
Q. And is Appendix C. 2 a true and correct copy of your market impact analysis?
A. It's in the middle in the binder and the binder's stuck. So I need about ten seconds to remedy that. Yes, it appears to be.
Q. Do you have any corrections or revisions to make to Appendix C.2?
A. No.
Q. Towards the end of your market analysis, Roman Numeral pages XXXVII to XLIII, you have provided a Statement of Qualifications; is that correct?
A. Yes.
Q. And just to briefly summarize, will you give an overview of your qualifications starting with your educational background?
A. Sure. I had the honor of attending and graduating from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana with a
B.S. in the School of Finance with a specialization in Urban Land Economics. I was immediately employed by a real estate consulting appraisal firm in the Chicago area, and then about five years later, after $I$ was awarded my MAI designation, I started and founded MaRous and Company. Subsequent to doing appraisals, or beginning, I've done about fifteen thousand appraisals of over twenty billion dollars of assets, primarily in the State of Illinois. I am licensed at the highest level, General Certified in Illinois and five other states. I am Past President of the Chicago Chapter of the Appraisal Institute. I also am an Illinois Licensed Broker. I've also been awarded the Counselors of Real Estate.

In my evaluation work, I've been very active in central Illinois. I've done both State Farm headquarters. I've done work for the University of Illinois. I've done the Caterpillar two million square foot Distribution Facility, probably fifteen major properties in Peoria and East Peoria, and thousands of agricultural parcels.

I've had also the occasion to be an elected public official. I sat as a liaison to Planning and Zoning of ZBA of Park Ridge. I also sat as an Alderman on the Finance Committee and Public Safety, and I'm the
former Mayor of the City of Park Ridge.
So over my career I've been involved in doing many many value impact studies, and many have been for energy, solar, wind, natural gas to electric, but also similar studies for development or re-development for zoning variations and special uses, for mixed use properties, for churches, for industrial uses, for waste transfer facilities, residential subdivisions among others.
Q. Thank you, Mr. MaRous. You covered all of my questions about your qualifications. With that, Mr. Kains, Mr. MaRous is available for questions.

MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you. Questions for Mr. MaRous from Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals?

MR. CHAMBERS: I'll start off.

QUESTIONS POSED BY
MR. CHAMBERS:
Q. So these are similar questions to some that we had last hearing, and so $I$ wanted to go over a couple of these again, the ones that brought probably the most concern or the most focus as far as the public questioning, at least. So my first question is, could
you explain to us what's your definition and your knowledge of vista stigma?
A. Of what?
Q. Vista stigma?
A. Well as I understand it, that has to do with the view that someone may have, generally, from a residential property where certain parties may feel that their view is impaired, and you know, that goes you know, to many different characteristics, but it also goes back to do people control the property beyond which they own.
Q. All right. So some of the questions $I$ have, the reason $I$ wanted to ask that first is to lay a litte foundation because some of the questions $I$ have are related more specifically to that and the central impact of the vista, the wind farm, on impact on residential property value. So do you believe that this stigma can have an adverse impact on property value?
A. Are we speaking, just to be clear, on wind farms and turbines alone for your questions?
Q. In this case, yes.
A. Sure. I mean it makes it cleaner and so forth with the answer. I think that's a real good question, and I've been studying and I've looked at about fifty studies, and I've looked at hundreds of wind farms, and
what's very interesting is the initial wind farms had less control and they had significantly more density. So in this situation, you've got a six megawatt machine and the initial turbines were one to one and a half megawatts. So for this Project you could have two hundred, two hundred plus machines. And from my observation and in speaking with brokers and active participants, it's the density that's the issue. And I think the other issue has to go, in my opinion, has to do with setbacks, and initially the setbacks were seven hundred fifty to a thousand feet from the edge of the house. Now again, with the new projects that have bigger machines that are generally three to six megawatts, the minimum is usually twelve hundred and fifty feet. In my opinion, I like to see fifteen hundred. In this Project I think sixteen seventy is the minimum setback. So when you have -- if you have a seven hundred and fifty foot setback from a house, do $I$ think that's a problem if there's views? I mean if it's in back of the garage and there's no views, maybe not. But if your proximate, that's an issue. The other concern, and I think we're all familiar with the flashing red lights which was a concern, and that's fascinating because you see them from a distance, but when you get into a wind farm it's unlike a Walmart where you go in and the lights are
shining down on you. When you actually go into a Project they're flashing up and you don't see it. But I think these ADLS systems are a huge benefit for them. So under proper controls well done, in my opinion, no. Now does that mean some people don't like them? You know, some people don't wanna look at barns, some people don't wanna look at silos, some people don't wanna, you know, look at unkempt properties. But $I$ can't say if done properly that there is a vista stigma that would negatively impact property values, particularly for this Project where you only have fifty turbines spread out over a large area.
Q. So your opinion is that for this Project that vista stigma does not pose a risk of negative impact on property value?
A. No, it does not, in my opinion.
Q. The only other question $I$ have, and this was more along the same lines, but more about vista stigma, and as a Realtor you'll have some insight on this, but the issues that we discussed before in relation to vista stigma is being a pool of buyers, so listing that particular property, if you have property A within the footprint of the wind farm and property B that is not within the footprint of the wind farm and they are virtually identical, buyers choose, you know, the
property that is outside the wind farm versus the one that is in. So the question would be, do you see a decrease in interest in buyer activity for homes within the Project, in terms of value?
A. You sound like you asked the questions that $I$ do the market participants. So, the answer is the net differential is zero because what you have is you have certain buyers that say that they don't want to buy, and where I've found, if the key is good location, paved road, modern house, close to a family member, close to services, and a strong economic stability where there's money for the schools, there's money coming into the community, so the off-sets of the few that don't like it, there are quite a few let's say the younger people with families that are coming back because it provides the infra structure for the community. Now as an example, if you have a house on three acres, and you have ten people look at it, I've never ever seen where all ten people could afford it, liked it, would make an offer. You're just not going to have people, you know, let's say the husband likes it and the wife doesn't like it. Guess what? They don't make an offer. And there's all kinds of issues that impact it. It could be the color of the siding. It could be the landscaping. It could be the small closets. It could be only one
bathroom. But because of the positive economics and the stability to the community, my observation and in talking with brokers, no that hasn't limited. Certain people? Yes, but then there's others that replace them.
Q. So in your opinion, the buyers that are removed from that pool of potential buyers, their absence does not affect the value?
A. Not in this instance, no. I think because of the economics, it's going to be a benefit and make the market stronger, and that's what's evidenced by looking at the similar projects throughout Illinois and throughout the country.

MR. CHAMBERS: That's all I have.
MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Chambers. Dr.
Wax, do you have any questions of Mr. MaRous?

QUESTIONS POSED BY
DR. WAX:
Q. You have apparently done thousands of these studies, sales, comparisons, and this sort of thing. In this report it seems like everything falls within a very narrow, very narrow median range of no effect. Have you, in your experience, ever run into situations where there were diminished values and also increased values?
A. So Dr. Wax, that's a real good question, and I've been out in areas where $I$ thought $I$ was gonna see negativity. So I was looking at a big wind proposed project near Lafayette, Indiana, and just north of there is White County. Along I-65, there's over a gigawatt of power that goes on for about twenty miles. So that's close to the capacity of a nuclear power plant. And they're all over and they're flashing red lights. So I went. I had sales that were proximate. I had, you know, maybe five, six, seven turbines within two thousand feet, others within fifteen hundred feet, and looked at comparables, and found that there was no differential in value. So then $I$ reached out to a local brokerage community, and they said that they have not had a tax increase in fifteen years, and the money that's come into the community has helped the schools, has helped the infra structure, and it's actually brought people in. It's just been part of the agricultural community. That's one I thought, because there's so many, it goes almost like fifteen or twenty miles. It goes for a long way, if you've ever gone that way. I think there was a project in the Dakotas that was poorly planned, that was not maintained, that was older, that was dense. I found and indication that there was -it had a negative impact. But again, that kind of goes
to zoning or you get into a situation where you have a community that's not well maintained, has no infra structure. That leads to the demise as a community. But where there's been well planned, and you know, the state of Iowa is just killing it if anybody's been to Des Moines lately. They have corn, soybeans. They have wind. They have solar. And on their license plate is a turbine, but because of it, they've gotten about ten billion dollars of data centers development that want to jump onto the renewable energy. Their values have gone way up. Des Moines is kind of like Indianapolis, it's kind of that subtly, very strong growing midwest town. So again, I've looked probably at six or seven projects in Iowa, and there's some strong opinions there where people don't like them and they're very negative. But once it's developed, and I talked -- I've talked to every assessor that has wind in Iowa, and the values have only gone up.
Q. Okay. Let's run one hypothetical thing. Let's assume, some non-participant or someone reasonably close to the turbines has a property for sale and they either have to take a ten, fifteen, twenty percent loss on it, or they can't sell it. In your opinion, should the company be concerned or try to make this situation whole?

MR. HESS: I'm very sorry to interrupt, Dr. Wax. With all due respect, I would make an objection. The new state law specifically prohibits property value guarantees from being a condition in a special use permit. So $I$ would object on relevance grounds. Now if Dr. Wax wants to just understand his opinion, I have no objection. But just to state for the record, $I$ don't think it's an issue that can be considered legally speaking in this proceeding. So I would have a relevancy objection.

MR. KAINS: Okay. I understand your objection, Mr. Hess, and I appreciate that, but I'm going to overrule it, and ask the witness to answer Dr. Wax's question if he knows.
A. So as an appraiser we look at a lot of properties, and a lot of properties come on the market very overpriced for what they have to offer the condition, the modernization, etc. So even though something is on the market for two hundred and fifty thousand, and what we had before interest rates, which I'll be honest with you, doubling of interest rates has had a negative impact on values, but you know, starting in August, September of 2020 , you know, when people got hot and got bored and they wanted more space, and the market was very strong, people were overpricing their
properties and some were getting lucky. So the first key is it has to be fairly priced. So even though somebody has it on for three hundred and they only get offers for two seventy, that may not be the wind. That may be they're just over priced. If you can prove properly that it's fairly priced, it's properly marketed, it's maintained, it's shown well, then that's a whole other issue. But I haven't found that. I've found it's usually a side story there where there's poor maintenance, there's on obsolete kitchen, one bathroom, outside areas need a ton of work. Even though it may be a nice house, that's what's impacted it. And a lot of people like to blame it on the wind, but that hasn't been the case, because there's others that will snap it up, but you know, if the value's two seventy, the value's two seventy, it's not three hundred.

DR. WAX: Okay, thank you.
MR. KAINS: Anything else, Mr. Chambers?
MR. CHAMBERS: No.

MR. KAINS: Very good. Questions for
Mr. MaRous from members of units of local government including school districts? Questions from members of the public opposed to the Application or neutral on the Application? Miss Coil? If you could, Miss Coil, state your name spelling your first and last for Jamie.

CLAUDIA COIL: Claudia Coil, C-L-A-U-D-I-A, C-O-I-L.

MR. KAINS: Very good. Go ahead with your questions for Mr. MaRous.

QUESTIONS POSED BY
CLAUDIA COIL:
Q. There are currently a lot, a number of leases in the County where a turbine won't take place. So the first question would be, $I$ don't know if this is speculative or whatever, but is the real estate agent up front with saying that that property, you know, across the street or whatever, it doesn't have a lease, could that potentially be used at another time?
A. So in my experience, and I'm not a lawyer, but when they go through a siting process for a special use, that's the project. If they build the project, they can't go modifying it unless they go back and re-do all of this again. So, even though let's say the three extra turbines here as an example, there's gonna be fifty turbines, the three turbines are extra, and let's say one of those is two thousand feet from you, my understanding, once the Project is done sited, that you know, they can't go put another turbine on that. That's
really a question for the lawyers, not for me, but then that's been my experience time and time again. So you're protected. They can't do it without going through the whole process, and you know how difficult and expensive that is based on what's happened here.
Q. Not so difficult in Illinois. Also, if there are leases that were not used, and you know, the potential of another company coming in or Apex having another project, would that deter future buyers?
A. In my opinion, no, because -- again, I'm not a scientist, $I$ 'm not a lawyer, but in looking at these issues they can't steal the wind and they generally have to have spacing of fifteen hundred to two thousand feet away. So it doesn't make economic sense for them, and it's not proper siting, and I think they would have very -- a new party coming to lease, particularly if it's in the Project footprint. I've seen what has been projects in McLean where they're developing relatively close, but not in the same footprint. Again, it's gonna require to go through this same process. But from a scientific, into the wind, $I$ think there's people here that can answer that, I've never seen it happen.

MR. KAINS: Thank you, Miss Coil. Any other questions from the public? Yes, sir. Could you please state your name and spelling first and last names for
the record?

JOHN HANNAH: My name is John Hannah, $J-O-H-N, \quad H-A-N-N-A-H$.

MR. KAINS: Go ahead with your questions for Mr. MaRous.

## QUESTIONS POSED BY

JOHN HANNAH:
Q. What if you're a property owner, and you've had seed corn on your property, and now the seed corn company will not accept your property because of the wind turbines, if you signed up for that? Wouldn't that dramatically affect your profit margins?

MR. HESS: With respect to that, I'm going to object. I think if the question goes to your property value, I think it's an appropriate question. I believe the way Mr. Hannah, with his last two words, if it goes to profit margins, $I$ think that's beyond the scope of Mr. MaRous's direct testimony. So if Mr. Hannah means is it going to affect property values, no objection. But if it's about profits in agriculture, I don't think it's appropriate.

JOHN HANNAH: I will say property values because it's going to be based upon the outcome of what's going to be made per acre.

MR. KAINS: What I'm going to do is, I'm going to sustain the objection and then I'm going to allow you to ask Mr. MaRous about the effect on property values, if someone won't accept seed corn. Is that fair?

MR. HANNAH: Yes.

MR. KAINS: Very good.
A. So as I understand the question, if your seed corn buyer will not accept the seed corn because of having a turbine on your property or proximate, the first question would be like anything else, if you go to the gas station and there's a red bag on the pump and you can't get gas, you're gonna go somewhere else. So if nobody in the market would buy your product, that would be obviously a negative. But if one buyer wouldn't, $I$ don't think -- that one doesn't make a market.
Q. Well what I'm saying is my property value would go down because $I$ have been able to prove I've made this much money per acre on this piece of property in the past several years. And now because of the wind turbine I'm not able to do that. Wouldn't that show that I would be losing property value?
A. And again, to answer that you'd have to test the market to see if you went out broadly to the market, and
if there's not a substitute buyer. If you're basically precluded from developing the property, obviously farm ag values are based on productivity. I've never seen that happen. In fact, you know, there's people, funds chasing to buy land where they're in areas like McLean County, and because it's kind of made the whole infra structure stronger and it's provided the ability for land owners to upgrade their ag equipment, we've seen nothing but increased land values. But clearly if your product doesn't have demand, that would have an impact on your property, but I've never seen that happen.

MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Hannah. Any other questions for Mr. MaRous from those opposed to the Application or persons who are neutral on the Application? Questions from Piatt County staff and consultants? Re-direct examination?

MR. GRANHOLM: No questions.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you, Mr. Granholm. Final questions from the Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals?

MR. CHAMBERS: Just one for me based on Mr. Hannah's question. I've been in the seed corn industry, so I'll kind of re-phrase it a little bit.

FURTHER QUESTIONS POSED
BY MR. CHAMBERS:
Q. This may or may not change your answer. So seed corn has to be grown a certain way, and you have to get authorization from your seed company to grow it, and then you go about your business and get paid. So what he was asking is, if the seed company says we won't grow our seed corn on land with turbines because it has to be harvested differently, it affects the logistics of it in picking it. So that seed corn is no longer an avenue of use for that property because it has turbines on it. In that case, would it affect the value?
A. So here's the appraisal answer, and it's called highest and best use. Where just like sometimes on Main Street you may have an old house, and it's kind of obsolete, and because of functional obsolescence only one bathroom, and it ends up let's say it's worth two hundred thousand, but you have a commercial user, a law firm, or a gas station that wants to buy it and knock it down, they'll pay more. In this situation, you would look at the value, and it's really a present value of that lease payment to get the value of that farm, and then you would look at the value of the land, and if you have to have an alternative crop, let's say soybeans or
wheat, or grazing, you'd look at the value there and you would add them together to see if there's a diminution. But again, with having a turbine on the property, I've seen nothing but significant increases all over the country, and again, there's buyers all over looking to buy sites with those leases. It's coupon clipping, and it's a very desirable investment. You'd have to add the two together to see if the net value is less. If the net value is less, then that would be a consideration.

MR. CHAMBERS: That's what $I$ was going for. Thank you.

MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Chambers. Dr. Wax?

DR. WAX: No.

MR. KAINS: Mr. MaRous, thank you very much for your testimony. You may step down, subject to recall.

It is 7:32, and let's take a ten-minute break plus. Let's try to come back about 7:45. We are in recess.
(Recess taken.)

MR. KAINS: Okay, folks. If we could get started. I just want to make one clarification. When I admonish the witnesses as they are leaving the witness
stand that they are subject to recall, they are subject to recall only by their attorneys. If they wish to call them back to the stand, they have that right, or if the Board wants to hear from them. But it's my understanding that after tonight, there will be a couple of witnesses who counsel's asking that they be excused, and I will allow Mr. MaRous and Dr. Loomis to be excused. I am guessing that all of the witnesses you have from Prosperity Wind will be here through the duration of this hearing; is that correct?

MR. HESS: I believe that's correct, but Mr. Conley has a conflict next week. So we will be asking at the appropriate time to excuse him. He will be here the rest of this week. I believe it might be the same for Miss Geiger, so if $I$ could talk with her on break, I can confirm that.

MR. KAINS: We will accommodate their schedules, but if the Board wants them back...

MR. HESS: Yes, sir.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Counsel, call your next witness.

MS. Antoniolli: Thank you, Mr. Kains. On behalf of Prosperity Wind, we'd like to call Mr. Jacob Runner.

MR. KAINS: Mr. Runner, please raise your
hand to be sworn.

> (Witness sworn.)
$\begin{array}{lllllllllll}J & A & C & O & B & R & U & N & \mathrm{~N} & \mathrm{R}\end{array}$
called as a witness on behalf of the Applicant in the above-entitled cause, having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

MR. KAINS: Sir, would you please state your name, spelling first and last for the record?

JACOB RUNNER: Yes, good evening. It's Jacob Runner, $\quad J-A-C-O-B, \quad R-U-N-N-E-R$.

MR. KAINS: Miss Antoniolli, you may proceed with your questions.

MS. ANTONIOLLI: Mr. Runner is our shadow flicker expert.

DIRECT EXAMINATION BY

MS. ANTONIOLLI:
Q. Mr. Runner, can you please state your job title and then also summarize your professional background and experience?
A. Sure thing. I am the GIS Practice Leader for Environmental Design and Research, DEC out Syracuse, New York. I have over a decade of experience conducting spatial analyses including shadow flicker studies like
the one conducted tonight. In regards to shadow flicker analyses, I've conducted dozens of these over the course of the last several years for wind Projects across the United States.
Q. Thank you. I have here with me a copy of Mr. Runner's CV, and that includes his education and professional background, and I'll pass it around and then I'll ask that it moved into the record as Applicant's Group Exhibit Number 15. Is that correct? MR. KAINS: Mr. Runner's CV will be admitted into evidence as Applicant's Exhibit Number 15.
Q. If I may, I'm going to bring the Application, Volume 2 of 2 of the Appendices, to show him Appendix E. 4.

MR. KAINS: You may approach the witness.
Q. Is appendix E.4 to Prosperity Wind's Special Use Permit, a true and correct copy of your shadow flicker report for Prosperity Wind?
A. It is.
Q. And do you have any corrections or revisions to make to that report?
A. I do not.
Q. Okay. Can you please give us a brief overview of your work with Apex on shadow flicker for wind farms?
A. Sure. I've conducted eight shadow flicker
analyses and reports for Apex across the United States including this one tonight for Prosperity Wind.

MS. ANTONIOLLI: Thank you. I have no further questions for Mr. Runner.

MR. KAINS: Very good. So the discussion that we will have would be about Mr. Runner's report on shadow flicker. First, questions from Members of the Zoning Board? Any questions on shadow flicker?

DR. WAX: I'll ask a question. I've probably forgotten this from the past or from the reading your lengthy report.

QUESTIONS POSED FROM
DR. WAX:
Q. How far away can -- is shadow flicker perceived from the origin?
A. So generally we include a reference or a couple of references for this in the report, but it's generally considered to be, you know, perceivable out to ten rotor diameters. So that would be, for this Project, one thousand six hundred and twenty meters.
Q. So somebody could be affected? You could see it that far away?
A. From a conceptual standpoint, yes, but there's multiple things, you know, like a very -- if all the
things in the world was perfectly flat, there was no haze or any sort of infra structure or anything in between, conceptually yes, but $I$ think in a real world scenario you have trees and buildings and all of those sorts of things that occur, you know, across the landscape. Those would likely interfere with it to extend to that far of a distance.

DR. WAX: I don't have anything else.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Anything else?
Mr. Chambers? All right. Very good. Questions for Mr. Runner on shadow flicker from members of units of local government including school districts? Questions from interested parties, members of the public opposed to the Application or neutral on the Application? Questions for Mr. Runner from Piatt County staff and consultants? Counsel, any Re-direct?

MS. ANTONIOLLI: No, not from me. Thanks.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you. Any final questions from the Zoning Board? Thank you, Mr. Runner. You're excused. Your next witness?

MS. ANTONIOLLI: Yes, thank you. Next on behalf of Prosperity Wind, I would like to call Mr. Eric Hansen from Westwood who's our decommissioning expert.

THE COURT: Mr. Hansen, you testified last
night; is that correct?

ERIC HANSEN: That is correct.

MR. KAINS: Rather than have you be sworn in,

I'll just remind you that you remain under oath and promise to be truthful in your responses to questions.

ERIC HANSEN: Understood.

MR. KAINS: Very good. If you could, we have a new court reporter tonight, so if you could spell your first and last names for her.

ERICK HANSEN: Eric Hansen, E-R-I-C, $\mathrm{H}-\mathrm{A}-\mathrm{N}-\mathrm{S}-\mathrm{E}-\mathrm{N}$.
$\begin{array}{llllllllll}E & R & I & C & H & N & S & E & N\end{array}$
recalled as a witness on behalf of the Applicant, having been previously sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION BY

MS. ANTONIOLLI:
Q. We heard a brief summary of his qualifications last night. I won't review those tonight, but I do have copy of his CV that summarizes his educational and professional background that $I$ would ask you to review, and then move into the record as Applicant's Exhibit Number 16.

MR. KAINS: Applicant's 16 is admitted. Go right ahead with your question, counsel.

MS. ANTONIOLLI: Thank you.
Q. Mr. Hansen, Westwood prepared a 23-page report titled A Decommissioning Plan for Prosperity Wind, for the Prosperity Wind Project; is that correct?
A. That is correct.
Q. Is Appendix E. 7 to Prosperity Wind's Special Use Permit Application a true and correct copy of the decommissioning plan?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. And your name is not on the report, just to be clear about that, but you were involved with preparing that report; is that right?
A. That is right.
Q. Whose name do we see on the cover of that?
A. That is signed by Professional Engineer Kevin Anderson who works for Westwood.
Q. Why do we see Mr. Anderson's name on the report?
A. He is a register Engineer in the State of Illinois as required, and oversaw the work as the lead Engineer.
Q. Thank you. And do you have any corrections or revisions to make to the decommissioning plan?
A. None.
Q. And can you please just give us a brief overview of your work on decommissioning plans for wind farms?
A. Absolutely. Westwood has prepared scores of decommissioning plans including over thirty in the State of Illinois, ranging from Lotus Wind most recently to Top Hat Wind, Livingston Wind, and I've been involved in decommissioning plans in other states as well, Ohio most recently, North Dakota and Minnesota.
Q. And is Westwood also the Civil Engineer for the Prosperity Wind Project?
A. Yes. We are the Civil Engineer. Correct. MS. ANTONIOLLI: Thank you. I don't have any further questions.

MR. KAINS: Thank you, Miss Antoniolli.
Questions on decommissioning from the Board?

QUESTIONS POSED BY DR. WAX:
Q. Could you run us through the procedure, okay, how do you approach this? You're assigned to decommission, and apparently you've done this several times, a decommissioning. Run us through the steps of what you do and how you do it, and how long it takes.
A. Yes. So the decommissioning will be planned out on a site-wide basis. A plan is prepared to remove the various elements that are required under the plan as
dictated by the Agricultural Impact Mitigation Plan. Usually it begins with removal of the turbines themselves and the larger infra structure pieces. Those are taken down, cut up into transportable pieces, and then removed from the site for either re-use, recycling or disposal, and that progresses through the different pieces of the Project from the O\&M building to the turbines themselves, the substation, and the transmission line that would be built as well. Once the major infra structure pieces are removed, and then the work on road removal begins, and basically work yourself out backwards through the roads, and then once the material is removed, then it moves into a restoration stage, and the soils and the working areas are de-compacted according to the State guidelines, and once those pass tests and inspection, top soil is re-spread, final site stabilization is declared, and vegetation is re-established or it's returned to the agricultural use, whichever the landowner prefers.
Q. Okay, my memory is escaping me here. I don't recall what $I$ had for breakfast. Are the buried lines at five feet, are they left? Or is that -- are they left there?
A. The majority of the lines are left below five feet. Everything is removed to a depth of five feet. So
where connections are made with the turbines themselves, or as they come up near the substation in the collection system, those portions will be removed, but the majority of the lines are left in place. The collection lines are left in place below that depth.
Q. As I understand, there are at least instrumental plans and studies under way to grind up some of the parts that are typically non-recyclable, but I don't know if those are actually in real life reusable yet or not. So what parts of the total units are actually recyclable, and what has to be put into some other place?
A. The recyclable components are generally the metal components, the steel from the tower itself, the motor windings, the copper, and other metals within the generation system and the transmission system, metal within the nacelle, the concrete from the turbine foundation that's taken out down to five feet can also be recycled into aggregate, crushed and recycled, and then the same goes for the substation, the transformer, the windings, the copper in that would be recoverable. What is not recoverable in large part is the plastics are not of value and the fiberglass for the blades are not of value. So those would be disposed of as solid waste.
Q. So the fiberglass is a significant part of the blades; is that correct?
A. That is correct.
Q. And are there studies going on in ways to grind that up into smaller parts that can be used?
A. There is research under way. A number of ideas are being pursued, but nothing has become commercially viable yet to re-use the fibers or find a use for the ground material on a commercial basis.
Q. Okay. I've forgotten now, but how much oil is in each turbine head, the nacelle?
A. I don't have the exact quantities for the 162 turbine. So I'm not sure of the exact quantities.
Q. That's all collected -(Multiple speakers at the same time)
A. Yes.
Q. -- and taken -- where is that taken?
A. That would be taken to a recycling center and processed there for use as a fuel for burning or re-processed for re-incorporation into a hybrid mixed synthetic conventional oil for lubricating.
Q. Very good. From the date that you're given the order to start this on site, and $I$ know there's a date determined, and $I$ don't know if you've done the fifty turbines and the laydown yard, the O\&M building, this
sort of thing, but from some number, pick a number that you have worked on and tell us how long from the time that you're assigned to removing the field and doing it, how long does that take?
A. Such an action would take several months. There's considerable planning to set the sequencing and the staging of the different pieces. You need to line up the disposal options or the recycling options, trucking. So it would take most of a construction season, several months for that to occur.

DR. WAX: Very good. Thank you. MR. KAINS: Mr. Chambers?

QUESTIONS POSED BY
MR. CHAMBERS:
Q. So a previous number that we dealt with on the last application we planned for the pedestal for the base was restoration to four feet, and then there was a different recommendation for other things that was five. And you just mentioned that the depth for restoration on the base on the pedestal was five feet. Is there a reason that that has changed from four to five as related to the previous application?
A. Let me verify the rationale. On page 3 of our
report it describes that removal, but does not have the rationale for the move, but it is to maintain consistency with the State rules and the Department of Agriculture guidelines.
Q. Okay. And I think the only other question $I$ have, and again going by the previous version of what I'm a little more familiar with. Some of the questions we had last time was on the financials for the decommissioning, there was a set dollar amount per turbine, and then there was a salvage value which was left to the County to recoup the salvage value. Is that the same layout that is in this decommissioning plan?
A. No. The decommissioning activities are taken as a whole, and so the salvage actions are part of the overall actions --
(Multiple people speaking at the same time.)
Q. -- that's not a separate thing?
A. Correct.

MR. CHAMBERS: Very good. That's all I have.
MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Chambers. Anything
else, Dr. Wax?
DR. WAX: I think that's it.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Questions for
Mr. Hansen from units of local government including schools? Questions from interested parties? That would
be members of the public opposed to the Application or neutral on the Application. Questions for Mr. Hansen on decommissioning? Questions from Piatt County staff and consultants? Any re-direct, Miss Antoniolli? MS. ANTONIOLLI: Sure. Just a few.

## RE-DIRECT EXAMINATION BY

MS. ANTONIOLLI:
Q. Just a few questions here on re-direct.

Mr. Hansen, are you familiar with the WECS Ordinance for Piatt County?
A. Yes.
Q. If I bring this up to you -- is it okay if I bring up the WECS Ordinance, Section 16, directly to that question?

MR. KAINS: Sure.
Q. Can you please read for us that Section 16 , titled Decommissioning of the Piatt County WECS Ordinance?
A. Yes.
"The WECS project must provide a decommissioning plan to ensure that the WECS equipment is removed and land is restored to its previous use upon the end of the Project's life, before a construction permit is issued.

The plan shall comply with the terms of AIMA."
And do you know what the term AIMA refers to? Can you explain that?
A. Yes. Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement.
Q. When you were answering the question previously and you mentioned the agricultural requirements, is that what you were referring to, AIMA?
A. That is correct. I believe I said plan instead of agreement.
Q. We do have as part of the Application, the AIMA for the Prosperity Wind Project and that's Appendix D.1. So may I approach the witness with an Appendix D.1?

MR. KAINS: Yes, you may. Okay. So I'm going to direct you to Section 21.A. 3 of the AIMA for the Prosperity Wind Project, and what does that tell us?
A. It says that wind turbine foundations shall be removed to a depth of five feet.
Q. So could that be where the five feet comes from? A. Yes.

Ms. ANTONIOLLI: Thank you. That's all.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you, Counsel.
Final questions for Mr. Hansen from the Board? Anything else? Mr. Chambers?

FURTHER QUESTIONS POSED BY
MR. CHAMBERS:
Q. This is just out of curiosity, but do you know why it would have been four feet before, where that number came from?
A. I do not know.

MR. CHAMBERS: Thank you.
MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Chambers. Dr. Wax, anything else? Very good. Thank you, Mr. Hansen. You may step down. Your next witness?

MR. GRANHOLM: Thank you. Applicant recalls
Mr. Alan Moore.
MR. KAINS: Mr. Moore, you testified on the first night of this public hearing, and do you understand that you remain under oath to answer truthfully in response to the questions that will be asked of you tonight?

ALAN MOORE: I do, yeah.
MR. KAINS: And could you spell first and last name for the court reporter?

ALAN MOORE: Yes. It's Alan, A-L-A-N. Last name is Moore, M-O-O-R-E.
Q. And Counsel, Mr. Granholm, you may proceed. MR. GRANHOLM: Thank you, Mr. Kains.
A L A N M O O R E
recalled as a witness on behalf of the Applicant in the above-entitled cause, having been previously sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION BY
MR. GRANHOLM:
Q. Mr. Moore, there have been a number of instances this week in which a complaint resolution process has been discussed with Members of the Board or members of the public. Do you recall hearing some of those questions and answers?
A. Yes, I do.
Q. And is there a complaint resolution process set forth in Prosperity Wind's Application?
A. Yes, there is. When Piatt County updated its WECS ordinance in May, it provided a provision requiring an applicant like Prosperity Wind to develop a system for logging and investigating complaints relating to the operation of the Project. That can be found in Section 11 of our Application.
Q. And can you summarize for us what are the steps in that complaint resolution process that are set forth in Section 11?
A. Sure. So outlined in that Section, regarding to our complaint resolution procedure, we're committed to solving any complaint on a case-by-case basis, and provide a written confirmation to the Piatt County Board after the complaints are resolved. So to do that we're obligating ourselves to maintain a toll free hotline number, an e-mail address that the public can submit a complaint. There's also the web site that they can get to that. That information will also be posted at our O\&M building, or folks are welcome to come into the O\&M building and make a complaint in person. The telephone number and the e-mail address will be staff so that they will be received, and that once a complaint is resolved it will be communicated to the Board and addressed.
Q. In the event that the Project were to receive a complaint at the telephone number or at the e-mail address, or in person at the O\&M building, what would be the next step?
A. Sure. So generally right, these follow certain steps to make sure that; one, we identify that there was a complaint; that we explore what's happening; we communicate with the landowner; we take actions to resolve it; and that we follow the next few steps. So specifically if we receive a complaint from anyone in those number of avenues that $I$ laid out previously, we
respond within 24 hours, often more quickly than that, to the person who made the complaint. So we acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and inform them of the steps that we may take to resolve it.

The next step is we investigate what's going on. So that could be, we gather information, as much as we can from the person making the complaint to understand, you know, what the complaint may be. We determine where within the Project area that complaint may be taking place, and start to check and identify all of the equipment that's in the area. We seek out other sources of information regarding the complaints, talk to neighbors, et cetera, to see if they're experiencing the same issue, and then we evaluate all of the potential causes of the complaint, so what could it be, so that we can either rule out things or identify what it might be, and then we confirm what the complaint may be. From there we report back to the person making the complaint, right, so that we've identified what the issue is that's causing the issue, and then we take the steps to resolve the issue. So we've identified what it is, we've communicated to the person making the complaint, then we work to resolve the issue. Then when it's resolved, we communicate back to the landowner that it has been resolved, and then we will specifically track all of
these complaints, and so we'll maintain a written record of all the complaints both during construction and during operation.

And last, we develop a report that we send to the County Board documenting the complaint, the resolution, and that it's taken place.
Q. The complaint resolution process that you've just described, is that a process that the company has used in the past for other projects?
A. Yes. Yeah, and again, every complaint we take seriously, participant and non-participant, but it's on a case-by-case basis. So it's hard to apply a specific complaint from one project to another project, but the process of identifying, communicating, resolving and tracking is the same.
Q. And have you found that process -- has the company found that process to be effective in identifying and addressing complaints?
A. Yes.
Q. The process that you have been describing, would that be used to address, for example, any complaint that might be raised related to sound from the Project?
A. Yes.
Q. And in the specific instance, if it were to occur that somebody made a complaint about sound, can you give
any examples of types of mitigation measures that might be considered by the company to address any sound complaints that were to arise?
A. Sure. So, again first what we do is receive the complaint. We communicate with the landowner. We keep open dialogue going back and forth. Right? As Adam laid out and as Jason laid out in previous testimony, communication is key in this issue. Next we go out and identify what's happening and what may be causing the issue. In almost all cases related to sound, it's some issue with the equipment, right, in a turbine. So we identify what is causing the issue. We fix the issue. We confirm that the issue has been resolved, and then we communicate with the complainant, the person making the complaint, what had happened, what our solution was, and then we document that and communicate it to the Board.
Q. When you say in almost all instances it was an issue with the equipment, can you tell us a little bit more? What do you mean by an issue with the equipment?
A. Well again, I'm not the expert on this here. There are others here who are more knowledgeable about the specific equipment, but $I$ know in the specs on how equipment should run in a normal instance, and if it's operating outside of that band of how it should run, then we would inspect to understand if there was
something related to the turbine operation that was malfunctioning or not functioning correctly, and then we would make the correction.

MR. GRANHOLM: No further questions. MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Granholm.

Questions for Mr. Moore regarding his testimony on the complaint resolution process and steps they propose to take? Questions on that issue from Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals?

QUESTIONS POSED BY

DR. WAX:
Q. I would ask one. So essentially any type of complaint that would come in, you would log it and try to investigate it and to determine if a mitigation is appropriate, and you would then take care of the mitigation?
A. Yes.

DR. WAX: Okay. That's it for that.
MR. KAINS: Thank you, Dr. Wax. Questions with respect to the complaint resolution process? First questions from members of units of local government including school districts? Other interested parties? Members of the public opposed to the Application or
neutral on the Application? Questions with respect to the complaint resolution process from Piatt County staff and consultants? Mr. Granholm, based upon Dr. Wax's question, do you have any re-direct examination of the witness?

MR. GRANHOLM: No, thank you, Mr. Kains.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you, sir. And final questions from the Board?

DR. WAX: On this issue? No.
MR. KAINS: On this issue. Very good. Thank you, Mr. Moore.

DR. WAX: You were talking, is Mr. Moore just available to talk about this particular issue, this complaint? Or may we ask him another question since he's the Project Manager?

MR. KAINS: Well, I think it's appropriate only to ask questions regarding the complaint resolution process, because otherwise that question would be beyond the scope of his testimony. However, Dr. Wax, if you want to ask the question, and if counsel doesn't object, then --

MS. ANTONIOLLI: We have Mr. Moore on the stand, and we have no objection to you asking a question about Project Management.

MR. KAINS: Okay. Thank you, Counsel.

DR. WAX: Anything about Project Management? MS. ANTONIOLLI: Go ahead and ask your question.

FURTHER QUESTIONS POSED BY

DR. WAX:
Q. Would you like to cover one on -- now this may be a memory deal on my part, but there's one aspect of drainage that $I$ didn't get clear on. I think I fully understood Mr. Carlson, and he did this very openly, if I understood it, on district tiles or district ditches you're going to tile underneath it, you're going to go lower...
A. Bore.
Q. You're going underneath not the tile, but you're going to bore underneath it and your lines go underneath it, and not disturb them that way; is that correct?
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. Individual farmer tiles you're going through with a trencher, and you're going to be watching for these, and then when you spot one, you're gonna have a team there in theory. Okay. You will have a team there that will, within one day, you're gonna take care of these to five feet to either side of that tile that you cut?
A. Correct.
Q. Is that correct?
A. Yes, based on Mr. Carlson's testimony.
Q. I didn't know whether you --
A. I'm happy to keep answering questions.
Q. Okay. What $I$ didn't recall is probably one of the main problems according to the tiling people that $I$ talked to, one of the main problems is the crushing of not only the hundred-year-old tile, but the newer tile, the newly-laid modern tile, by the very heavy cranes that move across the field, and in some instances, and I have no designated proof of this, I have no proof, but I've been aware of several instances where people have been concerned and had crushed tile when the cranes decided to go from point A to point B, not necessarily worrying about where the tiles were. And was that covered and did $I$ just miss that, on how you're going to detect where cranes have crushed tile, and it's not obvious to you because you didn't cut through and see them? How do we solve that?
A. Sure, yeah, and again I'm not an expert on crane weights or, you know, how they break down the crane to move it from place to place across the field. What I can say, and what we've said earlier, is that we're committed to repairing any tile that we break and that
commitment extends for the life of the Project, right, so we only go on property that has an agreement to work with us. If we break that tile, whether that's trenching it in, whether that it is with the crane going through, we're committed to fixing it. In the trenching, yes, you see the strikes, $I$ believe is what they're called, trench strikes, where they strike the tile, we repair right away. I know we take measures to limit the weight of the -- disburse the weight across the ground so that there's less impact or compaction or cracking of the tile, but it may break tile, right? If we break tile and we don't catch it in the first year, or in the second year, or in the third year, and a farmer or a landowner sees that there's tile that's been broken, we have modeled -- not modeled, we have mapped exactly where all of our facilities will go. So we know a GPS map of where the crane has gone, and if we've broken tile, we're committed to fixing it. And on top of committing to fixing it, the landowner and the farmer have the extra assurance that we're obligated to pay damages. Right? That payment extends to the landowner or the farmer, whoever's farming the ground, and we're obligated to repair the tile, and that extends over the life of the Project.
Q. Okay.
A. So we're committed. If we break it, we'll fix it.
Q. Sounds good. May I ask one more question?

MR. KAINS: Absolutely. You're the Chairman.
Q. This one is a little bit of a concern. May I ask a question concerning your leases as long as $I$ don't get into dollar amounts and that sort of thing? I looked at your lease template.
A. Sure.
Q. There's one part in there, and I suspect it's in a number of other places, in which it's probably very appropriate and straight forward to talk about, you the tenant or the owner, the operator, versus the landlord. Particularly, this struck my attention when I'm talking about in one of your leases, where you talk about surcharges and repaying the landlord, and then you want your people protected, and you're out of the way when somebody comes over to spray an insecticide or herbicide or fungicide. You don't want your people there and you want to be notified in a certain period of time; is that correct? I believe it's in there, your aerial section of your lease, your template lease.
A. Sure. I mean, in general terms, right, as we've said all along, communication is key. Right? So we communicate very closely with a participating landowner and their tenants, quite frankly, if we need to access a
parcel for any reason. Right? But certainly at start of construction we communicate with them.
Q. Okay --
(Multiple people speaking at the same time)
A. Likewise, if --
Q. Go ahead.
A. -- they're spraying a field, right, we do ask for a property owner to communicate with us that they're spraying, and $I$ understand that it changes, minute by minute and day by day based on the weather and based on what needs to happen, but we ask so that just for the sake that we can, in the instance that we have someone in the field or someone who's doing maintenance on a turbine, they would avoid being in the field during the time in which they're spraying.
Q. Thank you. That helps explain it. I didn't have a problem with you asking for that. I think my problem with the thing is that the language in your -- in several of your documents only talk about you and the landlord, probably approximately at least two thirds of the situations in the parcels that you're on, you're not dealing with the landlord. You're dealing with a grower who's there every day who knows what's going on and who's scheduled the aerial applications, does other things, and you're asking a landlord -- you're asking to
be notified by a landlord who may live in Honolulu, more likely in Chicago, Mahomet, or somewhere like Indianapolis. They don't know what's going on in most cases. They have enough faith in the operator that the operator makes the day-to-day decisions and is the one that you need to be communicating with.
A. And we will be. So I mean again as I've said -(Multiple people speaking at the same time.)
Q. -- it's not stated in there --
A. Sure.
Q. -- so I just want to make sure that you protect yourselves by making sure there's good communication between you, your landlords, and the growers.
A. Absolutely, and we do -- I mean keep in mind, we are part of this community, right? We'll have people working in the O\&M building. We'll have technicians. We know the people who farm the ground. Were in communication with them. We're in communication with the landlord as well. So, you know, we often times will work with the landlord and their tenant to understand what is the spray schedule, what does it look like, what do they anticipate, and then we know on a day-by-day basis that can change, and a season-by-season basis that can change. You may spray more one year than the next year. So again, safety, as Jason said in his
presentation, it's how we do business, right? So this is not just a one line of communication and we're doing what we want. This is a partnership with the landowner and the tenant farmer as well.
Q. I hear what you're saying, but I'm telling -- I'm reading what your lease says.
A. Sure.
Q. So, I understand. I've got confidence that you're working with all the parties.
A. Yes.

DR. WAX: Thank you. Mr. Chambers?
MR. KAINS: Mr. Chambers, anything else?
Very good. Thank you, Mr. Moore. You may step down. Counsel, do you have any other witnesses?

MS. ANTONIOLLI: No, we don't.
MR. KAINS: All right. Mr. Keyt, on behalf of
the Board, or do we need to have a recess for you to talk to Dr. Wax and Mr. Chambers? Is there any witness that you wish to call at this time? Obviously we have other times for Piatt County to call witnesses, but do you have anybody over here in the room that you want to hear from?

MR. KEYT: Why don't we take a recess. I can confer with them, with the ZBA Board. We do have Mr. Minder, who is the County's Engineer Consultant that
is testifying tomorrow. That's the only witness we would be calling on behalf of the County per say, but there may be witnesses that the Board may want to hear from that are here on behalf of the Applicant.

MR. KAINS: Let's take five minutes. You talk
with Dr. Wax and Mr. Chambers, and then everybody just sit tight. We're not going to run around. We'll just let them talk. So we're in recess.

MS. ANTONIOLLI: I would say to consider, while they're in recess, is potentially taking some public comment.

MR. KAINS: We'll be having testimony from those in favor of the Application when we come back from break.
(Recess taken.)
MR. KAINS: All right, folks. We're ready to
re-convene the hearing. Mr. Keyt, have you had an opportunity to meet with your Members of the Board?

MR. KEYT: Yes, sir. So I think for now the ZBA is going to reserve whether to call or recall any witnesses who testified. We will have Mr. Minder tomorrow.

MR. KAINS: What I'm going to do is excuse all of the witnesses for the Applicant who have testified. I believe we've had eleven different
witnesses in the first three nights. They will be excused, but subject to recall, and $I$ will allow Counsel time to bring them back should they need to be coming back. If the Board requests, or counsel, if you need to recall somebody, but you know, I think the folks, especially from out of town, probably need to get back to their families, and you know, they've testified, they've been cross-examined, and if we need them back then I'll let counsel know that we have that request. All right. And then Mr. Keyt, tomorrow night you have Mr. Minder, the Engineer that the County has retained. He's coming in, but we've got twenty minutes, and $I$ want to use our time as wisely as we can.

According to the order of progression, once the Applicant concludes its case, persons in favor of the Application shall testify. So, I have lists from all three nights of the hearing, and the first person on the list is a Mr. Joe Riley. Mr. Riley? Yes, sir. Would you please step up to the podium over here. Sir, could you please raise your hand and be sworn.
(Witness sworn.)
$J O E \quad R \quad I \quad E \quad Y$
being a person in support of the Application, having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

MR. KAINS: Could you please state your name, spelling first and last for the record.

JOE RILEY: Yeah. My name's Joe Riley, It's J-O-E, R-I-L-E-Y.

MR. KAINS: And Mr. Riley, it says on the sign-in sheet that you are from Macon County?

JOE RILEY: Yes.
MR. KAINS: Okay. According to the rules that have been established by the Zoning Board of Appeals, you have as a non Piatt County resident, ten minutes to say whatever you want to say that's relevant to this proceeding.

JOE RILEY: Sure.
Q. So go right ahead, Mr. Riley.
A. I don't need ten minutes, but $I$ appreciate you guys hearing me tonight. Like I said, my name's Joe Riley, and I'm a 24-year member of the Laborers International Union of North America, and I'm here tonight on behalf of them to speak in favor of this Project, and on behalf of Laborers Local 703 to speak in support in favor of this Project.

We support this Project for many reasons. I'm not
gonna speak on all of them, but I'll just tell you a few of them. First of all, our experience in building these Projects. The men and women of our community have built nearly every wind farm in the State of Illinois, and it's because of that, because of our safety and our training and our nationally accredited apprenticeship program, that contractors like White Construction and contractors like Champaign Asphalt utilize us and are signatory with us and use our members on these projects.

Another reason why White Construction utilizes our membership is when they come to build these projects they're gonna hire from the local hiring hall, which means men and women from the area are gonna be put to work on this Project. That also means a project like this, that means we can grow our apprenticeship program. All the trades that work on this Project can grow their apprenticeship programs. So that means young men and women from the area can be taken into the union hall.

What that means for these men and women and the women of the local is that the benefits of it are obviously a paycheck and the benefits as far as pension, health and welfare, and annuity. Historically on projects like this, on energy projects, there's a tight time line, so that means overtime. So the big deal for that, in my opinion, is your pension, your annuity, your
health and welfare. And when a member works on a project like this, when the project's over, they'll have a lot of hours built up. They probably have a year or so of insurance, and that could be the difference for them deciding, yeah we're gonna go ahead and get the kids braces or we're gonna go ahead and have this procedure that we didn't think we could afford before. So I'm not exaggerating when $I$ say projects like Prosperity Wind are a godsend for working men and women of our union and that live in this area.

So, again $I$ just wanted to voice the labor support for this Project.

MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you, Mr.
Riley. Hang on. There's questions for you all around. First questions for Mr. Riley regarding his testimony from Members of the ZBA?

QUESTIONS POSED BY
DR. WAX:
Q. I would have one question. What list of specialists -- what type of specialties are that -what, pipe fitters, electricians? List those specialties that, in your experience, have been used in constructing wind farms?
A. For White Construction, it's laborers will work on the Project. They do concrete work, they clean the towers, they do -- they work on the road aspect of it. Electricians work on it. Operating engineers work on it, and iron workers work on it, and usually teamsters driving the concrete trucks.
Q. Okay. So a good range of different specialties within the union would be working on it?
A. Yes, sir.

DR. WAX: Okay. Thank you.
MR. KAINS: Very good. Now questions for Mr. Riley from members of local government including school districts? Questions from other interested parties, that is members of the public opposed to the Application or neutral on the Application? Questions from Piatt County staff and consultants for Mr. Riley? Any questions from Counsel for Prosperity Wind? Mr. Hess?

MR. HESS: No, sir. Thank you for your testimony.

MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Hess. Final questions from the ZBA? Anything else? Very good, Mr. Riley. Thank you.
A. Yes.

MR. KAINS: That completes your testimony.

The next person in support of the Special Use Permit Application is Dan Smith. Is Mr. Smith here? Dan Smith from Farmer City? Philip Hult, H-U-L-T. Mr. Hult. Philip Hult from Mahomet? I see Christian Johnson is here. You're next, Mr. Johnson. Sir, if you would please raise your right hand and be sworn.
(Witness sworn)

MR. KAINS: Good to see you again,
Mr. Johnson. Could you please state your name and spelling first and last names for the record.

C $\begin{array}{lllllllllllllll}\mathrm{H} & \mathrm{R} & \mathrm{I} & \mathrm{S} & \mathrm{T} & \mathrm{I} & A & \mathrm{~N} & \mathrm{~J} & \mathrm{O} & \mathrm{H} & \mathrm{N} & \mathrm{S} & \mathrm{O} & \mathrm{N}\end{array}$
being a person in support of the Application, having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

CHRISTIAN JOHNSON: Yes. My name IS

Christian Johnson, $\quad C-H-R-I-S-T-I-A-N, \quad J-O-H-N-S-O-N$.
MR. KAINS: And you are a resident of is it Peoria County?

CHRISTIAN JOHNSON: Yes, Peoria and Peoria County.

MR. KAINS: Very good. Then according to the rules promulgated by this Zoning Board, you have ten minutes to say whatever you want to say with respect to this Project.

CHRISTIAN JOHNSON: I appreciate that. MR. KAINS: Go right ahead, sir.

CHRISTIAN JOHNSON: So, I wanted to come
here, and just -- first $I$ should tell you a little bit about who $I$ am and why $I$ am here. I work with an organization called The Land \& Liberty Coalition. We are a member of the Conservative Energy Network, and we are an organization traveling around the State, talk -teaching people about renewable energy, other forms of energy as well. We're not specifically a green organization, we are an energy organization. Me personally? I have a background in renewable energy. I actually started working on installing solar panels when I was nineteen years old, and for the past twelve-ish years now I've been hanging around the industry, and I've had the opportunity to design, build, perform maintenance operations on these, and for the last three or so years I've been doing some advocacy and educational work in the space. It's been a real honor for me to actually do that, giving me an opportunity to see a lot of this industry. Something I like to do when I come to these meetings is, you know, talk a little bit about how these things impact our communities. I like to look at kind of the situation through a lens that $I$ think's very important, and that's the lens of both kind
of economic development and landowner rights. I think those are both very important principles that $I$ stand for, and $I$ think a lot people downstate Illinois also would agree they stand for those same things. Nobody's forcing the land owners who are willingly signing up for these projects to enter these agreements. Obviously nobody wants to see, you know, the government forcing people to do anything, I think. I agree with that, and $I$ think everybody -- well $I$ don't know if everybody agrees with it, but $I$ think many people would agree with that. But that's not the case that we're seeing here. This is not an issue of some kind of eminent domain or, you know, the government's swooping in and stealing up people's land. All of these land owners are entering willingly into a contractual agreement that $I$ think they're seeing this as a great opportunity to utilize their farms which is their business to make some profit, diversify, you know, bad weather one year and you've got a wind turbine or two on your property, that can help mitigate some risks there. So I think that's a really important thing to remember, that when we talk about, you know, protecting the community, we also have to think about do we want the government coming in and telling people what they cannot do with their land. And I think that's an issue that is pretty pertinent to me.

Second area, $I$ think is really important to look at, is just the conversation about business and jobs. I live in Peoria and $I$ think many people will know that Caterpillar left Peoria a number of years ago. They moved their headquarters away, and that was a huge blow to Peoria. Local economy there was a pretty big nightmare in fact, and that hurt property values real bad. I kind of lucked out on that one. I was at the right time to buy something, but for many many people they had to move. You talk about property values, losing business is a huge huge hit to property values. And right here we've got an organization that's trying to come into this community, not really changing the community in any fundamental ways. They're not trying to build a huge suburban tract out there. They're not trying to change the nature of the community. They're building an energy asset that's going to bring some new jobs in. It's going to bring in a massive amount of tax revenue which can offset peoples' existing taxes or prevent, you know, this community from needing to raise its taxes in the future. And think about all the services that can go into it, how desirable that would make it for, you know, for a young guy like myself to come into a community and think hey $I$ can work here, I can $I$ raise a family here. I think it is necessary to
understand that every time that we've ever built anything in this country it has changed a little bit of something. Our railroads, our freeways, any big project. When Caterpillar was built in Peoria, I'm sure there were many people that thought $I$ don't know if $I$ want a big factory getting built here, but boy were they sad to see it go when it left. I don't want to keep hammering on that, but $I$ just think it's very important to remember, anything involving any kind of change to a community is a difficult question, but we need to be looking at the positives versus the negatives, and to me

I see a lot of positives and $I$ don't see very many people that are directly engaging with this Project as being forcefully made to do anything.

So I thank you very much for letting me speak, and that's all $I$ have to say.

MR. KAINS: All right. Thank you,
Mr. Johnson. Questions for Mr. Johnson regarding his testimony from Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals? Okay. Questions for Mr. Johnson from members of units of local government including school districts? Questions for Mr. Johnson from other interested parties? Members of the public opposed to the Application or neutral on the Application? Questions for Mr. Johnson from Piatt County staff and consultants? Any questions
from Counsel, Mr. Hess?
MR. HESS: No, sir. Thank you for your
statement.

CHRISTIAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

MR. KAINS: Thank you, Mr. Hess. And final
questions from the ZBA? Seeing none. Thank you, Mr. Johnson. We can get two more in. Mr. Ehrat?

BRADEN EHRAT: It will be more than five minutes probably.

MR. KAINS: That's correct.

BRADEN EHRAT: Leave the mikes on?
MR. KAINS: Leave all the mikes on. For the folks who weren't here last night, our regular sound engineer is not able to be here tonight, and $I$ drafted Mr. Ehrat, who at one time had run a sound board on the, at his church, and he has been very helpful tonight, because without him this wasn't going to happen tonight, because if we don't have the microphones, nobody's hearing anything. All right. Mr. Ehrat, if you could please raise your right hand to be sworn.
(Witness sworn)

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being a person in support of the Application, having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

MR. KAINS: Sir, if you would please state your name, spelling first and last for the record. BRADEN EHRAT: Braden Ehrat, $B-R-A-D-E-N$, $\mathrm{E}-\mathrm{H}-\mathrm{R}-\mathrm{A}-\mathrm{T}$.

MR. KAINS: Mr. Ehrat, you are from Monticello? As a Piatt County resident, you have thirty minutes.

BRADEN EHRAT: Yeah, absolutely. Technically
I live outside of the City limits. I live -- my family and I live northwest of Monticello just across Interstate 72, just to clarify, but yes, I am a resident of Piatt County, not a participant in this Project at all. By my estimation, my house will be about four miles from the nearest wind turbine. I'm speaking tonight in principled support to approve the wind farm Application from Prosperity Wind here.

If you don't mind, I'll tell you a little bit about myself since $I$ haven't so far. I've lived in Illinois basically my entire life. I've lived and worked in Illinois my entire life, bar doing a summer internship in southern California. I grew up on a dairy
farm just south -- well south of here in Vandalia, which is about two hours south of here. My dad and my uncle milk about 130 cows and farm about 900 acres of corn and soybeans. They've been doing that my entire life. Every day I've been alive the cows get milked every morning and night. It's amazing. So growing up and working on the farm myself, $I$ understand the unique job in life of what being a farmer is and, you know, I'm happy to see that the participating farms seem to be happy with their agreements that they've signed presumably because they've made business decisions. That's great.

After high school, I studied computer science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I also have a Master's Degree in Computer Science there. In line with my degree, my current profession and job is in computer software, and $I$ currently work remotely from home in Piatt County as an Engineering Manager. As such, $I$ have no association or financial interests in the Project, and no participating friends or family either, but...

Um, so let me tell you why I decided to speak tonight. First off, I've just been looking for ways to get involved with the community, being a newer member of the county. Secondly, I am very passionate about transitioning myself and, you know, indeed the entire
country and world to clean, sustainable energy needed to power our modern lives, because, you know, not to mention all the other issues that you may be aware of, some day all of the buried hydrocarbons will have run out. Amazingly, both of these interests have come together here tonight, so we speak. To that end, you know, I attended the Goose Creek Wind hearings last Fall, you know, read transcripts from when $I$ didn't attend in person, and have so far participated in this entire one.

I want it to be clear that while $I$ definitely support clean energy projects in general, and $I$ think they can work, you know, I still kept a very open and critical mind because $I$ want to be sure that this specific proposal is the best possible one for Piatt County, you know. To that end, I really appreciate the way the Board has conducted these meetings to give an open and thorough hearing for all interested parties. It's a lot of tedious work. Um, and yeah, I'm happy that they do all the work to make sure that it meets all of the requirements of the zoning ordinance. Um, I also completely support any, and want there to be, any reasonable and possible mechanisms to make sure that the company building such a project in our county is held accountable to their plans and promises, you know,
potentially through fines or penalties for
non-compliance if it's required when possible. And
that's because I, as a resident, want to be sure that this specific company, with this specific plan, is the right company plan for Piatt County, which is hopefully why we're doing all of this.

So, now in all of these hearings, it seems to me that people generally agree that this Project would be a substantial financial benefit for all of the residents of Piatt County through the extra revenue for our county and schools. I do indeed believe that it would be in my own family's interests as a taxpayer. It would be in my own family's interests as a dad of three kids along with my wife. Um, you know, from all of the hearings and objections, $I$ don't see necessarily any proposals of a better company or plan. So therefore, I would like to support this one.

Um, yeah. You know, when I'm commissioned and working from home, internet access is very important, especially working in software. So I appreciate it and I think it's important for many young people for many reasons. So I appreciate that benefit that can be brought to other people as well.

I didn't speak at all during the Goose Creek Wind hearings last Fall, but $I$ was -- $I$ found myself
disappointed when the project was voted down. I was a bit upset with myself that $I$ didn't speak in support of the wind energy project last time or speak at all. So I made myself sign up this time. From my attendance at the hearings and reading of transcripts it seems to me that probably $I$ would estimate that the primary reason for opposition to placing wind turbines in Piatt County is simply that residents don't want to see or hear them. Since that seems to be the case, I as another Piatt County resident, feel compelled to offer my contrasting view. To be clear, I'm not invalidating anyone else's idea of their ideal or preferred vista, but let me tell you that $I$ personally do want to see wind turbines, just because I think they're cool and they even look nice. Recently while on vacation $I$ drove through -- my family and I, we drove through some beautiful rolling hills in Indiana. These hills have wind turbines, and I honestly thought it was a really nice picture. I pointed them out to my kids and explained how they produce electricity that was powering our car from the moving wind.

Before I moved to Piatt County, my wife and I installed solar panels on our garage ourselves at our old house. We don't yet have solar panels on our new house, but $I$ plan to install them soon, hopefully this year. We're making plans. I really wish I had got them
installed sooner, but having a newborn baby isn't conducive to home improvement projects, especially doing them yourselves. I love solar power, but you know, I believe the west way to meet our energy needs is with a mix of renewable energy resources, and you know, to this end I'm very interested and I've researched lots of them. I've looked into the possibility of installing small wind turbines on my roof. I've looked into the possibility of generating electricity from a wood gasifier, which I didn't even realize was possible until a few years ago, but apparently you can generate energy from wood, which is cool. However, I want to point out that while it might still be fun, and I'm not saying I would never do it, to install turbines on my own roof, unfortunately, due to physical realities, um, it doesn't work as well because small-scale wind generation is not generally productive enough to be economically worth it. Rather, in order for the wind to be productive enough to be economically viable it requires turbines of a very larger scale. That's just the physical realities of there being more wind higher up, and mechanically it's not even to scale. Yeah, unlike solar, where a solar panel on your roof, it's roughly as productive as a solar panel that's part of a solar farm. So since I would like wind energy, a logical conclusion is that $I$
should support large-scale wind energy like the one proposed in this hearing.

As I said, by my summation, my house will be just about exactly four miles from the nearest wind turbine, and $I$ should be able to view them from my front porch. Personally $I$ really look forward to seeing the wind turbines from my front porch. I would be fine with them being closer. Um, I look forward to looking at them. Um, I skipped some things. I have this -- I have this plan of me sitting on the front porch, of watching these wind turbines spinning, hopefully, with solar panels on my back roof producing electricity, and I'm a software engineer. I like to write software. So, you know, I plan to program our electric car to charge whenever there is the most wind and solar power available um and, you know, $I$ think that's amazing because some people say that wind turbines, you know, aren't quite ready or, you know, we should wait a decade or two for the technology to get better or for there to be something else, but, you know, I want to tell you that in my view the future's right here, you know, as $I$ said, sitting on my front porch, getting the electricity generated just miles from me, charging this electric car that was made only forty miles from me at Rivian. We have that today. I just think, you know, the future is here and
it can be here if we were to have wind power in Piatt County.

So that's why I'm very excited about it, and of course hope that other people can be excited about it.

I think, you know, as Americans we generally like our freedom and independence, and $I$ think being able to make these things locally or even completely independently, right, if, you know, if the grid goes down, first thing, we'll want to be able to turn to turbines that would be totally effective to wind, to solar rather, and luckily the turbines are close on the grid, and you know, contrast that -- anyway, but the point is like, you know, we're independent. We can generate our own electricity to provide our transportation. I can do that today. That's amazing. You know, compare that to the old ways of doing things, of getting oil from other countries and then run out and start wars and stuff like that.

So, I'll conclude now. I want to thank my wife for allowing me to be here for as many hours and watching the kids every night, my wife Evelyn. As I believe has previously been said in these hearings, the role of the zoning ordinances and the Zoning Board of Appeals is, you know, not to protect participating land owners, but to protect non-participating land owners
like myself. So as one of those non-participating land owners, I would just hope that you take my opinion into consideration. And thank you for your time.

MR. KAINS: Very good. Thank you, Mr. Ehrat. Any questions for Mr. Ehrat from the Zoning Board of Appeals? Very good. Questions for Mr. Ehrat from members of units of local government including school districts? Questions from other interested parties, members of the public opposed to the Application or neutral on the Application? Questions from Piatt County staff and consultants? Questions from Counsel for Prosperity?

MR. HESS: No, sir. Mr. Ehrat, thank you for your statement. And thank you for doing sound tonight.

BRADEN EHRAT: Certainly.
MR. KAINS: Final questions from the ZBA? All
right. Thank you, Mr. Ehrat. You may step down. We appreciate your help tonight. Couldn't have done it without you. Okay. One other person has signed in, in support of the SUP Applicant and that's Meg Miner. Is she here? Okay, Miss Miner, will you be here tomorrow night?

MEG MINER: Yes, sir.
MR. KAINS: Okay. Very good. Would it be okay if we held you over until tomorrow night?

MEG MINER: Yes, sir.
MR. KAINS: All right. Very good. Because we're past time. All right. Tomorrow night we will have Miss Miner will testify. Also the consulting engineer that has been retained by Piatt county, Mr. Matt Minder will be here testify. Mr. Keyt will be examine him. There will be an opportunity for others to cross-examine Mr. Minder. And then after that, if there are any other folks in support. And if not, then we will go to folks who are opposed to the Application. So we're moving along rather expeditiously.

Mr. Chairman, I think the Board should recess until tomorrow. Do you think so?

DR. WAX: I agree.
MR. KAINS: All right. Very good. We're in recess until tomorrow evening at $5: 30$ in this very room. Thank you.
(Proceedings concluded this date and adjourned to 5:30 p.m. August 31, 2023.)

I, Jamie J. Mim, an Official Court Reporter and Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for the Sixth Judicial Circuit of the State of Illinois, do hereby certify that $I$ transcribed from shorthand notes the foregoing proceedings and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability.

$\square$


Analysis [6] - 10:18, 10:25, 11:5, 12:16, 18:2, 61:2
analysis [4] - 16:23, 61:5, 61:10, 61:17
Anderson [6] - 5:22, 38:24, 40:4, 42:16, 58:7, 86:16
anderson's [1] - 86:17
Andrew [1] - 1:15
angle [1] - 34:10
annual [4]-9:12, 9:14, 17:5
annually ${ }_{[1]}-15: 6$
annuity [2] - 113:22, 113:25
answer [11]-27:25, 40:1, 48:12, 64:23, 67:6, 71:13, 74:22, 76:24, 78:4, 78:14, 95:16
answering [2] - 94:5, 104:5
answers [1] - 96:13
anticipate [2] - 59:4, 108:22
Antoniolli [12]-1:16, 6:20, 9:18, 35:25, 36:9, 44:14, 48:15, 48:20, 59:23, 81:11,
87:12, 93:4
ANTONIOLLI ${ }_{[22]}$ 36:2, 36:18, 37:17, 46:25, 48:16, 59:24, 80:22, 81:13, 81:17, 83:3, 84:17, 84:21, 85:16, 86:1, 87:10, 93:5, 93:8, 94:20, 102:22, 103:2,
109:15, 110:9
Antoniolli....... $36{ }_{[1]}$ 2:9
Antoniolli....... 81 [1] 2:19
Antoniolli....... $85{ }_{[1]}$ 2:21
Antoniolli.... 93 [1] 2:22
anyway $[1]$ - 129:12
Apex [15] - 27:13, 38:9, 38:10, 38:13, 48:12, 49:16, 50:5, 50:17, 51:10, 52:22, 53:25, 54:23, 74:8, 82:24, 83:1
Apex's [2] - 47:2, 53:1
Appeals [10]-23:12, 44:15, 55:23, 63:15, 77:20, 101:9, 112:13, 120:19,

129:24, 130:6 appear [2]-12:9, 43:16
Appendices [3] 37:24, 51:21, 82:13 appendix [2] - 41:12, 82:16
Appendix [13] - 11:1, 11:4, 11:11, 37:24, 37:25, 51:23, 61:6, 61:9, 61:15, 82:13, 86:6, 94:11, 94:12
applicable [1] - 38:17 applicant [3] - 50:25, 95:12, 96:19
Applicant 99 - 10:3,
36:13, 81:4, 85:12, 96:2, 110:4, 110:24, 111:15, 130:20
APPLICANT ${ }_{[2]}-1: 16$, 1:18
Applicant's [10]3:11, 3:12, 3:13, 3:14, 37:11, 37:16, 82:9, 82:11, 85:22, 85:24
Applicants's ${ }_{[1]}$ 51:19
Application [44] 11:2, 28:19, 28:20, 38:1, 47:20, 47:21, 48:6, 51:20, 53:20, 53:23, 55:9, 59:16, 60:18, 61:7, 72:23, 72:24, 77:14, 77:15, 82:12, 84:14, 86:7, 93:1, 93:2, 94:10, 96:16, 96:22, 101:25, 102:1, 110:13, 111:16, 112:2, 115:15, 116:2, 116:13, 120:23, 120:24, 122:2, 122:20, 130:9, 130:10, 131:10
application [4]-51:5, 51:15, 91:18, 91:24 APPLICATION ${ }_{[2]}$ 1:3, 2:3
applications [1] 107:24
applied [1]-15:16 applies [1] - 42:17 apply [4]-13:22,
29:21, 45:2, 99:12 appraisal [2]-62:3, 78:14
Appraisal ${ }_{[1]}$ - 62:12
appraisals [2] - 62:6,

62:7
appraiser ${ }_{[1]}-71: 15$ appreciate [9]-7:19, 23:14, 71:12, 112:18, 117:1, 124:16, 125:20, 125:22, 130:18 apprenticeship ${ }_{[3]}$ 113:6, 113:15, 113:17
approach [6] - 39:15, 51:14, 60:20, 82:15, 87:19, 94:12
appropriate [10] 14:21, 34:19, 54:10, 55:1, 75:16, 75:22, 80:13, 101:17, 102:16, 106:11 approval ${ }_{[1]}-48: 6$ approve ${ }_{[1]}$ - 122:19 area [18] - 12:8, 20:22, 41:14, 46:2, 51:12, 54:8, 56:17, 56:25, 58:7, 58:10, 62:4, 66:12, 98:9, 98:11, 113:13, 113:18, 114:10, 119:1
areas [5]-24:2, 69:2, 72:11, 77:5, 88:14
arise [1] - 100:3
arrive [1]-23:5
aspect [2]-103:8, 115:3
Asphalt [1]-113:8
assess [3]-51:13, 52:1, 54:10
Assessed [1]-20:22 assessed [4]-13:19, 13:23, 13:24, 14:4
assessing [1] - 38:11 assessment [3] -
33:15, 39:22, 45:11
assessments [1] 38:11
Assessments [1] 34:24
assessor [2]-35:4, 70:17
asset [1] - 119:17
assets [1] - 62:8
assigned [2]-87:19, 91:3
assistance [1]-18:1 associated [4]-9:22, 13:25, 21:23, 55:6 association [1] 123:18
assume [5]-15:24, 44:20, 46:10, 58:2, 70:20
assumed [2] - 15:5
16:1
assuming [2]-24:1, 42:20
assumption [5] -
14:12, 17:15, 24:24,
42:13, 43:5
assumptions [6] 25:9, 41:22, 41:24, 41:25, 43:1, 43:3
assurance [1] 105:20
attend [1] - 124:9
attendance [1] - 126:4
attended [1] - 124:7
attending [1] - 61:24
attention [2]-53:19, 106:13
Attorney [1] - 4:10 attorneys [2]-5:10, 80:2
audibility [1] - 47:13
August [4]-1:4, 4:1, 71:23, 131:19 authorization [1] 78:6
automatic [1] - 9:3 available [3]-63:12, 102:13, 128:15
avenue [1] - 78:11
avenues [1] - 97:25 average [3]-17:5, 17:6, 17:12
averages [1] - 32:23
avian [1] - 51:4
avoid $[4]-52: 7,55: 5$,
55:7, 107:14
avoidance [5] - 53:16,
55:1, 55:7, 55:11, 55:16
awarded [2] - 62:5, 62:13
aware [4]-7:15,
$57: 13,104: 13,124: 3$
B
B. ${ }_{[1]}$ - 62:1
baby [1] - 127:1
Bachelor's [1] - 49:18
back.. [1] - 80:18
background [11] -
11:12, 11:15, 36:21, 37:9, 49:14, 49:17, 61:23, 81:20, 82:7, 85:21, 117:12
backwards [1] - 88:12
bad [2] - 118:18, 119:8
bag [1] - 76:12
band [3]-43:7, 43:9,

100:24
bands [5] - 39:10,
39:11, 39:12, 39:17, 39:23
bar [1] - 122:24
barns [1] - 66:6
base [2] - 91:19, 91:22
based [14] - 20:2,
26:22, 52:7, 52:16,
53:13, 55:8, 74:5,
75:24, 77:3, 77:21,
102:3, 104:3, 107:10
basis [10] - 6:7, 14:10,
17:8, 22:17, 87:24,
90:9, 97:3, 99:12,
108:23
bat [6] - 56:6, 56:19,
56:21, 57:11, 58:6
bathroom [3] - 68:1,
72:10, 78:18
bats [10]-51:7, 53:10,
53:12, 56:18, 57:17,
57:23, 58:1, 58:4,
58:9, 58:10
beat [1] - 5:8
beautiful [1] - 126:16
become [1] - 90:7
Beem [1] - 1:12
beem [1] - 4:14
BEEM [1] - 4:15
began [1] - 54:5
begin [1] - 60:23
beginning [3] - 11:15,
16:11, 62:7
begins [2] - 88:2,
88:11
behalf $[15]-5: 5,10: 3$, 32:11, 36:3, 36:13,
80:23, 81:4, 84:22,
85:12, 96:2, 109:16,
110:2, 110:4,
112:22, 112:23
below [3]-21:4,
88:24, 89:5
benefit [5] - 58:14,
66:3, 68:9, 125:9,
125:22
benefits [3]-26:2,
113:20, 113:21
best $[4]-25: 10,78: 15$,
124:15, 132:6
better [4]-35:1,
40:12, 125:16,
128:19
between [6] - 21:5,
39:6, 40:23, 44:2,
84:3, 108:13
beyond [3] - 64:10,
75:18, 102:18
big [5] - 69:3, 113:24,

119:6, 120:3, 120:6
bigger ${ }_{[1]}-65: 12$
biggest ${ }_{[1]}-13: 3$
bill [1]-22:15
billed [2]-22:13, 22:18
billion [2] - 62:8, 70:9
bills [1] - 22:19
binder ${ }_{[1]}$ - 61:11
binder's [1]-61:11
biologist ${ }_{[1]}$ - 51:3
Biology [1] - 49:18
bird [3]-49:24, 56:5,
57:11
birds [7]-49:25, 51:6,
53:10, 53:12, 57:23,
58:4, 58:9
bit [13] - 26:14, 42:1,
45:15, 47:2, 54:3,
77:23, 100:18,
106:4, 117:4,
117:22, 120:2,
122:22, 126:2
blades [2]-89:23,
90:2
blame [1]-72:13
blow [1]-119:5
Blue [5]-19:1, 19:11,
21:19, 28:2, 28:3
BOARD [4]-1:1, 1:9, 1:11, 1:14
board [1]-121:15
Board [34]-4:11,
21:14, 23:11, 36:25,
44:15, 47:17, 55:22,
63:14, 77:20, 80:4,
80:18, 83:8, 84:19,
87:13, 94:22, 96:11,
97:4, 97:14, 99:5,
100:16, 101:9,
102:8, 109:17,
109:24, 110:3,
110:18, 111:4,
112:12, 116:23,
120:19, 124:17,
129:23, 130:5,
131:12
bond [1]-25:24
bore [2]-103:14,
103:16
bored [1] - 71:24
bothered [2]-45:14, 45:15
bothering ${ }_{[1]}-46: 18$
bottom [1]-41:9
boy ${ }^{[1]}$ - 120 :6
braces [1] - 114:6
Braden [1] - 122:7
BRADEN [7] - 3:8,
121:8, 121:11,

122:7, 122:12, 130:15
break [9] - 79:18, 80:16, 104:22, 104:25, 105:3, 105:11, 106:1, 110:14
breakfast [1] - 88:21
brief [9]-6:24, 8:16,
8:17, 11:14, 12:3,
38:8, 82:23, 85:18, 86:24
briefly [3] - 36:21,
50:16, 61:21
bring [6] - 82:12,
93:14, 93:15, 111:3,
119:17, 119:18
broadly [1] - 76:25
broken [2] - 105:14,
105:17
Broker [1] - 62:13
brokerage [1] - 69:14
brokers [2] - 65:7,
68:3
brought [3] - 63:23,
69:18, 125:23
Brown [1] - 52:13
brown [2] - 52:14,
52:17
BS [1] - 49:17
buckets [1] - 20:10
budget [4] - 20:5,
22:9, 22:21, 22:22
build [6]-24:21, 27:9,
73:18, 113:11,
117:16, 119:15
building [9] - 88:7, 90:25, 97:10, 97:11, 97:17, 108:16, 113:2, 119:17, 124:24
buildings [1] - 84:4
built [9]-16:15, 24:23, 25:22, 88:9, 113:3, 114:3, 120:1, 120:4, 120:6
bullet [1] - 15:4
buried [2] - 88:21,
124:4
burning [1] - 90:19
business [7] - 53:1, 78:7, 109:1, 118:17, 119:2, 119:11, 123:11
businesses [1] -
24:19
but.. [1] - 123:20
buy [6] $-67: 8,76: 14$, 77:5, 78:20, 79:6, 119:9

| buyer $[4]-67: 3,76: 9$, | categories $[4]-12: 25$, |
| :---: | :---: |
| $76: 15,77: 1$ | $20: 15,27: 2,27: 6$ |

76:15, 77:1
buyers [7]-66:21,
66:25, 67:8, 68:5, 68:6, 74:9, 79:5
BY ${ }_{[30]}-10: 14,23: 18$, 26:8, 29:1, 31:1, 32:1, 34:16, 36:17, 44:17, 48:1, 49:10, 56:1, 57:6, 58:18, 60:13, 63:18, 68:17, 73:6, 75:6, 78:2, 81:16, 85:15, 87:15, 91:14, 93:7, 95:1, 96:6, 101:11, 103:4, 114:18

| C |
| :---: |
| C-O-I-L [1] - 73:2 |
| C.1 [3]-11:1, 11:4, |
| 11:11 |

C. 2 [3]-61:6, 61:9, 61:15
C12 [2] - 43:21, 44:1
C13 [2] - 43:21, 44:1
calculate [2] - 14:5, 40:12
calculated [2]-25:3,
25:6
calculations [2] -
14:14, $25: 6$
California [1] - 122:25
CALL...........................
............. . [1] - 2:2
cannot [1] - 118:24
capacity [2] - 15:1,
69:7
car [3] - 126:20,
128:14, 128:23
care [3]-46:21,
101:17, 103:23
career [1] - 63:2
Carlson [2]-1:19,
103:10
Carlson's [1] - 104:3
case [16] - 18:19,
22:20, 24:9, 27:7,
32:14, 57:16, 64:21,
72:14, 78:13, $97: 3$,
99:12, 111:15,
118:11, 126:9
case-by-case [2] -
97:3, 99:12
cases [7]-22:20,
25:15, 27:18, 45:6, 45:7, 100:10, 108:4
cash [3]-13:18,
14:23, 22:17
catch [1] - 105:12
category [1] - 46:22
Caterpillar [3] - 62:18, 119:4, 120:4
causal [2] - 34:1, 34:9
caused [1] - 39:8
causes [1] - 98:15 causing [3] - 98:20,
100:9, 100:12
Center [1] - 12:1
center [1] - 90:18
centers [1] - 70:9
central [2]-62:16,
64:15
certain [10] - 45:4,
45:5, 45:24, 57:25,
64:7, 67:8, 68:3,
78:5, 97:19, 106:19
certainly [5] - 6:5,
8:12, 29:18, 107:1, 130:15
certified [1] - 9:1
Certified [3] - 36:25,
62:10, 132:2
certify [1] - 132:4
cetera [1] - 98:13
chairman [2]-17:23,
131:12
Chairman [4] - 1:9, 14:2, 19:22, 106:3
chambers [18] - 4:8,
26:6, 28:12, 31:21,
55:23, 59:12, 68:14,
72:18, 79:12, 84:10,
91:12, 92:20, 94:23, 95:9, 109:11, 109:12, 109:18, 110:6
Chambers [2] - 1:10, 57:2
CHAMBERS [19] - 4:9,
26:9, 28:11, 32:2,
34:12, 56:2, 57:1,
58:19, 63:16, 63:19,
68:13, 72:19, 77:21,
78:2, 79:10, 91:15,
92:19, 95:2, 95:8
Chambers............ 26
[1]-2:6
Chambers............ 56
[1]-2:12
Chambers............ 63
[1]-2:15
Chambers............ 91
[1] - 2:22
Chambers.... 32 [1] -

## 2:7

Chambers.... 58 [1] -

Chambers.... 78 [1] 2:17
Chambers.... 95 [1] 2:23
Champaign [3] -
61:25, 113:8, 123:13
Champaign-Urbana
[1] - 61:25
change [8]-21:22,
28:7, 39:8, 78:4, 108:23, 108:24, 119:16, 120:9
changed [4] - 39:6,
40:23, 91:23, 120:2
changes [1] - 107:9
changing [1] - 119:13
Chapter [1] - 62:11
characteristics [1] 64:9
charge [1] - 128:14
charging [1] - 128:23
chart [3]-12:20,
12:21, 34:22
chasing [1] - 77:5
check [1] - 98:10
Chicago [3]-62:3,
62:11, 108:2
choose [1] - 66:25
chose [1] - 15:10
Christian [2] - 116:4, 116:17
CHRISTIAN ${ }_{[7]}-3: 7$,
116:16, 116:17, 116:20, 117:1,
117:3, 121:4
church [1] - 121:16
churches [1] - 63:7
circle [3] - 43:16,
43:23, 43:25
circles [1] - 43:21
Circuit [1] - 132:3
citizen [1] - 5:4
City [3] - 63:1, 116:3,
122:13
Civil [2] - 87:7, 87:9
clarification [1] -
79:24
clarify [2] - 18:22,
122:15
classes [1] - 8:25
classified [1] - 18:21
CLAUDIA[3] - 73:1, 73:7
Claudia [1] - 2:16
claudia [1] - 73:1
Clean [5] - 38:10, 49:17, 50:17, 53:25, 54:23
clean [3]-115:2,
124:1, 124:12

| ```cleaner \({ }_{[1]}-64: 22\) clear [11] - 7:5, 8:8, 16:25, 18:11, 18:17, 47:3, 64:19, 86:11, 103:9, 124:11, 126:11 clearly [1] - 77:9 clipping [1] - 79:6 close [7]-39:16, 67:10, 69:7, 70:20, 74:18, 129:11 closely [3] - 39:15, 55:15, 106:24 closer [2] - 42:17, 128:8 closest [2]-41:15, 41:18 closets [1]-67:25 Co [1]-12:1 Co-Founder \({ }_{[1]}\) - 12:1 Coalition [1] - 117:6 Coil [4] - 72:24, 73:1, 74:23 COIL [2] - 73:1, 73:7 Coil............ \(73_{\text {[1] - }}\) 2:16 collect [1] - 16:5 collected [2] - 35:1, 90:14 collection [2]-89:2, 89:4 College [1] - 13:6 college [1] - 49:22 color [1] - 67:24 Colorado [1] - 49:20 comfortable [1] - 46:10 coming [10]-22:17, 24:10, 25:19, 67:12, 67:15, 74:8, 74:16, 111:3, 111:12, 118:23 comment [2]-23:13, 110:11 commercial [2] - 78:19, 90:9 commercially [1] - 90:7 commissioned [1] - 125:18 commitment \({ }_{[1]}\) - 105:1 committed [6] - 58:11, 97:2, 104:25, 105:5, 105:18, 106:1 Committee [1] - 62:25 committing [1] - 105:19 common [1] - 33:1 communicate [8] -``` |  | ```99:13, 99:21, 99:25, 100:5, 100:15, 101:7, 101:15, 101:22, 102:2, 102:14, 102:17 complaints [7] - 96:20, 97:5, 98:12, 99:1, 99:2, 99:18, 100:3 completely [3]-8:24, 124:22, 129:7 completeness [1] - 8:7 completes [1] - 115:25 complex [1] - 29:12 compliance [2] - 53:3, 125:2 comply [3]-9:1, 51:8, 94:1 components [2] - 89:13, 89:14 comprehensive [3] - 25:5, 25:12, 25:15 computer [2] - 123:12, 123:16 Computer [1] - 123:14 concentrated [1] - 28:9 concentric [1] - 43:21 concept [2] - 19:21, 45:3 conceptual [1] - 83:24 conceptually [1] - 84:3 concern [10] - 18:13, 54:11, 55:6, 56:5, 56:18, 58:4, 63:24, 65:21, 65:23, 106:4 concerned [3] - 27:7, 70:24, 104:14 concerning [1] - 106:5 concerns [2] - 54:7, 54:14 conclude [1] - 129:19 concluded [1] - 131:18 concludes [1] - 111:15 conclusion [1] - 127:25 conclusions [1] - 18:9 concrete [11]-32:13, 32:15, 32:17, 32:20, 32:21, 32:25, 33:2, 89:17, 115:2, 115:6 condition [3]-42:19, 71:4, 71:18 conducive[1] - 127:2 conduct [2] - 51:3,``` |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

106:20, 121:10,
132:6
correction [1] - 101:3
corrections [5]-11:7, 38:5, 61:14, 82:20,
86:21
correctly [1] - 101:2
correspondence [1] 52:3
counsel [10]-5:25,
23:14, 35:23, 80:20, 84:16, 85:25,
102:20, 109:14, 111:4, 111:9
COUNSEL [2] - 1:14, 1:16
Counsel [8]-6:16, 94:21, 95:24, 102:25, 111:2, 115:17, 121:1, 130:11
counsel's [1] - 80:6
Counselors [1] -
62:13
count [1]-22:16
counties [4]-33:20,
33:24, 33:25, 35:14
counting [3]-10:21, 23:4, 38:4
countries [1] - 129:17
country [6] - 36:25,
49:23, 68:12, 79:5, 120:2, 124:1
COUNTY ${ }_{[5]}-1: 1,1: 6$,
1:9, 1:11, 1:14
county [5]-29:21, 35:4, 35:6, 124:24, 125:10
County [76]-1:23, 4:11, 13:3, 15:22, 15:23, 16:4, 24:4, 24:6, 24:8, 24:11, 24:13, 24:17, 24:19, 24:23, 26:15, 26:19, 26:23, 27:11, 27:12, 27:15, 27:19, 27:22, 29:7, 29:10, 29:11, 29:14, 29:24, 30:6, 30:9, 30:22, 31:11, 31:12, 34:23, 35:14, 47:22, 59:17, 61:2, 69:5, 73:10, 77:6, 77:15, 84:15, 92:11, 93:3, 93:12, 93:19, 96:17, 97:4, 99:5, 102:2, 109:20, 110:2, 111:11, 112:9, 112:13, 115:16, 116:19, 116:21, 120:25,

| $122: 10,122: 16$, | CROSS- |
| :--- | :--- |
| $123: 17,123: 24$, | EXAMINATION $[1]-$ | 124:16, 125:5, 125:10, 126:7,

126:10, 126:21, 129:2, 130:10, 131:5
County's [4] - 8:4, 50:23, 53:6, 109:25 County-specific [1] 27:19
couple [9]-5:1, 6:25, 17:13, 23:13, 47:3, 54:16, 63:22, 80:5, 83:17
coupon [1] - 79:6 course [6] - 14:11, 48:19, 53:1, 59:23, 82:2, 129:4
court [5] -9:25, 28:22,
42:2, 85:7, 95:21
COURT [3] - 1:21,
7:13, 84:24
Court [3]-1:22,
132:1, 132:13
Courthouse [1] - 1:23
cover [2] - 86:14, 103:7
covered [4] - 18:5, 23:15, 63:10, 104:17 covers [1] - 38:4 cows [2] - 123:3,
123:5
CPI [1] - 15:9
cracking [1] - 105:10 crane [4]-104:21,
104:22, 105:4, 105:17
cranes [3] - 104:10,
104:14, 104:18
create [1]-11:23
created [1] - 29:7
creates [1] - 23:3
credentials [2] - 50:8,
50:12
Creek [10] - 38:21,
39:7, 39:18, 39:20, 40:7, 40:15, 41:1, 124:7, 125:24
crises [1] - 22:22
critical [5] - 39:9,
39:12, 39:13, 39:17, 124:14
crop [1] - 78:25
cross [3]-48:1,
111:8, 131:8
Cross [2] - 2:7, 2:10
CROSS [1] - 31:1
cROSS-
EXAMINATION[1] 48:1

88:15
deal [2] - 103:8,
113:24
dealing [3] - 45:10, 107:22
dealt [1] - 91:17
DEC [1] - 81:23
decade [2]-81:24, 128:18
decided [2] - 104:15,
123:21
deciding [1] - 114:5
decimal [1] - 15:14
decisions [2] - 108:5, 123:11
declared [1] - 88:17
declines [2]-16:14,
17:10
decommission [1] 87:19
decommissioning
[14]-84:23, 86:8, 86:22, 86:25, 87:2, 87:5, 87:13, 87:21, 87:23, 92:9, 92:12, 92:13, 93:3, 93:22
Decommissioning [2]

- 86:3, 93:19
decrease [1] - 67:3
defer [1]-7:16
definitely [1] - 124:11
definition [2] - 32:9,
64:1
Degree [1] - 123:14
degree [1] - 123:15
Deland [5] - 19:9,
19:13, 21:20, 28:2,
28:4
Deland-Weldon [5] -
19:9, 19:13, 21:20,
28:2, 28:4
delay [1] -5:24
demand [1] - 77:10
demise [1]-70:3
demonstrate [1] 53:3
dense [1] - 69:24
density [2]-65:2,
65:8
Department [5] - 52:4,
53:15, 54:1, 54:25,
92:3
department [1] -
33:19
deployment [1] -
59:10
depreciate [1] - 16:17
depreciation [4] -
14:9, 16:15, 16:16, 16:20
depth [4] - 88:25,
89:5, 91:21, 94:17
Des [2]-70:5, 70:11
describe [1] - 12:18
described [3] - 14:6,
14:16, $99: 8$
describes [2]-11:11, 92:1
describing [1] - 99:20
descriptor [1] - 19:4
design [1] - 117:16
Design [1] - 81:23
designated [1] -
104:12
designation [1] - 62:5
designed [1] - 55:7
desirable [2] - 79:7,
119:22
detail [1] - 17:7
detailed [1] - 26:5
detect [1] - 104:18
detection [1]-7:10
deter [1]-74:9
determine [10] -
13:14, 13:20, 20:17,
22:6, 23:25, 24:1,
51:5, 53:9, 98:8,
101:16
determined [3] -
14:21, 14:24, 90:24
deterrent [1] - 58:22
develop [2] - 96:19,
99:4
developed [1] - 70:16
developer [1] - 32:10
developing [3] - 54:7,
74:18, 77:2
development [4] -
63:5, 70:9, 118:1
Development [1] -
1:19
DeWitt [4]-29:10,
29:11, 29:14, 29:24
dialogue [1] - 100:6
diameters [1] - 83:20
dictated [1] - 88:1
differ [1] - 60:25
difference [2] - 40:13, 114:4
different [18] - 20:15,
26:25, 27:2, 27:5,
28:1, 40:9, 43:9,
45:10, 45:22, 47:10,
47:12, 47:13, 64:9,
88:6, 91:7, 91:20,
110:25, 115:7
differential [2] - 67:7, 69:13
differently [1] - 78:10
difficult [4]-32:11,
$74: 4,74: 6,120: 10$ dimensions [3] -
40:11, 40:14, 40:16
diminished [1] - 68:25
diminution [1] - 79:2
Direct [4] - 2:9, 2:12,
2:15, 2:19
direct [19]-2:21, 2:22, $3: 3,30: 17,31: 6$, 31:17, 32:5, 32:8, 33:9, 48:15, 59:18, 75:19, 77:16, 84:16, 93:4, 93:10, 94:14, 102:4
DIRECT [8] - 10:14,
36:17, 49:10, 60:13,
81:16, 85:15, 93:7,
96:6
directly [2] - 93:15, 120:13
Director [3]-12:1, 36:23, 49:16
disappointed [1] 126:1
disburse [1] - 105:9 disclosure [1] - 16:25
discourage [1] - 57:22
discuss [1] - 12:15
discussed [3] - 19:22, 66:20, 96:11
discussing [1] - 14:16
discussion [2] -
25:18, 83:5
disposal [2] - 88:6, 91:8
disposed [1] - 89:24
distance [2] - 65:24, 84:7
Distribution [1] 62:19
district [17] - 15:20,
15:22, 19:17, 19:19, 20:14, 20:16, 21:5, 21:7, 21:9, 21:11, 22:6, 22:16, 25:21, 25:24, 103:11
District [4]-19:1, 21:20, 28:3 districts [23]-13:6, 18:11, 18:20, 18:21, 18:22, 20:9, 20:10, 20:11, 21:11, 21:12, 21:21, 22:2, 22:23, 28:1, 28:17, 47:19, 59:14, 72:22, 84:12, 101:24, 115:13, 120:21, 130:8
disturb [1] - 103:17
ditches [1] - 103:11
diversify [1] - 118:18
divide [1] - 26:24
Doctor [2]-10:12,
10:22
doctor [5] - 10:17, 12:15, 17:13, 19:20, 21:25
document $[7]$ - 23:22, 50:7, 51:24, 51:25, 52:9, 52:12, 100:16 documenting [1] 99:5
documents [1] 107:19
dollar [3]-12:24, 92:9, 106:6 dollars [19]-13:13, 14:25, 15:1, 16:14, 17:3, 17:7, 19:3, 19:4, 19:5, 19:9, 19:10, 19:12, 19:14, 19:16, 27:14, 32:20, 32:24, 62:8, 70:9
domain [1] - 118:12 done [16] - 12:11, 12:12, 20:7, 34:20, 35:1, 62:7, 62:16, 62:17, 62:18, 66:4, 66:8, 68:20, 73:24, 87:20, 90:24, 130:18
dotted [1] - 46:14 doubling [1] - 71:21 down [23] - 15:14, 17:4, 29:12, 34:23, 35:22, 42:1, 42:10, 42:12, 48:19, 57:25, 59:23, 66:1, 76:19, 78:21, 79:16, 88:4, 89:18, 95:11, 104:22, 109:13, 126:1, 129:9, 130:17 downstate [1] - 118:3
dozens [1] - 82:2
dR [1] - 23:19
Dr [43]-2:5, 2:8, 2:10, 2:13, 2:16, 2:19, 2:21, 3:3, 3:4, 3:6, 4:25, 7:2, 7:14, 8:20, 9:20, 9:24, 10:7, 12:3, 23:7, 23:10, 23:15, 28:12, 28:17, 30:21, 31:21, 34:13, 35:21, 57:2, 68:14, 69:1, 71:1, 71:6, 71:13, 79:12, 80:7, 92:21, 95:9, 101:21, 102:3, 102:19, 109:18, 110:6
DR [37] - 4:3, 4:7,
4:11, 4:23, 7:19, 10:10, 23:13, 26:4,

28:14, 34:14, 34:17, 35:20, 44:18, 47:5, 47:15, 57:4, 57:7, 58:16, 68:18, 72:17, 79:14, 83:9, 83:13, 84:8, 87:16, 91:11, 92:22, 101:12, 101:20, 102:9, 102:12, 103:1, 103:5, 109:11, 114:19, 115:10, 131:14
drafted [1] - 121:14
drainage [1] - 103:9
dramatically [1] -
75:13
driving [1] - 115:6
drove [2] - 126:15, 126:16
due [3]-16:14, 71:2, 127:15
duly [6] - 10:4, 36:14, 81:5, 112:3, 116:14, 122:3
Duncan [9] - 36:4, 36:8, 36:20, 37:17, 44:14, 47:17, 47:19, 47:21, 48:19
DUNCAN [2] - 2:9, 36:7
Duncan's [2] - 37:8, 37:15
duration [1] - 80:9
during [10] - 11:19,
23:2, 42:22, 58:8, 58:9, 58:12, 99:2, 99:3, 107:14, 125:24

| $\mathbf{E}$ |
| :---: |
| E-H-R-A-T $[1]-122: 8$ |

e-mail [3] - 97:7, 97:12, 97:16
E. 4 [2] $-82: 14,82: 16$
E. 5 [2] $-37: 24,37: 25$
E. 6 [1] - 51:23
E. 7 [1] - 86:6
ear [1]-34:5
eared [1] - 56:21
early [1] - 54:2
earnings [1] - 24:3
East [1] - 62:20
east [3]-44:1, 44:5, 44:9
east/northeast [1] -
41:20
easy [1] - 8:7
EAV [1] - 20:21
econ [3]-33:19, 35:8
economic [13]-9:21,

12:8, 24:23, 25:7, 25:18, 26:1, 27:17, 29:6, 33:21, 33:23, 67:11, 74:14, 118:1 Economic [7]-10:18, 10:25, 11:5, 12:5, 12:6, 12:16, 18:2 economically [2] 127:17, 127:19 Economics [4] -
11:16, 11:18, 11:22, 62:2
economics [2] - 68:1, 68:9 Economists [1] 15:12
economy [3]-26:24, 26:25, 119:6
EcoSystems [1] 51:11
Eddie [2] - 36:4, 36:7
EDDIE [3] - 2:9, 36:7, 36:8
edge [1] - 65:11
educate [3]-20:18,
20:19, 20:24
educating [1] - 21:17
education [1] - 82:6
Education [1] - 21:14 educational [5] -
11:12, 37:8, 61:23, 85:20, 117:19
educator [1] - 49:24
Edwards [1] - 4:14
effect [3] - 34:10,
68:23, 76:3
effective [5] - 57:19, 57:21, 59:7, 99:17, 129:10
effects [1] - 56:6
efficient [1] - 6:2
effort [1] - 16:25
Ehrat [10] - 121:7,
121:15, 121:19,
122:7, 122:9, 130:4,
130:5, 130:6,
130:13, 130:17
EHRAT [5] - 121:8,
121:11, 122:7,
122:12, 130:15

## EHRAT

........... 122 [1]-3:8
eight [12] - 8:21,
10:20, 10:22, 13:2, 15:9, 16:12, 16:13, 17:3, 17:9, 19:12, 50:4, 82:25
eighteen [1] - 37:5
either [10] - 6:5, 8:12,
21:21, 35:23, 55:7,

70:21, 88:5, 98:16, 103:24, 123:20 elected [1] - 62:22 electric [3]-63:4, 128:14, 128:23 electricians [2] 114:23, 115:4 electricity [5] -
126:19, 127:9,
128:12, 128:22,
129:14
Electricity [1] - 11:21
elements [1] - 87:25
eleven [6] - 19:3, 19:5,
19:9, 19:16, 110:25
elliptical [2] - 43:17, 44:8
eminent [1] - 118:12 emissions [2] - 42:7, 42:8
employed [3] - 32:9, 35:8, 62:2
employment [11] -
24:18, 26:13, 26:15, 27:22, 29:5, 29:14, 30:2, 30:17, 31:8, 32:6, 34:3
end [10] - 22:24,
44:25, 45:1, 45:5,
60:25, 61:17, 93:24,
124:6, 124:16, 127:6
ends [2]-23:1, 78:18
energy [22] - 11:20,
12:14, 37:4, 38:12,
50:4, 63:4, 70:10,
113:23, 117:9,
117:10, 117:11,
117:12, 119:17,
124:1, 124:12,
126:3, 127:4, 127:5, 127:11, 127:25, 128:1
Energy [8] - 11:25, 12:2, 38:10, 49:17, 50:17, 53:25, 54:23, 117:7
engaging [1] - 120:13
Engineer [8] - 37:1,
86:15, 86:18, 86:20,
87:7, 87:9, 109:25,
111:11
engineer $[3]$ - 121:14,
128:13, 131:5
engineering [1] - 37:3
Engineering [1] -
123:17
engineers [1] - 115:4
ensure [2] - 8:7, 93:23
enter [1] - 118:6
entering [1] - 118:14



|  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Hess [16] - 1:17, 5:5, } \\ & \text { 5:7, } 5: 14,6: 20,9: 7, \\ & \text { 48:20, 49:7, 50:14, } \\ & \text { 55:21, 59:17, 71:12, } \\ & \text { 115:18, 115:21, } \\ & \text { 121:1, 121:5 } \\ & \text { Hess..........49 [1] - } \\ & 2: 12 \\ & \text { high }[2]-39: 15, \\ & 123: 12 \\ & \text { higher }[4]-17: 17, \\ & 17: 19,31: 13,127: 21 \\ & \text { highest }[2]-62: 9, \\ & 78: 15 \\ & \text { hills }[2]-126: 16, \\ & 126: 17 \\ & \text { hinder }[2]-6: 15,6: 16 \\ & \text { hire }[2]-32: 23, \\ & 113: 12 \\ & \text { hired }[2]-31: 10, \\ & 51: 10 \\ & \text { hiring }[1]-113: 12 \\ & \text { historically }[1]- \\ & 113: 22 \\ & \text { hit }[1]-119: 11 \\ & \text { hits }[1]-16: 19 \\ & \text { hold }[1]-19: 7 \\ & \text { home }[3]-123: 17, \\ & 125: 19,127: 2 \\ & \text { homes }[1]-67: 3 \\ & \text { honest }[1]-71: 21 \\ & \text { honestly }[1]-126: 17 \\ & \text { Honolulu }[1]-108: 1 \\ & \text { honor }[2]-61: 24, \\ & 117: 19 \\ & \text { hope }[2]-129: 4, \\ & 130: 2 \\ & \text { hopefully }[3]-125: 5, \\ & 126: 24,128: 11 \\ & \text { hot }[2]-42: 22,71: 24 \\ & \text { hotline }[1]-97: 6 \\ & \text { hours }[4]-98: 1, \\ & 114: 3,123: 2,129: 20 \\ & \text { house }[11]-25: 22, \\ & 65: 12,65: 18,67: 10, \\ & 67: 17,72: 12,78: 16, \\ & 122: 17,126: 23, \\ & 126: 24,128: 3 \\ & \text { huge }[6]-35: 15,66: 3, \\ & 119: 5,119: 11, \\ & 119: 15 \\ & \text { Hult }[3]-116: 3,116: 4 \\ & \text { hundred }[28]-14: 25, \\ & 19: 2,19: 3,19: 5, \\ & 19: 8,19: 10,19: 16, \\ & 21: 6,21: 7,21: 9, \\ & 21: 16,26: 25,33: 20, \\ & 65: 6,65: 11,65: 14, \\ & 65: 15,65: 17,69: 11, \\ & 71: 19,72: 3,72: 16, \end{aligned}$ | ```74:13, 78:19, 83:21, 104:9 hundred-year-old [1] - 104:9 hundreds [1] - 64:25 hurt [1] - 119:7 husband [1] - 67:21 hybrid [1] - 90:20 hydrocarbons [1] - 124:4 hypothetical [1] - 70:19 hypothetically \({ }_{[1]}\) - 56:15 Hz [3] - 39:11, 39:13, 39:18```  | ```55:1, 58:1, 59:8, 61:5, 61:10, 63:3, 64:15, 64:16, 64:18, 66:10, 66:14, 67:23, 69:25, 71:22, 77:10, 105:10, 117:23 Impact [8] - 10:18, 10:25, 11:5, 12:16, 18:2, 61:2, 88:1, 94:4 impacted [2] - 18:10, 72:12 impacts [12]-9:22, 12:8, 29:6, 29:25, 32:7, 32:8, 32:11, 33:5, 50:19, 50:20, 54:10, 55:5 impaired [1] - 64:8 impartial [1] - 6:1 IMPLAN [1] - 26:23 implement [1] - 55:7 implemented [1] - 55:4 implementing [1] - 52:6 implying [1] - 24:5 important [7] - 117:25, 118:2, 118:21, 119:1, 120:8, 125:19, 125:21 improvement [1] - 127:2 IN [1] - 2:3 incidental [4] - 34:9, 56:12, 56:15,56:23 include [1] - 83:17 included [2] - 10:25, 61:5 includes [4]-26:21, 37:8, 52:2, 82:6 including [13] - 28:17, 47:18, 59:14, 72:22, 81:25, 83:2, 84:12, 87:2, 92:24, 101:24, 115:12, 120:21, 130:7 income [1]-24:5 incorporation [1] - 90:20 increase [3] - 16:11, 22:9, 69:15 increased [4] - 17:24, 34:3, 68:25, 77:9 increases [1] - 79:4 indeed [2] - 123:25, 125:11 independence [1] - 129:6 independent [1] -``` | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 129:13 } \\ & \text { independently }[1]- \\ & 129: 8 \\ & \text { INDEX.......................... } \\ & \ldots . . . . . . . . . . . . .134[1]- \\ & 3: 16 \\ & \text { Indiana }[3]-56: 21, \\ & 69: 4,126: 17 \\ & \text { Indianapolis }[2]- \\ & 70: 11,108: 3 \\ & \text { indicate }[1]-58: 3 \\ & \text { indicated }[1]-31: 4 \\ & \text { indication }[1]-69: 24 \\ & \text { indirect }[3]-32: 6, \\ & 32: 11,33: 5 \\ & \text { individual }[3]-20: 18, \\ & 35: 9,103: 19 \\ & \text { induced }[1]-33: 13 \\ & \text { industrial }[1]-63: 7 \\ & \text { industries }[4]-24: 18, \\ & 26: 17,26: 22,27: 10 \\ & \text { industry }[9]-27: 12, \\ & 27: 14,27: 15,27: 17, \\ & 2: 18,32: 23,77: 23, \\ & 117: 15,117: 21 \\ & \text { inflation }[10]-14: 10, \\ & 15: 3,15: 5,15: 8, \\ & 15: 13,16: 21,17: 14, \\ & 17: 15,17: 17 \\ & \text { inform }[2]-55: 1,98: 3 \\ & \text { information }[9]-7: 1, \\ & 14: 20,34: 22,40: 5, \\ & 40: 6,41: 3,97: 9, \\ & 98: 6,98: 12 \\ & \text { infra } 97]-67: 16, \\ & 69: 17,70: 2,77: 6, \\ & 84: 2,88: 3,88: 10 \\ & \text { initial }[2]-65: 1,65: 4 \\ & \text { insecticide }[1]- \\ & 106: 17 \\ & \text { insight }[1]-66: 19 \\ & \text { inspect }[1]-100: 25 \\ & \text { inspection }[3]-9: 11, \\ & 9: 14,88: 16 \\ & \text { inspections }[1]-9: 13 \\ & \text { install }[3]-7: 24, \\ & 126: 24,127: 14 \\ & \text { installation }[2]-51: 5, \\ & 53: 9 \\ & \text { installed }[3]-8: 21, \\ & 126: 22,127: 1 \\ & \text { installing }[2]-117: 13, \\ & 127: 7 \\ & \text { installments }[1]- \\ & 22: 14 \\ & \text { instance }[5]-30: 4, \\ & 68: 8,99: 24,100: 23, \\ & 107: 12 \\ & \text { instances }[4]-96: 9, \\ & 100: 17,104: 11, \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |


| 104:13 | 100:10, 100:11, | . 116 [1]-3:7 | 112:4, 112:8, | L |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| instead [1] - 94:8 | 100:12, 100:13 | JONES [1] - 4:17 | 112:11, 114:13, |  |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Institute }[2]-9: 2, \\ & 62: 12 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 100:18, 100:19, } \\ & \text { 101:8, 102:9, } \end{aligned}$ | Jones [2]-1:12, 4:16 <br> Journal [2] - 15:11, | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 115:11, 115:21, } \\ & \text { 115:25, 116:8, } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { L-O-O-M-I-S }{ }_{[1]} \text { - } \\ & 10: 11 \end{aligned}$ |
| instruction [1] - 7:15 | 102:10, 102:13 | 5:15 | 6:18, 116:22, | labor [1] - 114:11 |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { instrumental }[1]- \\ & 89: 6 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { 118:12, 118:25 } \\ \text { issued [1] - } 93: 25 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Judicial }_{[1]}-132: 3 \\ & \text { jump }[1]-70: 10 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 117:2, 120:17, } \\ & \text { 121:5, 121:10, } \end{aligned}$ | Laborers [2] - 112:20, 112:23 |
| insurance [1] - 114:4 | issues [6] - 45:18, | jumped [2]-5:21, 6:4 | 1:12, 122:5, | laborers [1] - 115:1 |
| integral [1] - 59:8 | 45:20, 66:20, 67:23, | Junction [1] - 36:24 | 22:9, 130:4, | Lafayette [1] - 69:4 |
| intending ${ }_{[1]}$ - 5:8 | 74:12, 124:3 | June [2]-11:17, 23:1 | 30:16, 130:24 | laid [4] - 97:25, 100:6, |
| intent [2] - 6:5 | it'll ${ }^{\text {[1] }}$ - $57: 25$ | jur | 131:2, 131:15 | 100:7, 104:10 |
| interest [3] - 67:3, | itemize ${ }_{[1]}$ - 17:1 | 15:19, 15:21, 15:23, | kains [2] - 9:19, 95:25 | Land [2]-62:2, 117:6 |
| 71:20, 71:21 | itemized $[1]$ - 18:25 | 22:7, 25:11, 38:17 | Kathleen [1]-1:13 | land [15] - 13:21, |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { interested }[9]-28: 18, \\ & \text { 84:13, 92:25, } \\ & \text { 101:24, 115:13, } \\ & \text { 120:22, 124:18, } \\ & \text { 127:6, 130:8 } \\ & \text { interesting }[1]-65: 1 \end{aligned}$ | itself [1] - 89:14 | jurisdictions [5] - | $\begin{aligned} & \text { keep }[4] \text { - 100:5, } \\ & 104: 5,108: 14,120: 7 \end{aligned}$ | $22: 15,77: 5,77: 8$ |
|  | J | 14:13, 16:13 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { kept }_{[2]}-30: 15 \text {, } \\ & 124: 13 \end{aligned}$ | 93:24, 118:5, |
|  | J-O-H-N-S-O-N | K | Keri [1]-1:6 | 9:24, 129:25, |
|  |  |  | Kevin [1]-86:15 | 130:1 |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { interests [4]-123:18, } \\ & \text { 124:5, 125:12, } \\ & 125: 13 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { JACOB [3] - 2:18, } \\ & \text { 81:9, 81:10 } \\ & \text { Jacob [2] - 80:23, } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { Kains [15] - 1:8, 4:24, } \\ 6: 23,7: 14,9: 20, \\ 23: 7,36: 2,48: 22, \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { key }[4]-67: 9,72: 2, \\ 100: 8,106: 23 \\ \text { KEYT }[11]-8: 3,8: 6, \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { landlord [8] - 106:12, } \\ \text { 106:15, 107:20, } \\ \text { 107:22, 107:25, } \end{gathered}$ |
| interfere [1] - 84:6 | 81:10 | 50:6, 50:15, 51:17 | 30:23, 31:2, 31:16, | 88:1, 108:19, |
| International [2] $8: 20,112: 21$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Jamie [4] - 1:22, } \\ & 72: 25,132: 1,132: 12 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 55: 20,63: 12,80: 22, \\ & 102: 6 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 37: 14,47: 23,48: 2, \\ & 48: 13,109: 23, \end{aligned}$ | 108:20 |
| International's [1] -$7: 4$ | Jason [3]-1:20, $100 \cdot 7$ 108:25 | $\mathrm{KAINS}_{[121]}-4: 25$, | 110:19 | landowner [10] - |
|  | 100:7, 108:25 | 7:7, 7:9, 7:20, 8: | Keyt [9] - 1:15, 30:2 | 88:19, 97:22, 98:24, |
| $\begin{gathered} \text { internet }[2]-7: 16, \\ 125: 19 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Jennie [2] - 48:23, } \\ & 49: 5 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 8: 5,8: 14,8: 18,9: 6, \\ & 9: 14,9: 16,9: 23, \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 31:17, 37:13, 47:24, } \\ & \text { 109:16, 110:17, } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 100:5, 105:14, } \\ & \text { 105:19, 105:21, } \end{aligned}$ |
| internship [1] - 122:25 | JENNIE [3]-2:11 | 10:7, 10:12, 23:9 | 111:10, 131:6 | 106:24, 109:3, 118:1 |
| interrupt ${ }^{[1]}$ - 71:1 | 9:5, 49:6 | $8: 12,28: 15$ | keyt [3] - 8:5, 32:4, | landscape [1] - 84:6 |
| Interstate [1] - 122:15 | Jerald [1]-1:17 | 28:24, 30:20, 30:24, | 50:11 | landscaping ${ }_{[1]}$ - |
| intimidate [1] - 5:8 | jmummreports@ | 31:17, 31:20, 34:13, | Keyt............ 31 [1] - | 67:24 |
| introduce [1] - 8:12 | gmail.com [1] - 1:25 | 35:21, 36:5, 36:9, | $2 \cdot$ | language [1] - 107:18 |
| invalidating ${ }_{[1]}$ - 126:11 | $\begin{gathered} \text { job }[12]-5: 8,5: 9, \\ 5: 11,6: 1,23: 24, \end{gathered}$ | 37:13, 37:15, 44:13, 47:16, 47:24, 48:14, | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Keyt.............. } 48 \text { [1] } \\ & \text { 2:10 } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { large }[4]-35: 13 \\ & 66: 12,89: 22,128: 1 \end{aligned}$ |
| investigate [2] - 98:5, | $26: 13,32: 21,36: 20,$ $49: 13,81: 11,123: 7,$ | $\begin{aligned} & 48: 17,48: 24,49: 3, \\ & 49: 7,50: 12,51: 16, \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \mathbf{k H z}[3]-39: 11,39: 13, \\ & 39: 19 \end{aligned}$ | large-scale [1] - 128:1 |
| 101:16 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 49:13, 81:19, 123:7, } \\ & \text { 123:15 } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 49: 7,50: 12,51: 16, \\ & 55: 21,57: 2,59: 12, \end{aligned}$ | 39:19 <br> kids [4]-114:6, | larger [3] - 40:15, |
| investigating ${ }_{[1]}$ - 96:20 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 123:15 } \\ & \text { jobs }[9]-24: 2,24: 4, \end{aligned}$ | 59:20, 60:1, 60:4, | $\begin{gathered} \text { kids [4] - 114:6, } \\ \text { 125:13, 126:19, } \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} 88: 3,127: 20 \\ \text { largest }[2]-13: 1, \end{gathered}$ |
| investment ${ }_{[1]}-79: 7$ | 29:6, 31:6, 33:4, | 60:7, 60:11, 60:20, | $9: 2$ | 35:15 |
| involved [5] - 11:20, | $33: 11,33: 16,119: 2$, $119 \cdot 18$ | 63:13, 68:14, 71:11, $72: 18,72: 20,73: 3,$ | killing $\left.{ }^{1}\right]-70: 5$ | Larson [1]-4:5 |
| 63:2, 86:11, 87:4, | 119:18 | 72:18, 72:20, 73:3, | kind [21] - 5:21, 20:11 | last [42]-5:3, 5:18, |
| 123:23 | JOE [5] - 3:5, 112: $112: 7.112: 10$ | $76: 7,77: 12,77: 18$ | 22:16, 23:25, 27:24, | 6:11, 6:12, 10:9, |
| involving ${ }_{[1]}-120: 9$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 112:7, 112:10, } \\ & 112: 16 \end{aligned}$ | 79:12, 79:15, 79:23, | $\begin{aligned} & 32: 12,34: 5,34: 10, \\ & \text { 47:9, 59:2, 69:25, } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 12: 10,15: 9,21: 2, \\ & 24: 24,28: 22,29: 9 \end{aligned}$ |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Iowa }[3]-70: 5,70: 14, \\ & 70: 17 \end{aligned}$ | Joe[3]-111:18, | 80:17, 80:20, 80:25, | 70:11, 70:12, 77:6, | $33: 22,34: 14,36: 6,$ |
| IPCB [5] - 39:12, | 112:6, 112:19 | $\begin{aligned} & 81: 7,81: 11,82: 10, \\ & 82: 15, ~ 83: 5.84: 9 \end{aligned}$ | 77:23, 78:16, | 3:14, 49:4, 50:3, |
| 39:15, 39:21, 39:22, | John [2] - 2:17, 75:2 <br> JOHN [4] - 75:2, 75:3, | 82:15, 83:5, 84:9, <br> 84:18, 85:2, 85:6, | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 117:24, 117:25, } \\ & \text { 118:12, 119:8, 120:9 } \end{aligned}$ | 54:21, 56:4, 60:8, $63: 22,72 \cdot 25,74: 25$ |
| 47:9 iron $[1]-115: 5$ | JOHN [4] - 75:2, 75:3, 75:7, 75:23 | 85:24, 87:12, 91:12, | 118:12, 119:8, 120:9 kindly [1] - 37:9 | $\begin{aligned} & 63: 22,72: 25,74: 25, \\ & 75: 17,81: 8,82: 3, \end{aligned}$ |
| iron ${ }^{[1]}-115: 5$ IS $_{[1]}-116: 16$ | Johnson [10]-116:4, | 20, 92:23, 93:17, | kinds [2]-27:5, 67:23 | $34: 24,85: 8,85: 19,$ |
| ish [1] - 117:14 | 116:5, 116:9, |  | kitchen [1] - 72:10 | 91:18, 92:8, 95:21, |
| ISOlines [1]-43:22 | 116:17, 120:18 | $: 21,102$ | knock [1] - 78:20 | 95:22, 99:4, 112:5, |
| issue [28] - 18:3, 25:24, 40:22, 59:3, | $\begin{aligned} & 120: 20,120: 22, \\ & 120: 24,121: 7 \end{aligned}$ | 102:10, 102:16, | $\begin{aligned} & \text { knowledge [3] - } \\ & 29: 18,57: 18,64: 2 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 116:10, 117:17, } \\ & \text { 121:13, 122:6, } \end{aligned}$ |
| 25:24, 40:22, 59:3 <br> 65:8, 65:9, 65:21, | JOHNSON [5] | 102:25, 106:3, | knowledgeable [1] - | 124:7, 125:25, 126:3 |
| 71:8, 72:8, 98:14, | 11 |  | 0:2 | lately ${ }_{[1]}-70: 6$ |
| 98:19, 98:20, 98:21, | 7:1, 117:3, 121:4 |  | knows [2] - 71:14, | latest ${ }_{[1]}$ - 15:11 |
| 98:23, 100:8, | JOHNSON.... |  | 107:23 | law [5] - 13:17, 14:24, |


| 16:15, 71:3, 78:19 | lights [3]-65:22, | logging [1] - 96:20 | 65:13 | 123:14 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| lawsuit [1] - 30:12 | 65:25, 69:8 | logical [1] - 127:25 | Macon [5] - 30:6, 30:9, | matching [1] - 24:20 |
| lawyer [2] - 73:16, | likely [5] - 21:21, | logistics [1] - 78:10 | 31:11, 31:12, 112:9 | material [2]-88:13, |
| 74:11 | 42:24, 56:17, 84:6, | long-eared [1] - 56:21 | Mahomet [2] - 108:2, | 90 |
| lawyers [1] - 74:1 | 108:2 | look [25]-20:20, | 16:4 | Matt [1] - 131:6 |
| lay ${ }^{\text {[1] }}$ - $64: 13$ | likewise [1] - 107:5 | 25:25, 27:1, 30:11, | MAI [1] - 62:5 | matter [1]-23:23 |
| laydown [1] - 90:25 | limit $[3]-39: 21,45: 7$, | 33:20, 35:8, 44:3, | mail [3]-97:7, 97:12, | matters [1]-6:21 |
| layout [1] - 92:12 | 105:8 | 44:4, 51:23, 53:22 | 7:16 | maximum [5] - 16:16 |
| lead [1] - 86:19 | limited [3] - 6:10 | 54:4, 66:6, 66:7, | Main [1] - 78:15 | 16:20, 43:7, 43:8, |
| Leader [1]-81:22 | 56:24, 68:3 | 66:8, 67:18, 71:15, | main [2] - 104:7, 104:8 | 43:11 |
| leads [1] - 70:3 | limits [6] - 38:17 | 78:22, 78:24, 79:1, | maintain [3]-92:2, | Mayor [1]-63:1 |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { lease }[7]-73: 14, \\ & 74: 16,78: 23,10 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 39: 15,39: 23,47: 9 \\ & 47: 14,122: 13 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 108:21, 117:24, } \\ & \text { 119:1, 126:14, } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} 97: 6,99: 1 \\ \text { maintained } \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { McLean }[3]-35: 14, \\ & 74: 18,77: 5 \end{aligned}$ |
| 106:21, 109:6 | line [8]-29:12, 43:23, | 128:6, $128: 8$ | 69:23, 70:2, 72:7 | mean [10] - 39:13, |
| $\begin{gathered} \text { Ieases [5] - 73:9, } 74: 7, \\ 79: 6,106: 5,106: 14 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 43:24, 88:9, 91:7, } \\ & \text { 109:2, 113:24, } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { looked }[8]-28: 9 \\ 64: 24,64: 25,69 \end{gathered}$ | maintenance [3] | 45:21, 46:12, 64:22, 65:19, 66:5, 100:19, |
| least [6]-8:3, 12:10, | 123:15 | 70:13, 106:6, 127:7, | 117:17 | 106:22, 108:7, |
| 19:18, 63:25, 89:6, | lines [9] - 26:12 | 127:8 | major [4]-11:24, | 108:14 |
| 107:20 | 43:22, 46:14, 66:18, | looking [10] - 12:22 | 44:24, 62:19, 88:10 | means [12]-18:23, |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Ieave [2] - 121:11, } \\ & 121: 12 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 88: 21,88: 24,89: 4, \\ & 103: 16 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 24: 17,25: 8,68: 10, \\ & 69: 3,74: 11,79: 5, \end{aligned}$ | majority [4] - 44:23, 45.14 $88 \cdot 24$ 89.3 | $\begin{aligned} & 24: 25,25: 1,58: 25, \\ & 75: 19,113: 13, \end{aligned}$ |
| leaving [1] - 79:25 | list [4] - 24:10, 111:18, | 120:11, 123:22, | malfunc | :14, 113:15, |
| left [9]-39:22, 88:22, | 114:21, 114:23 | 128:8 | 101:2 | 3:17, 113:19, |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { 88:24, 89:4, 89:5, } \\ & 92: 11,119: 4,120: 7 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { listed [3] - 13:15, 24:3, } \\ & 56: 25 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { looks [4] - 12:20, } \\ & 20: 17,24: 16,27: 6 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { management [1] - } \\ & 55: 2 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 113: 24 \\ & \text { meant }[1]-25: 4 \end{aligned}$ |
| legal [1] -6:9 | listing [1] - 66:21 | LOOMIS [2] - 2:4, | Management [2] - | measures [9]-52:6, |
| legally ${ }_{[1]}$ - $71: 8$ | lists [1] - 111:16 | 10:10 | 102:24, 103:1 | 53:16, 55:3, 55:4 |
| legislation [1]-20:9 | live [8]-31:12, $45: 15$, | Loomis [18]-9:21, | Manager [3]-1:19, | 55:8, 55:12, 55:16, |
| Legislature ${ }_{[1]}$ - 20:3 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 108:1, 114:10, } \\ & 119: 3,122: 13, \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 9: 24,10: 8,10: 10 \\ & 10: 17,12: 3,12: 15, \end{aligned}$ | 102:15, 123:17 | $\text { 100:1, } 105: 8$ |
| lengthy [1] - 83:1 <br> lens [2] - 117:24, | 122:14 | 17:13, 19:20, 21:25, | 9:11 | 127:21 |
| $117: 25$ | lived [2] - 122:22 | 23:7, 23:10, 23:15, | manufacturer [3] | mechanisms [1] - |
| less [8] - 8:25, 39:18, | 122:23 | 28:17, 30:21, 35:21, | 42:6, 42:7, 57:10 | 124:23 |
| 39:19, 42:24, 65:2, | lives [1] - 124:2 | 80:7 | map [3]-41:16, 44:4, | median [1] - 68:23 |
| 79:8, 79:9, 105:10 | Livingston[1] - 87:4 | losing [2]-76:23, | 05:17 | meet [2]-110:18, |
| letting [1] - 120:15 | $\operatorname{LLC}_{[4]}-1: 3,1: 18$, | 119:10 | mapped [1] - 105:15 | 127:4 |
| level [11]-20:12, | 5:5, 9:20 | loss [1] - 70:22 | maps [1] - 41:13 | meeting [2] - 4:3, |
| 39:17, 40:18, 42:6, | loaded [1] - 17:8 | lost ${ }_{[1]}$ - 58:13 | margins [2]-75:13, | 58:11 |
| 42:7, 42:8, 43:11, | Local [1]-112:23 | Lotus [1] - 87:3 | 75:18 | meetings [2] - 117:22, |
| 43:22, 47:12, 47:13, | local [33] - 20:20, | love [3] - 30:3, 127:3 | mark [1] - 8:9 | 124:17 |
| 62:10 | 20:21, 20:23, 20:24, | Lovin [1] - 4:5 | marked [1] - $34: 5$ | meets [1] - 124:20 |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { level's }[2]-47: 11, \\ & 47: 12 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 21:1, 21:17, 21:25, } \\ & \text { 22:3, 22:5, 22:6, } \end{aligned}$ | low [1] - 39:16 <br> lower [2]-31:14 | $\begin{gathered} \text { market }[13]-58: 23, \\ 61: 5,61: 10,61: 17, \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { MEG [2] - 130:23, } \\ 131: 1 \end{gathered}$ |
| levels [15]-38:16 | 22:9, 22:10, 22:12 | 4 | 68:10, 71:1 | Meg [1] - 130:20 |
| 38:24, 39:10, 39:14, | 23:6, 28:16, 31:8 | lower.. [1] - 103:13 | 71:19, 71:25, 76:14, | megawatt [2] - 14:25, |
| 41:4, 42:23, 43:7, | 31:10, 32:14, 32:15, | Loyd [2] - 1:9, 58:21 | 76:17, 76:25 | 65:3 |
| 43:8, 43:15, 43:23, | 47:18, 59:13, 69:13, | Loyd's [1] - 26:12 | Market [1] - 61: | megawatts [3] |
| 44:3, 44:5, 44:6, | 72:21, 84:12, 92:24, | lubricating [1] - 90:21 | marketed [1] - 72:7 | 13:23, 65:5, 65:13 |
| 46:13 | 101:23, 113:12 | lucked [1] - 119:8 | marks [1] - 13:5 | member [5]-67:10, |
| liaison [1] - 62:23 | 113:20, 115:12 | luckily [1] - 129:11 | maRous [2]-63:14, | 112:20, 114:1, |
| Liberty ${ }_{[1]}$ - 117:6 | 119:6, 120:21, 130:7 | lucky [1] - 72:1 | 72:21 | 117:7, 123:23 |
| license [1] - 70:7 | locally [1]-129:7 |  | MaRous [17] - 2:1 | members [21]-28:16, |
| licensed [1] - 62:9 | located [1] - 41:20 | M | 60:2, 60:9, 60:16, | 28:18, 47:18, 47:19, |
| Licensed [1] - 62:12 | location $[4]-40: 21$, $40 \cdot 25,44: 10,67 \cdot 9$ |  | $60: 23,61: 1,62: 5$, $63: 10,63: 12,68: 1$ | $\begin{aligned} & 59: 13,59: 15,72: 21, \\ & 72: 22,84: 11.84: 13 \end{aligned}$ |
| lieu $[1]-8: 1$ | locations [10]-13:20, | 60:10 | $: 10,63: 12,68: 1$ | 72:22, 84:11, 84:13, <br> 93:1, 96:11, 101:23, |
| 15:24, 16:1, 17:6, | $28: 3,28: 5,28: 6,$ | M-O-O-R-E [1] - 95:23 | $77: 13,79: 15,80: 7$ | 101:25, 113:9, |
| 89:9, 93:25, 105:1, | 28:8, 28:10, 41:2, | Ma'am [1] - 48:24 | MaRous's [1] - 75:19 | 115:12, 115:14, |
| 105:24, 122:23, | 41:17, 41:18 | machine ${ }_{[1]}$ - 65:3 | massive [1]-119:18 | 120:20, 120:23, |
| 122:24, 123:4, 123:7 | $\boldsymbol{\operatorname { l o g }}{ }_{[1]}-101: 15$ | machines [2]-65:6, | Master's [2]-49:19, | 130:7, 130:9 |

MEMBERS [2] - 1:9,
1:11
Members [12]-4:11, 23:11, 31:20, 44:14, 63:14, 77:19, 83:7,
96:11, 101:8, 110:18, 114:16, 120:19
membership [1] 113:11
memo [1] - 52:21 memory [2] - 88:20, 103:8
men [5] - 113:3,
113:13, 113:17, 113:19, $114: 9$
mention [2] - 42:16, 124:3
mentioned [8]-14:23,
15:4, 17:13, 19:20,
26:14, 43:2, 91:21,
94:6
met [2] - 54:12, 54:17
metal [2]-89:13, 89:16
metals [1] - 89:15
meters [1] - 83:21
MICHAEL [2] - 60:9,
60:10
Michael [2] - 1:12,
60:2
michael [1] - 60:9
microphones [1] 121:18
middle [1] - 61:11
midwest [1] - 70:12
might [14] - 18:1, 18:9, 19:8, 43:19, 45:15, 45:16, 45:23, 54:15, 59:3, 80:14, 98:16, 99:22, 100:1, 127:13
migrate [1] - 58:9
migration [3] - 58:8,
58:9, 58:12
MIKE [1] - 2:14
mikes [2]-121:11, 121:12
miles [6] - 69:6, 69:21, 122:18, 128:4, 128:23, 128:24
milk [1] - 123:3
milked [1] - 123:5
million [15] - 13:2,
13:4, 13:5, 13:12,
16:12, 16:14, 17:3, 17:7, 17:10, 17:11, 19:12, 19:14, 32:19, 32:24, 62:18
mind $[4]-5: 2,108: 14$, 122:21, 124:14

Minder [5] - 109:25, 110:21, 111:11, 131:6, 131:8
Miner [3]-130:20, 130:21, 131:4 MINER [2] - 130:23, 131:1 minimization [3] 55:2, 55:11, 55:16 minimize [2] - 52:7, 58:13
minimum [2] - 65:14, 65:16
Minnesota [1] - 87:6
minute [3] - 79:18, 107:9, 107:10 minutes [7] - 110:5, 111:12, 112:14, 112:18, 116:24, 121:9, 122:11
miscellaneous [1] 13:6
misleading [1] - 17:2
Miss [29] - 5:22, 6:19,
28:20, 30:20, 38:24, 40:4, 42:16, 44:13, 48:15, 49:13, 50:6, 50:8, 50:15, 51:18, 55:19, 55:22, 58:7, 59:13, 59:15, 59:22, 59:23, 72:24, 74:23, 80:15, 87:12, 93:4, 130:21, 131:4
miss [10] $-4: 4,9: 17$, 35:25, 36:9, 48:20, 50:12, 51:23, 72:24, 81:11, 104:17
mitigate [1] - 118:20
mitigation [5] - 38:19, 53:16, 100:1, 101:16, 101:18
Mitigation [2]-88:1, 94:4
mix [2] - 32:14, 127:5
mixed [2] - 63:6, 90:20
mode [1] - 42:19
model [11] - 8:23,
19:24, 20:2, 24:2,
25:2, 33:4, 34:8,
34:21, 39:14, 42:9, 43:6
modeled [9] - 29:8,
38:24, 41:1, 42:10, 42:18, 48:4, 48:10, 105:15
Modeling [1] - 37:18
modeling [12] - 29:4, 38:2, 38:6, 38:9, $38: 15,38: 20,39: 3$, 39:6, 39:10, 41:23,
$41: 24,41: 25$
models [1] - 24:12
modern [3] - 67:10,
104:10, 124:2
modernization [1] -
$71: 18$
modifying [1] - 73:19
Moines [2] - 70:6,
$70: 11$
Monday [4]-14:2,
16:2, 17:24, 19:22 money [18] - 18:12,
18:14, 18:24, 19:6, 19:15, 19:17, 20:4, 20:22, 22:16, 22:19, 23:1, 24:7, 27:16, 35:13, 67:12, 69:15, 76:20
monies [2]-13:1, 18:17
monitoring [1] - 55:2
months [3]-54:17, 91:5, 91:10
Monticello [3] - 1:24, 122:10, 122:14
moore [2] - 95:14, 96:9
MOORE [3] - 3:2,
95:19, 95:22
Moore [12] - 1:19,
12:22, 14:2, 19:21, 47:1, 95:13, 95:23, 101:6, 102:11, 102:12, 102:22, 109:13
morning [2] - 6:13, 123:5
most [8]-39:15,
63:23, 63:24, 87:3, 87:5, 91:9, 108:3, 128:15
mostly [2] - 33:9, 42:17
motor [1] - 89:14
move [9]-5:25, 6:6,
6:17, 37:10, 85:22,
92:2, 104:11,
104:23, 119:10
moved [3] - 82:8,
119:5, 126:21
moves [1] - 88:13
moving [2] - 126:20,
131:11
MR [189] - 4:9, 4:13, 4:15, 4:21, 4:25, 6:23, 7:7, 7:8, 7:9, 7:12, 7:14, 7:20, 7:23, 8:1, 8:3, 8:5, 8:6, 8:11, 8:14, 8:17, 8:18, 8:19, 9:6, 9:8,

9:14, 9:15, 9:16 9:19, 9:23, 10:7, 10:12, 10:15, 23:9, 26:6, 26:9, 28:11, 28:12, 28:15, 28:24, 30:20, 30:23, 30:24, 31:2, 31:16, 31:17, 31:19, 31:20, 32:2, 34:12, 34:13, 35:21, 36:5, 36:9, 37:13, 37:14, 37:15, 44:13, $47: 16,47: 23,47: 24$, 48:2, 48:13, 48:14, 48:17, 48:22, 48:24, 49:3, 49:7, 49:8, 49:11, 50:11, 50:12, 50:15, 51:16, 55:19, 55:21, 56:2, 57:1,
57:2, 58:19, 59:12, 59:19, 59:20, 60:1, 60:2, 60:4, 60:7, 60:11, 60:14, 60:20, 63:13, 63:16, 63:19, 68:13, 68:14, 71:1, 71:11, 72:18, 72:19, 72:20, 73:3, 74:23, 75:4, 75:14, 76:1, 76:6, 76:7, 77:12, 77:17, 77:18, 77:21, 78:2, 79:10, 79:12, 79:15, 79:23, 80:11, 80:17, 80:19, 80:20, 80:25, 81:7, 81:11, 82:10, 82:15, 83:5, 84:9, 84:18, 85:2, 85:6, 85:24, 87:12, 91:12, 92:19, 92:20, 92:23, 93:17, 94:13, 94:21, 95:2, 95:8, 95:9, 95:12, 95:14, 95:20, 95:25, 96:7, 101:4, 101:5,
101:21, 102:6,
102:7, 102:10,
102:16, 102:25,
106:3, 109:12,
109:16, 109:23,
110:5, 110:12,
110:16, 110:19,
110:23, 112:4,
112:8, 112:11,
114:13, 115:11,
115:19, 115:21,
115:25, 116:8,
116:18, 116:22,
117:2, 120:17,
121:2, 121:5,
121:10, 121:12,
122:5, 122:9, 130:4,
130:13, 130:16,
130:24, 131:2,

131:15
MS [33]-4:5, 4:8,
4:10, 4:12, 4:14, 4:16, 4:17, 4:19, 4:20, 4:22, 28:23, 30:19, 36:2, 36:18, 37:17, 46:25, 48:16, 59:24, 80:22, 81:13, 81:17, 83:3, 84:17, 84:21, 85:16, 86:1, 87:10, 93:5, 93:8, 102:22, 103:2, 109:15, 110:9
multiple [2] - 54:12, 83:25
Multiple [4] - 90:15,
92:16, 107:4, 108:8
Mumm [3] - 1:22,
132:1, 132:12
must [1] - 93:22

| $\mathbf{N}$ |
| :---: |
| nacelle $21-89: 17$ |

nacelle [2] - 89:17,
90:11
name [21]-7:9, 10:8,
28:21, 36:5, 36:7,
49:3, 49:5, 60:7,
72:25, 74:25, 75:2,
81:8, 86:10, 86:14,
86:17, 95:21, 95:23,
112:4, 116:9,
116:16, 122:6
name's [2] - 112:6,
112:19
names [6] - 10:9, 36:6,
49:4, 74:25, 85:8,
116:10
narrative [3]-51:22,
53:20, 53:22
narrow [2] - 68:23
National [1] - 9:2
nationally [1] - 113:6
Natural [5] - 11:21,
52:4, 53:15, 54:2, 54:25
natural [2]-12:13,
63:4
nature [2]-38:19, 119:16
near [3]-58:4, 69:4,
89:2
nearest [2] - 122:18,
128:4
nearly [1] - 113:4
necessarily [3] -
30:13, 104:15,
125:15
necessary [1] -
119:25
need [19] - 14:11,
15:2, 20:19, 20:24,
38:18, 59:4, 59:10,
61:12, 72:11, 91:7,
106:25, 108:6,
109:17, 111:3,
111:4, 111:6, 111:8, 112:18, 120:10
needed [1] - 124:1
needing [1] - 119:20
needs [4] - 15:1, 20:18, 107:11, 127:4
negative [5] - 66:14,
69:25, 70:15, 71:22,
76:15
negatively [1] - 66:10
negatives [1] - 120:11
negativity [1] - 69:3
neighboring [1] 29:21
neighbors [1] - 98:13
net [4]-34:10, 67:6, 79:8
Network [1] - 117:7
neutral [11] - 28:19,
47:20, 59:16, 72:23,
77:14, 84:14, 93:2,
102:1, 115:15,
120:24, 130:10
never [7] - 21:14,
23:5, 67:18, 74:22,
77:3, 77:11, 127:14
New [1] - 81:23
new [13] - 18:24, 19:6,
19:14, 19:16, 20:4, 25:22, 35:6, 65:12, 71:3, 74:16, 85:7, 119:17, 126:23
newborn [1] - 127:1
newer [2]-104:9, 123:23
newly [1] - 104:10
newly-laid [1] - 104:10
next [21]-6:19, 13:2, 16:24, 20:12, 36:3, 48:21, 54:20, 59:6, 60:1, 80:12, 80:21, 84:20, 84:21, 95:11, 97:18, 97:23, 98:5, 100:8, 108:25, 116:1, 116:5
nice [3] - 72:12,
126:14, 126:18
night $[19]-5: 1,5: 3$, 5:18, 6:11, 6:12, 12:22, 42:25, 43:14, 58:13, 84:25, 85:19, 95:15, 111:10, 121:13, 123:6, 129:21, 130:22,

130:25, 131:3
nightmare [1] - 119:7 nights [2] - 111:1, 111:17
nighttime [1] - 42:23
nine [2]-15:9, 21:6
nineteen [4] - 18:6,
19:1, 37:6, 117:14 ninety [2] - 13:12, 21:6
ninety-nine [1] - 21:6
ninety-three [1] -
13:12
nobody [2] - 76:14, 118:7
nobody's [2] - 118:4, 121:18
Noise [1] - 36:25
noise [4]-37:3, 38:11, 45:10, 45:22
non [8]-24:8, 70:20,
89:8, 99:11, 112:13,
125:2, 129:25, 130:1
non-compliance [1] 125:2
non-participant [2] 70:20, 99:11
non-participating [2] 129:25, 130:1
non-recyclable [1] 89:8
non-residents [1] -
24:8
none [2]-86:23,
121:6
normal [1] - 100:23
north [2] - 44:10, 69:4
North [2] - 87:6,
112:21
Northern [1] - 56:21
northwest [1] - 122:14
note [1] - 31:9
notes [1] - 132:4
nothing [4] - 33:14,
77:9, 79:4, 90:7
notice [1] - 16:9
notified [2] - 106:19,
108:1
nuclear [1] - 69:7
Number [5] - 37:12,
51:19, 82:9, 82:11, 85:23
number [31] - 13:23,
15:10, 20:2, 22:3, 22:4, 25:19, 27:14, 28:7, 34:6, 35:3, 35:15, $35: 16,35: 18$, 38:11, 41:7, 42:15, 73:9, 90:6, 91:1, 91:17, 95:6, 96:9,

97:7, 97:12, 97:16, 97:25, 106:10, 119:4
numbered [2] - 10:21, 10:23
numbers [9]-25:23,
26:13, 27:20, 29:5, 29:14, 34:22, 35:5, 60:24
Numeral [1] - 61:18
Numerals [1] - 60:25
numerous [2] - 22:20, 53:13
Nusbaum [2] - 1:6, 4:4
NUSBAUM [9] - 4:5,
$4: 8,4: 10,4: 12,4: 14$,
$4: 16,4: 18,4: 20$,
4:22

| $\mathbf{O}$ |
| :---: |
| O\&M $[6]-88: 7,90: 25$, |
| $97: 9,97: 10,97: 17$, |

108:16
oath [2] - 85:3, 95:16
object [3] - 71:5,
75:15, 102:20
objected [2] - 5:20,
6:9
objection [9]-5:6,
8:13, 71:2, 71:7,
71:10, 71:12, 75:20,
76:2, 102:23
objections [4] - 5:12,
5:21, 5:25, 125:15
obligated [2] - 105:20, 105:23
obligating [1] - 97:6
observation [2] - 65:7,
68:2
observe [1] - 32:12
obsolescence [1] -
78:17
obsolete [2] - 72:10, 78:17
obtain [2] - 31:7, 33:8
obvious [1] - 104:19
obviously [6] - 14:1,
76:15, 77:2, 109:19,
113:21, 118:6
occasion [1] - 62:22
occasions [1] - 54:12
occur [3]-84:5,
91:10, 99:24
octave [5] - 39:11, 39:12, 39:17, 43:7, 43:9
OF [2] - 1:1, 2:3
off-sets [1] - 67:13
off-setting [1] - 18:15
offer [4]-67:20,

67:22, 71:17, 126:10
Offered [4]-3:11,
3:12, 3:13, 3:14
offers [3]-57:11, 57:14, 72:4
OFFICER [1] - 1:6
offices [1] - 36:24
Official [3]-1:22,
132:1, 132:13
official [1] - 62:23
offset [1] - 119:19
often [3] - 45:9, 98:1, 108:19
Ohio [1] - 87:5
oil [3] - 90:10, 90:21, 129:17
old [5] - 78:16, 104:9,
117:14, 126:23, 129:16
older [1] - 69:23
ONAF [1] - 42:19
once [9]-16:19,
54:11, 70:16, 73:24,
88:9, 88:12, 88:15,
97:13, 111:14
one [87]-5:3, 5:17,
6:14, 12:11, 12:17,
12:18, 12:19, 12:24,
13:9, 13:15, 14:3,
14:8, 17:6, 17:11,
17:21, 19:10, 19:12,
19:14, 20:13, 22:4,
23:13, 27:25, 29:12,
30:4, 30:23, 34:14,
42:12, 42:15, 44:1,
44:6, 44:20, 44:25,
45:5, 45:17, 46:3,
46:11, 47:7, 47:10,
47:23, 50:7, 57:4,
65:4, 67:1, 67:25,
69:19, 70:19, 72:10,
73:23, 76:15, 76:16,
77:21, 78:18, 79:24,
82:1, 83:2, 83:20,
97:20, 99:13,
101:14, 103:7,
103:8, 103:21,
103:23, 104:6,
104:8, 106:2, 106:4,
106:9, 106:14,
108:5, 108:24,
109:2, 114:21,
118:18, 119:8,
121:15, 124:10,
124:15, 125:17,
128:1, 130:1, 130:19
one-page [1] - 50:7
ones [2]-34:6, 63:23
open [3] - 100:6,
124:13, 124:18
openly [1] - 103:10 operate [2] - 27:9,
42:25
operates [1] - 16:3
operating [5] - 42:21, 43:6, 43:10, 100:24, 115:4
operation [6] - 8:23,
16:8, 24:22, 96:21,
99:3, 101:1
operations [2] - 18:13, 117:17
operator [3]-106:12,
108:4, 108:5
opinion [13] - 5:7,
21:19, 65:9, 65:15, 66:4, 66:13, 66:16, 68:5, 70:23, 71:6, $74: 10,113: 25,130: 2$
opinions [1] - 70:14
opportunity [7] -
34:21, 57:14,
110:18, 117:16,
117:20, 118:16,
131:7
opposed [12] - 28:19,
47:20, 59:15, 72:23,
77:13, 84:13, 93:1,
101:25, 115:14,
120:23, 130:9,
131:10
opposition [1] - 126:7
option [1] - 57:11
options [2]-91:8
order [6] - 4:3, 22:9,
51:12, 90:23,
111:14, 127:18
Ordinance [5] - 50:23,
53:7, 93:11, 93:15, 93:20
ordinance [2] - 96:18,
124:21
ordinances [1] -
129:23
organization [5] -
117:6, 117:8,
117:11, 119:12
oriented [1] - 44:9
origin [1] - 83:16
original [2] - 16:19,
20:8
ornithologist [1] -
51:3
otherwise [1] - 102:18
ourselves [2] - 97:6,
126:22
out-of-State [1] -
24:14
outcome [1] - 75:24
outcomes [1] - 46:1



|  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 121:6, 130:5, 130:6, } \\ & \text { 130:8, 130:10, } \\ & \text { 130:11, 130:16 } \\ & \text { quick }[1]-58: 21 \\ & \text { quickly }[1]-98: 1 \\ & \text { quite }[6]-8: 17,34: 6, \\ & 59: 10,67: 14, \\ & \text { 106:25, 128:17 } \\ & \text { quote }[2]-51: 1,53: 8 \\ & \text { quoted }[1]-53: 7 \end{aligned}$  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 48:15, 59:18, 77:16, } \\ & \text { 93:4, 93:10, 102:4 } \\ & \text { re-do [1] - 73:19 } \\ & \text { re-established }[1]- \\ & \text { 88:18 } \\ & \text { re-incorporation }[1] \text { - } \\ & \text { 90:20 } \\ & \text { re-phrase }[1]-77: 23 \\ & \text { re-processed }[1]- \\ & \text { 90:20 } \\ & \text { re-spread }[1]-88: 16 \\ & \text { re-use }[2]-88: 5,90: 8 \\ & \text { reached }[1]-69: 13 \\ & \text { read }[2]-93: 18,124: 8 \\ & \text { reading }[3]-83: 10, \\ & 109: 6,126: 5 \\ & \text { ready }[4]-9: 17, \\ & 59: 10,110: 16, \\ & 128: 17 \\ & \text { real }[8]-62: 3,64: 23, \\ & 69: 1,73: 12,84: 3, \\ & 89: 9,117: 19,119: 7 \\ & \text { Real }[1]-62: 13 \\ & \text { realities }[2]-127: 15, \\ & 127: 20 \\ & \text { reality }[1]-43: 2 \\ & \text { realize }[1]-127: 10 \\ & \text { really }[16]-12: 7,21: 6, \\ & 22: 10,25: 7,25: 25, \\ & 33: 15,59: 2,74: 1, \\ & 78: 22,118: 20, \\ & 119: 1,119: 13, \\ & 124: 16,126: 18, \\ & 126: 25,128: 6 \\ & \text { realm }[1]-50: 4 \\ & \text { Realtor }[1]-66: 19 \\ & \text { reason }[8]-25: 13, \\ & 40: 4,43: 25,64: 13, \\ & 91: 23,107: 1, \\ & 113: 10,126: 6 \\ & \text { reasonable }[1]- \\ & 124: 23 \\ & \text { reasonably }[1]-70: 20 \\ & \text { reasons }[5]-21: 25, \\ & 22: 3,29: 20,112: 25, \\ & 125: 22 \\ & \text { recalled }[2]-85: 12, \\ & 96: 2 \\ & \text { receipt }[1]-98: 3 \\ & \text { receive }[10]-13: 1, \\ & 18: 1,18: 11,19: 2, \\ & 19: 10,22: 19,24: 7, \\ & 97: 15,97: 24,100: 4 \\ & \text { received }[3]-19: 2, \\ & 22: 23,97: 13 \\ & \text { recently }[3]-87: 3, \\ & 87: 6,126: 15 \\ & \text { receptor }[5]-41: 7, \\ & 41: 10,41: 16,41: 19 \\ & \text { receptors }[1]-41: 13 \end{aligned}$ |  | ```relating [3] - 7:21, 41:4, 96:20 relation [1] - 66:20 relationship [1] - 34:2 relative \({ }_{[1]}-13: 15\) relatively \({ }_{[1]}\) - \(74: 18\) relevance [1]-71:5 relevancy [1]-71:9 relevant [3]-13:21, 18:20, 112:14 reliant \([1]-22: 12\) relied [1]-25:8 rely [3] - 32:18, 32:23, 53:2 remain [2]-85:3, 95:16 remedy [1] - 61:12 remember [3]-39:1, 118:21, 120:9 remind [1] - 85:3 reminder \([1]\) - 39:10 reminds [1] - 43:4 remotely [1] - 123:16 removal [3]-88:2, 88:11, 92:1 remove [1]-87:24 removed [8] - 68:5, 88:5, 88:10, 88:13, 88:25, 89:3, 93:23, 94:17 removing [1] - 91:3 renewable [5] - 50:4, 70:10, 117:9, 117:12, 127:5 Renewable [2] - 11:25, 12:1 repair [2]-105:7, 105:23 repairing [1] - 104:25 repaying [1] - 106:15 replace \({ }_{[1]}\) - 68:4 Report [2]-12:16, 37:18 report [34]-10:18, 11:8, 14:17, 17:1, 17:20, 18:25, 25:22, 26:5, 30:8, 35:12, 35:17, 37:18, 38:2, 38:6, 39:24, 40:20, 41:5, 41:6, 43:18, 60:25, 61:1, 68:22, 82:18, 82:21, 83:6, 83:11, 83:18, 86:2, 86:10, 86:12, 86:17, 92:1, 98:18, 99:4 REPORTER [1] - 1:21 reporter [5] - 9:25, 28:22, 42:2, 85:7, 95:21 Reporter [4]-1:22,``` |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |


|  | ```respectfully \({ }_{[1]}\) - 48:23 respective [1] - 15:22 respond \({ }_{[1]}\) - 98:1 responding \([1]\) - 46:10 response [9]-9:9, 45:2, 45:6, 45:13, 46:15, 46:24, 47:2, 47:6, 95:17 responses [6] - 44:21, 44:23, 45:4, 45:8, 47:7, 85:4 responsibilities [2] - 50:17, 50:18 responsive [1]-7:18 rest [1]-80:14 restoration [3] - 88:13, 91:19, 91:21 restored [1] -93:24 result [3]-21:22, 27:16, 33:5 results [9]-24:13, 24:22, 39:6, 39:24, 40:17, 41:13, 52:7, 54:13, 54:23 retained [2]-111:11, 131:5 retired [1] - 33:18 returned \([1]-88: 18\) reusable [1] - 89:9 revenue [11]-16:24, 17:14, 17:16, 17:19, 17:21, 17:22, 22:1, 28:7, 35:16, 119:19, 125:10 revenues [5] - 16:5, 17:25, 18:10, 21:22, 25:11 review [3] - 37:10, 85:19, 85:21 revisions [5] - 11:7, 38:6, 61:14, 82:20, 86:22 rich [1]-20:16 Ridge \([7]\) - 19:1, 19:11, 21:19, 28:2, 28:3, 62:24, 63:1 rights [1] - 118:1 Riley [9] - 111:18, 112:6, 112:17, 112:20, 114:14, 115:12, 115:16, 115:23 RILEY [3] - 112:6, 112:10, 112:16 riley [2] - 112:8, 114:15 RILEY..None``` |  <br> River [1] - 36:24 <br> Rivian [1] - 128:24 <br> road [3] - 67:10, <br> 88:11, 115:3 <br> roads [1] - 88:12 <br> role [1] - 129:23 <br> ROLL [1] - 2:2 <br> roll [1] - 4:4 <br> rolling [1] - 126:16 <br> Roman [2]-60:25, <br> 61:17 <br> roof $[4]-127: 8$, <br> 127:14, 127:23, <br> 128:12 <br> room [3] - 38:25, <br> 109:21, 131:16 <br> rotor [1] - 83:19 <br> roughly [2]-24:9, <br> 127:23 <br> RSG [2] - 36:4, 36:23 <br> rule [2] - 8:6, 98:16 <br> rules [3] - 92:3, <br> 112:11, 116:23 <br> run [11]-24:12, 68:24, <br> 70:19, 87:18, 87:21, <br> 100:23, 100:24, <br> 110:7, 121:15, <br> 124:4, 129:17 <br> Runner [4]-80:24, <br> 80:25, 81:10, 81:13 <br> RUNNER [2]-2:18, <br> 81:9 <br> runner [5]-81:19, <br> 83:4, 84:11, 84:15, <br> 84:19 <br> runner's [2]-82:6, <br> 83:6 <br> Runner's $[1]$ - 82:10 <br> RYAN [3] - 28:23, <br> 29:2, 30:19 <br> Ryan [6]-1:17, 28:20, <br> 28:23, 28:25, 30:20, <br> 37:9 <br> Ryan............. $29_{[1] ~-~}^{\text {- }}$ <br> 2:6 <br> S <br> sad ${ }_{[1]}-120: 6$ Safety $[1]-62: 25$ safety $[3]-50: 2$, $108: 25,113: 5$ sake $[1]-107: 12$ sale $[1]-70: 21$ sales $[2]-68: 21,69: 9$ | ```salvage [3] - 92:10, 92:11, 92:14 sat [2] - 62:23, 62:24 scale [6] - 33:18, 35:7, 127:16, 127:20, 127:22, 128:1 scare [1] - 57:22 scenario [1] - 84:4 schedule [2]-9:11, 108:21 scheduled [3] - 19:2, 19:9, 107:24 schedules [1] - 80:18 school [40]-15:20, 15:22, 18:9, 18:11, 18:20, 18:21, 18:22, 19:17, 19:19, 20:9, 20:10, 20:11, 20:14, 20:16, 20:18, 20:20, 21:4, 21:7, 21:9, 21:10, 21:11, 21:12, 21:18, 22:2, 22:6, 22:16, 22:23, 22:24, 23:22, 28:17, 47:19, 59:14, 72:22, 84:12, 101:24, 115:13, 120:21, 123:12, 130:7 School [5] - 19:1, 21:19, 21:20, 28:3, 62:1 schools [12]-13:1, 17:23, 18:1, 18:16, 20:6, 21:14, 28:1, 35:14, 67:12, 69:16, 92:25, 125:11 science [1] - 123:12 Science \({ }_{[1]}\) - 123:14 Sciences [1] - 49:18 scientific [1] - 74:20 scientist [1] - 74:11 scope [2]-75:18, 102:19 scores [1] - 87:1 Scott [1] - 1:8 scrupulous [1] - 30:16 season [3]-91:9, 108:23 season-by-season [1] - 108:23 second \([9]-7: 7,15: 4\), 22:11, 40:2, 43:24, 53:23, 56:12, 105:13, 119:1 secondary [2] - 32:6, 33:11 secondly [1] - 123:24 seconds [2] - 9:1, 61:12 Section [9]-50:22,``` | $\begin{gathered} 50: 25,53: 6,93: 15, \\ 93: 18,94: 14,96: 21, \\ 96: 25,97: 1 \\ \text { section }[1]-106: 20 \\ \text { sector }[2]-37: 4, \\ 38: 13 \\ \text { sectors }[1]-26: 25 \\ \text { see }[36]-5: 15,16: 22, \\ 16: 23,17: 5,41: 16, \\ 43: 20,43: 21,43: 23, \\ 44: 8,56: 9,59: 10, \\ 65: 15,65: 23,66: 2, \\ 67: 2,69: 2,76: 25, \\ 79: 2,79: 8,83: 22, \\ 86: 14,86: 17,98: 13, \\ 104: 19,105: 6, \\ 116: 4,116: 8, \\ 117: 21,118: 7, \\ 120: 7,120: 12, \\ 123: 8,125: 15, \\ 126: 8,126: 13 \\ \text { seed }[11]-75: 10, \\ 76: 4,76: 8,76: 9, \\ 77: 22,78: 4,78: 6, \\ 78: 8,78: 9,78: 11 \\ \text { seeing }[4]-118: 11, \\ 118: 16,121: 6,128: 6 \\ \text { seek }[1]-98: 11 \\ \text { seem }[1]-123: 9 \\ \text { sees }[1]-105: 14 \\ \text { selected }[3]-7: 24, \\ 8: 24,40: 10 \\ \text { self }[1]-9: 3 \\ \text { self-contained }[1]- \\ 9: 3 \\ \text { sell }[1]-70: 23 \\ \text { selling }[1]-49: 4 \\ \text { send }[1]-99: 4 \\ \text { Senior }[2]-1: 19, \\ 36: 23 \\ \text { sense }[4]-14: 13, \\ 25: 12,33: 6,74: 14 \\ \text { sensitive }[1]-45: 24 \\ \text { sensitivities }[1]- \\ 45: 22 \\ \text { separate }[2]-24: 12, \\ 92: 17 \\ \text { separately }[1]-51: 22 \\ \text { September }[1]-71: 23 \\ \text { sequencing }[1]-91: 6 \\ \text { seriously }[1]-99: 11 \\ \text { Service }[5]-52: 4, \\ 53: 15,54: 1,54: 17, \\ 54: 25 \\ \text { services }[2]-67: 11, \\ 119: 22 \\ \text { Services }[1]-57: 20 \\ \text { set }[8]-15: 18,16: 16, \\ 32: 14,45: 16,91: 6, \\ 92: 9,96: 15,96: 24 \end{gathered}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |



| ```statistical \([1]\) - 34:8 statistics \([7]-7: 4\), 7:5, 7:6, 7:21, 8:20, 24:16, 33:1 steal [1] - 74:12 stealing \({ }_{[1]}-118: 13\) steel \({ }_{[1]}\) - 89:14 step [10]-35:22, 48:19, 59:22, 79:16, 95:11, 97:18, 98:5, 109:13, 111:19, 130:17 stepped \({ }^{11]}\) - 6:10 steps \([8]-51: 8,87: 21\), 96:23, 97:20, 97:23, 98:4, 98:20, 101:7 stigma \([7]\) - 64:2, 64:4, 64:17, 66:9, 66:14, 66:18, 66:21 still [8] - 19:15, 32:18, 33:4, 33:9, 33:19, 46:23, 124:13, 127:13 stood [1] - 5:5 stop [2] - 58:1, 58:12 story [1] - 72:9 straight \([1]\) - 106:11 Strategic [2]-12:4, 12:6 Street [3] - 15:11, 15:15, 78:16 street \({ }_{[1]}-73: 14\) strictly [1]-25:1 strike [1] - 105:7 strikes [2]-105:6, 105:7 strong [4]-67:11, 70:12, 70:14, 71:25 stronger [2]-68:10, 77:7 struck [1] - 106:13 structure [7]-67:16, 69:17, 70:3, 77:7, 84:2, 88:3, 88:10 stuck [1] - 61:12 student \({ }_{[1]}\) - 20:17 students [4]-20:20, 33:19, 35:8, 49:25 studied [1]-123:12 studies [19] - 38:9, 45:9, 51:12, 52:5, 52:7, 52:18, 52:21, 53:2, 53:13, 54:9, 54:24, 55:14, 63:3, 63:5, 64:25, 68:21, 81:25, 89:7, 90:4 study [2]-38:21, 51:4 studying [1] - 64:24 stuff \({ }^{11}\) - 129:18 subdivisions [1] -``` | ```63:8 subject [8] - 22:5, 35:22, 48:19, 59:23, 79:16, 80:1, 111:2 submit [1] - 97:7 subsequent [1] - 62:6 substantial [5] - 51:6, 53:10, 53:11, 53:18, 125:9 substation [8] - 41:15, 41:18, 41:19, 41:20, 42:18, 88:8, 89:2, 89:20 substitute \({ }_{[1]}-77: 1\) subtly [1] - 70:12 suburban [1] - 119:15 sued [1]-25:19 suggesting \([1]-34: 20\) suggestion [1]-8:3 sum [1]-14:1 summarize [4]- 36:21, 61:21, 81:20, 96:23 summarized [1] - 55:17 summarizes [3]- 35:12, 55:3, 85:20 Summary [1]-12:20 summary [9] - 7:3, 8:19, 16:11, 49:14, 51:25, 55:10, 55:11, 55:14, 85:18 summation [1]-128:3 summed [1] - 35:19 summer [2]-23:2, 122:24 Summer [1] - 58:8 SUP [1] - 130:20 superior \([3]-22: 1\), 22:4, 23:6 Supervisor \({ }_{[1]}-34: 23\) support [15] - 112:2, 112:24, 112:25, 114:12, 116:1, 116:13, 122:2, 122:19, 124:12, 124:22, 125:17, 126:2, 128:1, 130:20, 131:9 SUPPORT \({ }_{[1]}-2: 3\) supported [1] - 29:7 supportive [1] - 57:20 supposed [2] - 20:4, 20:7 suppress [1] - 8:25 suppression [4] - 7:10, 7:11, 7:24, 57:11 surcharges [1] - 106:15``` | ```surprised [1] - 29:11 surveys [4] - 54:12, 54:13, 56:7, 58:3 Susan [2]-2:6, 28:23 SUSAN [2] - 28:23, 29:2 suspect [1] - 106:9 sustain [1] - 76:2 sustainability [1] - 50:1 Sustainable [1] - 11:24 sustainable [1] - 124:1 sustained [2]-5:12, 35:16 swing [1] - 28:7 switch [1]-23:21 swooping \([1]\) - 118:13 sworn [24]-9:25, 10:1, 10:4, 36:10, 36:14, 48:25, 49:1, 60:5, 60:6, 81:1, 81:2, 81:5, 85:2, 85:13, 96:3, 111:20, 111:21, 112:3, 116:6, 116:7, 116:14, 121:20, 121:21, 122:3 synthetic [1] - 90:21 Syracuse [1]-81:23 system [11] - 7:11, 7:23, 7:24, 57:12, 57:18, 57:24, 59:7, 89:3, 89:16, 96:19 systems [3]-8:21, 58:22, 66:3``` T table $[8]-16: 9,16: 11$, 19:11, $41: 13,54: 21$, $55: 3,55: 9,55: 10$ Table $[2]-55: 9,55: 17$ task $[1]-32: 22$ taught $[1]-11: 19$ tax $[28]-13: 24,14: 12$, $15: 15,15: 16,15: 17$, $15: 18,15: 21,15: 23$, $16: 5,16: 24,17: 14$, 17:16, 17:19, 17:21, 17:24, 18:14, 21:22, $22: 1,22: 6,22: 8$, $25: 5,25: 11,25: 16$, $35: 9,35: 16,69: 15$, $119: 18$ Tax $[1]-34: 23$ taxed $[1]-16: 8$ taxes $[14]-12: 23$, 13:9, $13: 11,13: 16$, | ```16:10, 16:12, 20:21, 22:13, 22:18, 25:2, 35:11, 119:19, 119:21 taxing [9]-13:6, 13:14, 13:20, 13:25, 15:18, 16:5, 22:7, 28:1, 35:19 taxpayer [1]-125:12 teachers [1]-22:25 teaching [2]-49:25, 117:9 team [2]-103:22 teamsters [1]-115:5 tease [1] - 32:12 teaser \({ }_{[1]}\) - 47:1 Technically \({ }_{[1]}\) - 122:12 technician [1]-49:23 technicians [1] - 108:16 technology [1] - 128:18 Technology [1] - 51:11 tedious [1]-124:19 Telecommunication s [1]-11:22 telephone [2]-97:11, 97:16 template [2]-106:7, 106:21 \(\operatorname{ten}[21]-8: 25,12: 10\), 13:4, 16:23, 16:24, 20:3, 32:19, 32:24, 34:5, 45:25, 50:3, 61:12, 67:18, 67:19, 70:8, 70:22, 79:18, 83:19, 112:13, 112:18, 116:23 ten-minute [1]-79:18 ten-year [1]-20:3 tenant [3]-106:12, 108:20, 109:4 tenants \({ }_{[1]}-106: 25\) term [5]-21:14, 21:15, 33:10, 33:11, 94:2 terms [12]-13:18, 13:22, 22:17, 29:6, 30:16, 31:8, 35:7, 40:16, 45:25, 67:4, 94:1, 106:22 test [1] - 76:24 testified [14] - 10:5, 29:10, 36:15, 81:6, 84:24, 85:13, 95:14, 96:4, 110:21, 110:25, 111:7, 112:3, 116:14, 122:3``` | $\begin{aligned} & \text { testify [5] - 29:24, } \\ & \text { 50:9, 111:16, 131:4, } \\ & \text { 131:6 } \\ & \text { testifying }[1]-110: 1 \\ & \text { TESTIMONY }[1]-2: 3 \\ & \text { testimony }[14]-6: 22, \\ & 9: 17,23: 11,75: 19, \\ & 79: 16,100: 7,101: 6, \\ & \text { 102:19, 104:3, } \\ & 110: 12,114: 15, \\ & 115: 20,115: 25, \\ & 120: 19 \\ & \text { tests }[1]-88: 16 \\ & \text { that'Il }[1]-12: 25 \\ & \text { THE }[5]-1: 14,1: 16, \\ & 2: 3,7: 13,84: 24 \\ & \text { themselves }[3]-88: 3, \\ & 88: 8,89: 1 \\ & \text { theory }[2]-18: 18, \\ & 103: 22 \\ & \text { therefore }[2]-16: 19, \\ & 125: 16 \\ & \text { they've }[10]-20: 25, \\ & 22: 25,23: 2,44: 22, \\ & 70: 8,111: 7,111: 8, \\ & 123: 4,123: 10, \\ & 123: 11 \\ & \text { think's }[1]-117: 25 \\ & \text { thinking }[1]-25: 1 \\ & \text { thinks }[1]-6: 3 \\ & \text { third }[6]-41: 8,42: 13, \\ & 43: 4,51: 10,58: 23, \\ & 105: 13 \\ & \text { third-party }[1]-51: 10 \\ & \text { thirds }[1]-107: 20 \\ & \text { thirteen }[3]-13: 3, \\ & 14: 16,24: 25 \\ & \text { thirty }[10]-10: 20, \\ & 10: 22,14: 11,16: 4, \\ & 16: 18,17: 1,17: 6, \\ & 17: 11,87: 2,122: 10 \\ & \text { thirty-eight }[2]- \\ & 10: 20,10: 22 \\ & \text { thirty-year }[2]-17: 6, \\ & 17: 11 \\ & \text { thorough }[1]-124: 18 \\ & \text { thousand }[10]-8: 21, \\ & 14: 25,62: 7,65: 11, \\ & 69: 11,71: 20,73: 23, \\ & 74: 13,78: 19,83: 21 \\ & \text { thousands }[3]-19: 4, \\ & 62: 20,68: 20 \\ & \text { three }[31]-5: 1,5: 9, \\ & 6: 11,13: 4,13: 12, \\ & 14: 24,15: 6,15: 10, \\ & 16: 9,17: 6,17: 11, \\ & 17: 15,17: 17,21: 3, \\ & 21: 4,21: 5,28: 2, \\ & 42: 4,48: 7,48: 9, \\ & 65: 13,67: 17,72: 3, \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

72:16, 73:20, 73:22,
111:1, 111:17,
117:17, 125:13
thresholds [1] - 46:6 throughout [4] -
41:13, 51:12, 68:11, 68:12
Tier [12] - 18:22,
19:17, 19:19, 20:11,
20:12, 20:14, 21:4,
21:7, 21:8, 21:10,
21:12
tier [5] - 19:20, 19:23,
20:11, 21:21, 23:23
tiers [1] - 20:10
tight [2]-110:7,
113:23
tile [17] - 103:12, 103:15, 103:24, 104:9, 104:10, 104:14, 104:18, 104:25, 105:3, 105:7, 105:11, 105:14, 105:18, 105:23
tiles [3]-103:11, 103:19, 104:16
tiling [1] - 104:7
title [3]-36:20, 49:13, 81:19
titled [6] - 10:18, 10:23, 37:18, 61:1, 86:3, 93:19
today [2] - 128:25, 129:15
Todd [1] - 1:11
together [4] - 43:3,
79:2, 79:8, 124:6
toll [1] - 97:6
tomorrow [9]-8:12, 110:1, 110:22, 111:10, 130:21, 130:25, 131:3, 131:13, 131:16
ton [1] - 72:11
tonight [16] - 80:5, 82:1, 83:2, 85:7, 85:19, 95:18, 112:19, 112:22, 121:14, 121:16, 121:17, 122:19,
123:22, 124:6,
130:14, 130:18
top [8]-34:5, 34:6,
37:21, 42:13, 42:14,
48:11, 88:16, 105:18
Top [1]-87:4
total [6]-13:8, 13:11, 13:16, 16:12, 34:3, 89:10
totally $[1]-129: 10$
touch [1] $-47: 8$ towards [1] - 61:17 tower [1]-89:14 towers [1] - 115:3 town [2]-70:12, 111:6 townships [1] - 13:4
traced [1] - 33:21
track [3]-34:25, 98:25
tracking [1] - 99:15
tract [1]-119:15 trades [1] - 113:16
Tradewind [2] - 29:10, 29:13
train [1] - 58:13
training [1] - 113:6 transcribed [1] 132:4
transcript [1] - 132:6 transcripts [2] -
124:8, 126:5 transfer [1] - 63:8 transformer [8] - 40:6, 40:9, 40:14, 40:15, 40:16, 42:20, 42:21, 89:20
transformers [4] -
40:7, 40:10, 40:22, 42:18
transitioned [1] -
19:25
transitioning [1] 123:25
transmission [3] -
12:13, 88:9, 89:16
transparent [1] - 25:9
transportable [1] 88:4
transportation [1] 129:15
traveling [3] - 44:5, 49:23, 117:8
Travis [1] - 52:13
treat [2]-7:16, 29:17
trees [1]-84:4
trench [1] - 105:7
trencher [1] - 103:20
trenching [2] - 105:3, 105:5
trending [2] - 14:9, 16:22
tried [2] - 6:4, 25:8
tripped [1] - 25:5
trouble [1] - 24:25
trucking [1] - 91:8
trucks [1] - 115:6
true [7]-11:4, 38:1,
58:6, 61:9, 82:17,

86:7, 132:5
trust [1] - 52:20
truthful [1] - 85:4
truthfully [1] - 95:17
try [7]-34:24, 44:20, 46:20, 70:24, 79:19, 101:15
trying [10] - 6:14, 6:15,
6:16, 6:17, 7:17,
45:12, 119:12,
119:14, 119:16
turbine [32]-7:25, 13:20, 13:24, 35:2, 35:5, 39:14, 41:17,
42:8, 42:12, 44:6, 44:7, 48:7, 48:9, 55:5, 57:10, 70:8, 73:10, 73:25, 76:10, 76:21, 79:3, 89:17, 90:11, 90:13, 92:10, 94:16, 100:11, 101:1, 107:14, 118:19, 122:18, 128:4
turbines [44]-8:22, 13:18, 14:1, 35:15, 42:11, 43:6, 43:10, 43:12, 43:20, 44:1, 44:2, 44:9, 48:4, 57:15, 57:17, 57:25, 58:1, 58:12, 64:20, 65:4, 66:11, 69:10, 70:21, 73:21, 73:22, 75:12, 78:9, 78:12, 88:2, 88:8, 89:1, 90:25, 126:7,
126:13, 126:17, 127:8, 127:14, 127:19, 128:7, 128:11, 128:17, 129:10, 129:11 turn [8] - 4:23, 11:10, 12:17, 17:21, 37:24, 53:19, 59:24, 129:9
twelve [2]-65:14, 117:14
twelve-ish [1] - 117:14
twenty [11]-8:21,
8:23, 27:2, 34:6,
37:1, 62:8, 69:6,
69:20, 70:22, 83:21, 111:12
twenty-eight [1] - 8:21
two [42] - 6:11, 14:8,
15:6, 15:10, 15:14, 17:14, 17:17, 20:13, 21:11, 22:14, 24:12, 28:2, 30:10, 33:19, 33:20, $39: 9,39: 12$, 39:17, 40:23, 42:9,


| 63 | 110:6 | 石, 44:5 | 128:11, 128:15, | 31:10, 115:5 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 49 | wA |  | 7, | -19:2 |
| varies [1] - 20:13 | WAX ${ }_{[36]}-4: 3$ | W | 129:1 | 114: |
| variety [1] - $38: 12$ | $\begin{aligned} & 4: 11,4: 23,7 \\ & 23: 13,26: 4,2 \end{aligned}$ | Western 11 - $51: 11$ | Wind [44] - 5:5, 9:20, 10:19, 12:12, 12:23, | world [5] - 8:22, <br> 52:19, 84:1, 84:3, |
| various [6] - 15:18, <br> 35:19, 44:21, 49:24 | $3,26: 4,28: 1$ $4,34: 17,35$ | Western [1] - 51:1 <br> Westwood [5] - 84 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 10:19, 12:12, 12:23, } \\ & \text { 18:15, 19:13, 21:23, } \end{aligned}$ | 52:19, 84:1, 84:3, |
|  | 44:18, 47:5, 47:15, |  | :13, | worrying [1] - 104:16 |
| vary [1] - 46:7 | 4, 57:7, 58:16 |  | , 36:3, 37 | worth [2] - 78:18, |
| ve | 7, 79 | whatsoever [2] - | 21, 39:7, 39 | 127:17 |
| ve | 83:9, 83:13, 84:8, | 44:25, 45: | 23, | [1]-128: |
| vel [3]-44:22, 45 | 11:11, 92 | w | 5:4, 55:1 | [ [3] - 50: |
| 45:6 | 101:12, 101:20, | [1] - 8 | 61:2, 61:6, $80: 9$, | 7:4, |
| $\begin{array}{r} \text { verify }[5]-30 \\ 33: 3,41: 10 \end{array}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 2: 9,102: 12 \\ & 3: 1,103: 5, \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { White }[6]-29: 15, \\ 36: 24,69: 5,11 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & : 23,82: 18,83 \\ & : 22,86: 3,86: 4 \end{aligned}$ | www.Firetrace.co [1] - 7:6 |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Vermont }[1]-36: 24 \\ & \text { version }[1]-92: 6 \\ & \text { versus }[5]-10: 21, \\ & 40: 7,67: 1,106: 12, \\ & 120: 11 \end{aligned}$ | :11, 114:1 | $115 \cdot 1$ | 94:11, 94:15, 96:19, <br> $114 \cdot 9,115 \cdot 17$ |  |
|  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 115:10, 131:14 } \\ & \text { Wax's }[2]-71: 14, \\ & \text { 102:3 } \\ & \text { Wax................. } 101 \end{aligned}$ | whoever's [1] - 105:22 |  | X |
|  |  | $\begin{gathered} \text { whole [6] - } 45: 21, \\ 70: 25,72: 8,74: 2 \end{gathered}$ | $20,124$ | XLIII ${ }_{[1]}$ - 61:18 |
|  |  | 77:6, 92:14 |  |  |
| Vestas [1] - 57:13 viable $[2]-90: 8$, | $\begin{aligned} & -3: 3 \\ & \text { Wax................ } 114{ }_{[1]} \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { wide }[2]-13: 17,87: 24 \\ & \text { wife }[5]-67: 21 \text {, } \end{aligned}$ | WIND [2] - 1:3, 1:18 <br> Wind's [8]-51:20, | d |
| $\begin{gathered} \text { view }[6]-15: 7,6 \\ 64: 8,126: 11,1 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Wax................. } 23[1]- \\ & 2: 5 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 125:14, 126:21, } \\ & \text { 129:19, 129:21 } \end{aligned}$ | 96:16 | year [33] - 11:17, |
| 128:20 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 2:5 } \\ & \text { Wax................ } 44[1] \text { - } \\ & 2: 10 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { wildlife }[10]-50: 1, \\ 50: 9,51: 3,51: 12, \end{gathered}$ | windings [2]-89:15, 89:21 | 14:10, 15:9, 15:17, <br> 16:11, 16:12, 17:1, |
| views [2]-65 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 2:10 } \\ & \text { Wax................. } 57 \\ & \end{aligned}$ | $51: 13,52: 2,52: 23,$ | Winds [1] - 11:1 <br> wisely [1] - 111:13 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 16:11, 16:12, 17:1, } \\ & \text { 17:4, 17:6, 17:8, } \end{aligned}$ |
|  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Wax................. } 57 \text { [1] - } \\ & \text { 2:13 } \end{aligned}$ | Wildlife [8]-49:18, |  | ,11, 19:6, 19:1 |
| vista [7]-64:2, 6 | Wax................. 68 [1] - <br> 2:16 | $54: 6,54: 17,54: 25,$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { wish }[4]-6: 21,80: 2, \\ 109: 19,126: 25 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & : 3,20: 6,20: 13, \\ & : 2,22: 24,23: 1, \end{aligned}$ |
| 66:9, 66:14, | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 2:16 } \\ & \text { Wax................. } 83_{[1] ~-~}^{\text {- }} \end{aligned}$ |  | Witness [8]-10:1, <br> 36:10, 49:1, 60:6, | :17, 104:9, |
| Vista [1] - 64:4 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Wax................. } 83 \text { [1] - } \\ & \text { 2:19 } \end{aligned}$ | 57:19 <br> William [1] - 1:10 |  | 105:12, 105:13, 108:24, 108:25, |
| voice [1]-114:11 | Wax................. 87 [1] - |  | $\begin{aligned} & 81: 2,111: 21,116: 7, \\ & 121: 21 \end{aligned}$ | 114:3, 118:18, |
| Volume [3]-51:21 <br> 51:24, 82:13 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 2:21 } \\ & \text { Wax......... } 103[11-3: 4 \end{aligned}$ | 118:15 | 121:21 <br> witness [25]-6:19, | 126:25 |
| 51:24, $82: 13$ voted [1] - 126:1 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Wax......... } 103_{[1]}-3: 4 \\ & \text { Wax........ } 34_{[1]}-2: 8 \\ & \text { ways }[4]-90: 4, \\ & 119: 14,123: 22, \\ & \text { 129:16 } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { wind }[77]-8: 22,12: 8, \\ \text { 16:7, 16:17, 16:19, } \\ \text { 17:2, 24:21, 27:9, } \\ 30: 6,30: 9,32: 19, \\ 33: 25,34: 4,34: 7, \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{array}{\|c} \text { witness [25] - 6:19, } \\ 9: 21,10: 3,10: 13, \\ \text { 28:16, 36:13, 48:21, } \\ \text { 51:14, 57:3, } 60: 1, \end{array}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { year-by-year [2] - } \\ \text { 14:10, 17:8 } \\ \text { years }[30]-8: 23, \end{gathered}$ |
| W |  |  | $\begin{aligned} & 51: 14,57: 3,60: 1, \\ & 60: 3,60: 21,71: 13 \end{aligned}$ |  |
| wait ${ }_{[1]}$ - 128:18 <br> walk [2]-14:20, 41:21 | 129:16 <br> weather [2]-107:10, | $35: 2,35: 5,35: 15,$ | 82:15, 84:20, 85:12, <br> $94 \cdot 12,95 \cdot 11,96 \cdot 2$ | 16:23, 16:24, 17:1, <br> 20:2, 22:23, 30:10, |
| Wall [2]-15:11, 15:15 | web [7]-7:4, 7:13, 7:20, 8:9, 9:12, 35:9, | $\begin{aligned} & 39: 14,41: 17,42: 10, \\ & 42: 11,42: 12,43: 6, \end{aligned}$ | $102: 5,109: 18,110: 1$ | 20:2, 22:23, 30:10, |
| Walmart [1]-65:25 <br> wanna [3]-66:6, 66 | 7:20, 8:9, 9:12, 35:9, 97:8 | 43:9, 43:12, 57:25, | witnesses [10]-36:1, | 38:11, 49:22, 50:3, |
| wants [5] - 71:6, | $\begin{aligned} & \text { WECS }_{[6]}-93: 11, \\ & 93: 15,93: 19,93: 22, \end{aligned}$ | $63: 4,64: 16,64: 19$ | 109:14, 109:20, | $\begin{aligned} & 50: 5,53: 13,62: 4, \\ & 69: 15,76: 21,82: 3 \end{aligned}$ |
| 80:4, 80:18 | 93:15, 93:19, 93:22, | $66: 23,66: 24,67: 1 \text {, }$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 110:3, 110:21, } \\ & 110: 24,111: 1 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 117:14, 117:15, } \\ & \text { 117:18, 119:4, } \end{aligned}$ |
| wars [1]-129:18 |  | 69:3, 70:7, 70:17, |  |  |
| Washington [1] - 1:23 | week [3] - 80:12 | $\begin{aligned} & 72: 4,72: 13,74: 12, \\ & 74: 21,75: 12,76: 21, \end{aligned}$ | women [6] - 113:3 | yesterday [5] - 6:25, |
| waste [2]-63:7, 89:25 |  | 74:21, 75:12, 76:21, | 113:19, 113:20, | 38:23, 40:5, 42:4, |
| $\begin{gathered} \text { watching [3] - 103:20, } \\ 128: 10,129: 21 \end{gathered}$ | weight [2]-105:8 | 94:16, 113:4, | 113:19, 113:20, 114:9 | 38:23, 40:5, 42:4, $58: 7$ |
| Wax [24]-1:9, 4:6 | weights [1] - 104:22 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 114:25, 118:19, } \\ & \text { 122:18, 122:19, } \end{aligned}$ | wood [2] - 127:9, | York [1] - 81:24 <br> young [3]-113:17, |
| 4:25, 7:2, 7:14, 8:20, |  | 126:3, 126:7, |  |  |
| :2, 17:23, 19:22, | Weldon [5] - 19:9, | $\begin{aligned} & 126: 13,126: 1 \\ & 126: 20,127: 8 \end{aligned}$ | WORD [1] - 3:16 words [2]-16:18, | 119:23, 125:21 |
| $3,68: 15,69: 1$ | $19: 13,21: 20,28: 2,$ |  |  | yourself $[1]-88: 11$ yourselves [2] 108:12, 127:3 |
| $2,71: 6,79: 13$ |  |  | words [2] - 16:18, 75:17 |  |
| 92:21, 95:9, 101:21, | welfare [2] - 113:22, 114:1 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 127:21, 127:25, } \\ & \text { 128:1, 128:4, 128:6, } \end{aligned}$ | worker [1] - 30:14 <br> workers [3]-24:14, |  |


| Z |
| :---: |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { ZBA }[14]-7: 1,30: 10, \\ & \text { 31:21, 35:23, 48:18, } \\ & \text { 54:3, 59:21, 62:24, } \\ & \text { 109:24, 110:20, } \\ & \text { 114:16, 115:22, } \\ & \text { 121:6, 130:16, } \\ & \text { zero }[2]-27: 16,67: 7 \\ & \text { zoning }[4]-63: 6, \\ & 70: 1,124: 21,129: 23 \\ & \text { zONING }[3]-1: 1,1: 6, \\ & \text { 1:9 } \\ & \text { Zoning }[14]-23: 11, \\ & 44: 15,55: 22,62: 24, \\ & 63: 14,77: 20,83: 8, \\ & 84: 19,101: 9, \\ & 112: 12,116: 23, \\ & 120: 19,129: 23, \\ & 130: 5 \end{aligned}$ |

