Bayfield County Board Meeting August 30, 2022. Presentation by Bill Bailey, CBR - Narrative

Slide 1: Title

Thank you, Kristine and the board for inviting me, and welcome Chairperson Valcq to BC. I’d like to *celebrate* both the amazing renewable energy projects that the county has recently completed, and what is in store for the near-term future.

Slide 2: BC Jail & Courthouse

Over the last decade, BC has installed many solar projects on its jail, including solar hot water and solar electricity. In 2021, 21% of the electricity used in the jail and annex was provided by on-site solar PV.

Slide 3: BC Washburn Garage

BC has also installed a large solar array at its Washburn Highway Garage, offsetting 100% of its electricity on an annual basis

Slide 4: Other Garages

Two other garages also offset 100% of their annual electric use with solar PV

Slide 5: Community Solar

In addition to the on-site solar, BC has invested in community solar with both Xcel Energy and Bayfield Electric.

Slide 6: 100% Carbon-free Electricity

BC was the first county in WI to claim that 100% of its electric use in county-owned facilities was from carbon-free sources, 30-years ahead of Gov. Ever’s goal

Slide 7: Commendation

Doing so, resulted in a Commendation from Gov. Evers

Slide 8: Community-wide projects

RE projects in Bayfield and Ashland Counties have totaled over $10M just since 2018. The projects would not have happened without funding from multiple programs administered through the WI PSC.

Slide 9: EVs

BC has also partnered with Xcel Energy and BART to invest in the new *transportation transition* with the first DC fast charger in northern WI.

Slide 10: Solar + Storage

BC will be owners of two new microgrids, one here at the jail & courthouse, and the second at the Washburn Highway Garage. Both microgrids will be able to supply power when the grid is down, provide additional electric bill savings, and demonstrate real-time grid interface. The Washburn Highway Garage microgrid will also have two level-2 EV charging stations for the first BC electric vehicles to be added to the county fleet.

Slide 11: Energy Tracking

The investments in RE are not installed and forgotten, even though little maintenance is required. All installations have online monitoring including this example of an August 2022 day at the Jail where solar production is tracked along with building use.

Slide 12: Project Highlight -NLS

I’d like to highlight a special project whose installation will begin next month. NLS is the only nonprofit with assisted living, skilled nursing, and rehabilitation clinic in BC. The solar project is a great example of a partnership between the County, NLS, the State of WI’s Focus on Energy, and the private sector. Donations of solar panels from the private sector include the Couillard Foundation’s Solar for Good, based outside Madison, and Nokomis Energy, a solar developer based in Minneapolis. Additional donations were received, and are still being received from the community which as of today have surpassed $22,000, including $2500 from Memorial Medical Center. This community outpouring makes a strong statement about the importance of clean energy and its commitment to our seniors. I’d like to recognize NLS’ CEO, Pauline Darling, for her support of the project.

Slide 13: NLS Metrics

For NLS, who has been chronically underfunded for decades, having over 60% of the project costs covered by State and private sources, will result in dramatic cost savings which can be used for patient care.

Slide 14: Ariel photo of NLS

The empty foreground will hopefully be filled with 40-60 senior independent living units as BC has just released a RFP to develop the county-owned land. BC is closely working with Xcel Energy, the WI PSC, and CBR to develop the most sustainable development possible. This project promises to be a showcase for how to build for the future incorporating renewable energy, energy efficiency, advanced electrification, and EV charging. The timing couldn’t be better as the IRA has raised the ITC to 50% for qualified low-income housing.

Slide 15: Community/Collaboration

BC has been successful because it knows how to work together to achieve its goals. In 2021, the WI State Rural Development Council awarded the Top Rural Development Initiative for the community solar project that included Bayfield County, the City of Washburn, the Washburn School District, the City of Bayfield and the Pikes Bay Sanitary Sewer District. This unique collaborative project highlighted a spirit of cooperation that showcases the best of Northern WI.

Slide 16: Thank you

Thank you, and I’d like to personally thank Mark Abeles-Allison, BC’s Administrator, who couldn’t be here tonight, but he’s the power-house behind BC’s success and we wouldn’t be here without him!

Slide 17: Chad Young

And now, I’s like to introduce Chad Young, CEO and General Manager for Chequamegon Communications Cooperative, also known as Norvado located in Cable.