

Town of Forest Urges Leeward to Stop Highland Wind Farm Project

Unanimous Town Board Tells CEO Allen Project Violates Corporate Values

MADISON, WISCONSIN, UNITED STATES, March 22, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Citing health and safety concerns and a perpetual threat to the community, the Town of Forest Board has unanimously requested that Leeward Renewable Energy CEO Jason Allen stop a massive 42-turbine project in western Wisconsin because it is not consistent with Leeward's published [corporate values](#).

Additionally, the township asked for the Leeward Board of Directors to formally vote to end the project. The town wrote Allen and the Leeward board on Jan. 18 with a deadline of Feb. 28 to reply, and they have not responded. The Town Board voted unanimously on Jan. 12 for Leeward to abandon the project.

On March 16, the Forest TownBoard unanimously voted to release the letter, and then the town posted it online. "Our Town Board believes that the Highland Wind Farm project is inconsistent with your corporate values stated on your website," the letter states. "Our Town Board believes that this will be a devastating project where people will be forced to leave their homes if the turbines ever start operating, similar to the Shirley wind project's disastrous record in Glenmore, Wisconsin."

[Click here](#) for the letter.

Additionally, the letter urges Leeward's board to vote to stop the project:

"Mr. Allen and Leeward board members, we request that you review the Town's concerns and formally vote to end the Highland Wind Project in Forest, Wisconsin. The Town Board of Forest believes the project's delay is being caused by Leeward Energy now having had time to assess its safety. We believe your experts now have their own significant concerns. Because of this, Leeward's inaction causes our town to be subject to the effect of a project that is not safe, yet one without your board's formal decision to stop the project continues to hang over the Town of Forest Residents' heads. Please discuss our concerns ... and vote to end the project."

The 42-turbine project was approved by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission and has been the subject of significant litigation. The project permit has no expiration date.

“Our community lives under constant threat that one day the bulldozers will show up and we won’t be able to stop them,” said Jaime Junker, chairman of the Town of Forest. “It is very difficult for families in Forest to live like this, and we need them to stop the project.”

The Town Board said that in the wake of the very difficult year of 2020, with COVID shutdowns and other challenges, it would be best for the community to heal with Leeward ending the project.

“As we close out a challenging year and look forward to brighter days ahead, we seek the gift of peace from Leeward Renewable Energy to the Town of Forest Wisconsin,” the letter states.

The project is in direct conflict with the company’s stated corporate values:

[\[https://www.leewardenergy.com/our-company/\]](https://www.leewardenergy.com/our-company/).

The Leeward website states that it promotes responsible developments that are safe and in partnership with their communities.

Leeward’s website reports of its values:

“Responsible development is an ethos that runs deep at Leeward. We develop, own, and operate renewable generation assets for the long-term, and we are committed to leaving a positive impact on the communities where we operate. We achieve this by prioritizing our values of community partnership, sustainability and safety.”

Junker said the Town Board and residents feel the project is in direct conflict with those values, and the company has a moral obligation to inform the residents of Leeward's intentions.

“Our residents need CEO Jason Allen and his board to scrap the project and allow the town to get back to farming and our way of life here in western Wisconsin.”

The Shirley wind farm project was declared a public health hazard by the Brown County Board.

Three families abandoned their homes near that project, and hundreds of complaints were filed. Dairy farmers sold their herds after milk production dropped 50% after the turbines went online. More than 70 animals died or went down from the effects of the turbines, according to an area farmer. Homeowners reported sleeplessness due to the inaudible sounds from the turbines.

Leeward has yet to deal with the Town on decommissioning requirements established as a precondition to beginning the project, the letter states.

“It’s time for Leeward to move on,” the Town Board members said. “Our town deserves peace.”

The Town Board of Forest, Wisconsin approved this press release on March 16 at a properly noticed town meeting of the Board.

The World Health Organization (WHO) in a 2018 statement declared wind turbine noise as a global health hazard, noting that it's "more than annoyance and that chronic noise contributes to cardiovascular disease; lack of sleep, hearing loss, tinnitus and stress; and increased changes in blood pressure and heart health."

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