



**Town of Wheatland**  
34315 Geneva Rd. New Munster, WI 53105  
Clerk Katie Sweatman

Date: January 14, 2026

## Public Hearing Minutes (Robin Battery Storage)

Tuesday, January 13, 2026 – 6:00 P.M.

The Wheatland Town Board met on Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at 6:00 PM at the Wheatland Town Hall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### Roll Call:

Chairmen: Jeff Butler

Supervisor #1: Kyle Madsen

Supervisor #2: Kelly Wilson

Also in attendance were Katie Sweatman, Clerk, Shannon Herda, Treasurer, Jill Rzeplinski, Mary and Rob Petersen, Diane Grenus, Todd Terry (Town Attorney), Robert Wieglos (Town Engineer), Foth Representative (Town Planner), Simone Marletti (CIP), James Hingston (US Solar & Storage Holdings), Michael Townsend (Jensen Hughes), David Jakubiak (Aileron Communications), Scott McPherson (Aileron Communications), Brendan Miller (Westwood), Mickey Foti (Government Affairs), Alex Peterson (Michael Best & Friedrich LLP), Orrie Walsvik (Michael Best & Friedrich LL), Denise and Thomas Brehm, Steve Sleider, Traci and Lou Denko, Kristina Klabunde, Mark Homuth, Jeff Niederer, Michelle and Bob Durkin, Mark Andrekus, Alaina Blanchard, Judy Kokes, Thomas Nickels, Rita Robers, Chrissy Wok, Emily Lein, Michael Fenske, Jim and Nora Boss, Mike and Kathy Robinson, Leroy and Pat Vos, Mark Weidel, Chad Toedter, Nick Smith, Jim Haubrich, Steven Wermeling, Jeff Meracle, Regina Bark, E. Willis, Jim McNeil, Paul and Jennifer DeLuisa, Debra and Andy Lois, Bizncz Morris, Paul Morris, Lorna Bacle, Caden Wright, Jaimie Trotter, John Lewis, Wayne and Mary Kaddatz, Grant Kaddatz, Jerry Schuerman, Jenny and Jax Morehouse, Tammy and James Kauppila, Linda Michaels, Linda and John Misek, Brad Wilkebibng, Rob Fosdick, Chris Gorlinski, Tura and Rich Siebman, Brent Zirbel, Norm Drissik, Daniel Kiefer, Mark Schmitt, Traci Murphy, Suzanne Masini, Jean Kosar, Joan Johnson, Rachel and Tim Daniels, Cindy Kaatz, Ken, Smith, Mary and Paul Ehr, Joanna Grabir and Samantha Kerkman

### Verification of public notice for agenda

The agenda was submitted to Kenosha News for publication on December 9<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> 2025. It was also posted at Wheatland Center School, Facebook (Keeping Wheatland Informed) and the Town Hall on those dates. Additional area included the transfer station posting.

Key points from Robin Battery Representatives presentation:

- **Project Overview:**
  - 200 MW battery energy storage facility.
  - Approximately 198 containers (each ~20 ft long, 8 ft wide, 9 ft high).
  - Located adjacent to existing ATC substation.
- **Purpose:** Address growing electricity demand and grid reliability.
- **Safety Measures:**
  - Use of Lithium Iron Phosphate (LFP) batteries (safer chemistry).
  - Compliance with NFPA 855 (2026 edition) and UL 9540A testing.
  - Annual fire department training and emergency response plan.



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- Hazard mitigation analysis and spacing to prevent fire propagation.
- **Site Design:**
  - Setback of 770 ft from nearest residence (county ordinance requires 100 ft).
  - Landscaping and screening planned.
- **Environmental & Stormwater:**
  - Retention pond designed per Kenosha County stormwater ordinance.
  - Spill prevention and water testing protocols in place.
- **Financial Commitment:**
  - Joint Development Agreement (JDA): \$1,000,000 upfront, \$400,000 annually for 20 years.
  - Decommissioning plan with financial surety.

### Public Comments

Anderson – Are you going to be going into the water table? For what purpose? Well water access and if there is waste from that? Also, what would the noise level be from all of this?

Robin - To be clear the units do not use water.

Chairmen Butler – There are water tanks being used on site, correct?

Robin – yes, that would be likely trucked into the site at the beginning of the project and then it would be held there and that's the main.

There are 2 – 32,000 gallon tanks, correct?

Robin – I don't believe that's been established specifically with the gallon.

Mark Schmitt – concerned because this is an investment company we are dealing with owned by a 96% foreign company, this company is suppose to represent our interest. They do have water on the surface in a retention pond which can make it to the aquifer, this is concerning. Another point is that phosphorus battery storage is very safe, but it's what you don't know that can result if there's a tornado or a flood. The referendum was about the fire station, so \$1 Million isn't going to go very far. That is concerning for the liabilities for the Town to make payments.

Todd Hazel – Relating to the NPA 855 submitting based on 2021 however, there is a 2024 IFC why are you guys not following the most current? I did not see any documentation on fire scale.

Robin - NFPA 8552023 admission and both basically IFC 2021, the 2026 version and so be created documents. My team and I created all the documentation for site level information as well as the product. In the 2026 version a significant piece of code change was full scale fire testing. The products that are being looked at here, most specifically a product that's made in Michigan is has already undergone full-scale fire testing when we submitted our documentation prior. 855 UL 9540A battery test, those reports were not submitted in your application documentation either?

Robin - Those reports were specific to look at and they're discussed in the hazard mitigation analysis.

That was prepared for the site at the site model. Those reports were not submitted in your documentation, so I don't think I don't see that the package. James or Ian proposed to grab speed to



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the package. So nobody in this community knows that a fire will not continue to propagate. What I know is that the technology that's being looked at for this particular site has undergone NFPA 855 full scale fire testing. It's undergone UL 9548 cell. Module and unit level testing. A hazard mitigation analysis with separation distances that are required based on full scale fire testing. What I know is that I work with Chief Denko to prepare an emergency response plan if anything were to happen here. We will submit those materials as part of that building application.

Residence - You're aware of any hazardous toxic gases that are going to be part of these batteries. Any lithium ion battery that has a fire has a toxic gas release. Also, how will this dissipate?

Robin – Any lithium ion battery has a toxic gas release, I can tell you down to 110th of a percent exactly what's coming off those batteries, and I can show you on modeling based on a full scale fire test the amount of gases that are released off of that energy source system where they will go and how they will dissipate.

Tom Brehm – is concerned about the money being gone right away. Insurance companies not covering damages for locals and the 1.4 miles away from our school. This is about the safety of the kids and families. Also, wondering what else, on this scale Robin's has done because no information was able to be found. 61 containers is what the report shows, how many containers are there really? Moss Landing fire is a story out of California associated with the battery storage and information is scary.

Adam Tobias – If we are getting kick backs that are so nice what is Robin getting? This company is largely held by Danish investors. What happens if the company doesn't like what is being produced? Concerned because that doesn't mean much in 20 years look at what has happened just in the past 3-4 year with inflation. Urges the community to not make up their minds until they are fully informed.

Christopher Gorlinski – what are the alternatives to battery storage units and why are we not deciding to do those instead?

Robin – Battery projects are helpful during peak demands in capacities. They are also becoming more popular. They will also make more energy to be able to be put to valuable use.

Mary Ehr – retaining ponds are not lined, what happens to this water being pumped out? Also, everything is remote, what kind of response time and what is the extra cost for our fire department including extra staff?

Robin – The retention pond is intended for storm water. The fire department will take a defensive side. We do not endorse putting fire water on a battery system under any circumstances. The energy storage systems can open up and articulate what is going on with them through remoting. There is no one available 24/7 however, the fire department will already be notified that the



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system is going off and why. If for some reason there is a fire, the fire will burn out on its own and we analyze the situation for further information.

Tammy Kauppila – concerned about the impact to our family, homes and community. Response time for the fire department and constable? Who is managing the situation? With an emergency response plan who is being trained? What is the impact of decommissioning? What is the impact of housing values? What is the impact for insurance?

Robin – Training will be emergency responders here in Wheatland along with Kenosha County and anyone who has agreements with Wheatland. This training will also be renewed annually.

Douglas – What happens with the gasses after an explosion? Whos going to pay for my family to be evacuate? Training the fire department, what are we going to use to suppress a fire and whos paying the bill?

Robin – these containers are engineered for grid scale storage, any other facility is not grid scale. There is a .001% chance of having a fire. The fire will burn its self out. Risk evaluation is given with training to Chief Denko. At the time of an incident the Chief will be able to evaluate the situation and act accordingly.

Chief Hennessey from Paris – All the fires that are being referenced are older technology than what you have, even what we have. Response time concern, Wheatland is very responsive and shouldn't change with this installation of the project. Man power shouldn't be an issue. These are going to be a slow and long burning if they are going to burn. We did not have the proper equipment for this, you do have a ladder truck for these fires. Once we are on scene we are just monitoring the fire. We are also going to have HASMAT Team for a benefit of the community to be billable for the event, which will help offset the costs.

Resident – Moss Landing, CA in January of last year this was a total loss of \$400 million worth of assets written off totally by the company within six days. 5,000 degrees is what the fire will burn at and we will make national news.

Robin – This was technology from 1930's at Moss Landing. This information was outdated. Those were NFC batteries not LFC batteries.

Dan Kiefer – Current electrical code is from 2017 are you guys going to go to the electrical code of 2026 regarding batteries. Project Maintenance, are you going to go with the lowest bidder?

Robin – The project will be referencing and according to the current code of 2026. Meeting the company level with the highest qualifications. We want the information and technology to be accurate and right not just good.



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Rachel Daniels – tests that were conducted with HASMAT and fire, I am assuming these were controlled environments, we all know that we are in real world situations which include tornadoes. Are there any real world studies that support HASMAT and fire. We are concerned that it's not if it will happen but when. Town Board please do not allow the parcels to change and or the use of the parcel to change.

Robin – Our laboratory sets the standard for testing not just in the US but internationally. They offer real world testing for plume testing. We collect data after every single event to make our standards better. It comes down to training the fire department correctly for evaluating the situation. As soon as a gas detector goes off, it takes seconds of those going off, for action to happen. It won't involve the entire container only the specific section of the container. It will not explode.

Joanna G – I don't see what the benefits to us in the community are. Can you please explain them?

Rachel Daniels – the amount of money that we are receiving doesn't outweigh the risks of what we are putting in the community.

Deb Lois – What is Robin's cost into this project? And what is your profit off the project? We are hoping to turn our property of 168 years down to the next generation so what are you projecting with this project?

Robin – \$100 Million, however, we can not share sensitive information. Mostly because we don't have the information for the question to be answered at this time.

Wendy Travis – The benefit for Wheatland is the money that is coming, how does this project impact the tax payers? So you are saying that we are going to need full time staffed fire fighters? So how many full time firefighters will we need? So how are we going to spend the money we are going to get?

Chief Denko – We are needing a fire station, regardless of the fire station we can not staff a building until we have a fire station up to compliance. It is time for this town to consider a some level of staffing. How are we suppose to keep our recruits with giving them training and a soda without the pay to come with it? I have to let these new recruits go other places like Salem or Pleasant Prairie because they pay their people. What is their incentive to stay at Wheatland? If we can't pay them we are going to loose them.

I have already suggested this to our Town Board with starting out at 2 fire fighters and the rest as paid on call.

You will not need additional firefighters for this project. You will need them because of the growth of the community.

Robin – You will not need additional firefighters or equipment at Wheatland. We have done an independent study to evaluate Wheatlands needs.



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Chairmen Butler – The money is going to go to the Town of Wheatland. That doesn't mean that the Fire Department isn't going to get some of the money.

Chad Troedter – Why shouldn't they get all of the money?

Chairmen Butler – In order to get \$1 Million more we have to have a public hearing just this. That takes time.

Jenny Morehouse – We are given this money, the agreement states that we do not need additional firefighters, however it snuck in there that we need a new firehouse. This was voted down awhile back. I feel like we are being taken advantage of a little bit. Now the money is being said that it's going to be put toward the new fire house instead of having a discussion on where it should go. My other question is Wheatland School going to get any of this money? Who is paying for this project to be run? As residents we have a right to know. Are the residents paying for this to be run? What about the insurance company's?

Chairmen Butler – There is nothing in writing that says the firehouse is going to get the money. It goes to the Town of Wheatland. The money will go into the Town's budget.

Attorney Todd Terry – There is a budgeting process which is by state law. This is a step by step approach regarding the land issue. We can't discuss where the money is going without having the money first. Which goes through a process by state statutes.

Tom Brehm – Could we make this a village so we can make our own zoning?

Attorney Todd Terry – We don't have time to talk about tonight, that needs to be left for a different discussion.

Andy Lois - \$400k is nothing that will barely build a house today. Wheatland isn't about the money it's about the place we live in. It's a beautiful place, why don't we keep it that way.

Todd Hazel – If there is a significant event in the community, with the retention pond not being lined, is there anything that shows what would happen to our wells, because we are all on wells. What will happen with that water?

Robin - Our plan aligns with Kenosha County rules and regulations. We can not line the retention pond. A pad lining with a rock wall will be constructed however the amount of water we are talking about would be pretty small and we would not anticipate it will reach properties. We will be testing during the fire. The results of those tests would determine our next actions.

Robin - Regarding Moss Landing, testing from the fire showed that they did not see that the fire had contaminated the water or ground. State of New York, ground water steaming from battery energy sourcing. NY states 2023 no harmful contaminants steaming from battery storage including Peatfoss.



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Existing data shows no long term impacts. Especially, concerning contamination from Fire Fighter run offs.

Resident – expected 20 years of this project. What do you mean expected? What are the expectations for the after 20 years of this project? with the testing protocols we have done the worst case scenarios, the question of who is paying for this?

Robin – If we are doing something else with this in 20 years, we can't just do what we want after the 20 year contract we would have to get approval again. Evacuations are never going to be required. Every fire will release hazardous gasses. All gasses will disappate. We know based on the studies from actual fires from other battery storage facilities. CIP would have to be the one to take on the burden to the owner of the project. The cost will be the burden of CIP.

Jeff Meracle – from the Canadian wild fires that is a long distance away, and yet still I have a kid that can't go outside. Has it disappated, yes but in the long run I still have a kid that can't go outside. Even though we don't have an attachment like other families do, we still love it here. Would I have bought my house if that facility existed, absolutely not. Risk and rewards, we live here, I felt very disrespected at some of the comments regarding risk, the money doesn't represent the risk that my family would take. The money, where did that number come from, if we were Kenosha would that number be different? High power lines have trees and bushes under them that are standing straight up, it makes me wonder was this all part of the plan all along being a perfect fit? Did all the other sites have Town Hall meetings? At a previous Town Board meeting, Mr Butler commented that he would support this project, will you continue to support this even though the community has been pretty clear that they are not supportive?

Chairmen Butler – We are doing what the residence want because you voted for us. This is why we are having a public hearing.

Jenny Morehouse – Why is there no vote? The planning committee is not here. But no one is saying what do the residence want in a vote?

Chairmen Butler – The planning commission are here and will be voting. The planning commission will send a favorable or nonfavorable recommendation to Kenosha County.

Attorney Todd Terry – the planning commission will show you that when they have their meeting as it is happening right after the public hearing.

Andy Lois – The power from the power lines is coming from Minnesota why do we have to house the Battery Storage here. Why Wheatland?

Resident – Town Board, this is a precedent please don't set it



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Kurt Anderson – This is a very similar situation like the gravel pit years ago. The county passed it. Expect the outcome for this to be similar.

Resident – Isn't there a current law that allows part of this money to go to county?

Samantha Kerkman – Battery storage is not part of the payment for utility aid. For a utility Aid payment comes into it's like a payment in lieu of property tax. The town gets 1/3, the county gets 2/3. Then it goes into the Town's General fund. Whether utility aid kicks in or not, we wouldn't get all the money. Battery storage currently is not included in the utility aid payment. So that changes the process. They get money from the solar farm but nothing for the battery storage.

Robin – At the end of the \$8.6 Million will be all for the Town of Wheatland.

Resident – how many pods are on the property?

Robin – 196

Greg – You mentioned that Paris had a chance to take this on through the Town but it went directly to the state? How do we keep this from happening here?

Samantha Kerman – No they didn't have an opportunity, it went directly to the state.

Brent Zirbel – you briefly touched on Iminent Domain, is there a chance that the state could come in here and push this through?

Samantha Kerkman – Because the battery storage is not included in the utility aide, it makes it difficult to predict what the state will do in this scenario.

Mike Leffleman – From what I understand Sodium ion batteries are safer than Lithium ion batteries, why are we not using those instead? Sodium ion batteries are cheaper and since this isn't going to go online for a couple of years from now they will be massed produced, so we are still wondering why Lithium and not Sodium?

Robin – Sodium ion batteries are not commonly used right now. Lithium batteries have been around for awhile. The technology will continue to evolve and be similar to what we are expecting.

Chairmen Butler – We are closing the public hearing for the battery storage now. Next will be the Planning Commission Meeting to discuss.

Respectfully submitted,  
Katie L. Sweatman  
Town of Wheatland Clerk