

Sheridan Swaim Road Substation to Big Horn Substation new Transmission Line Community Meeting

July 10th 2025

17 Sandstone Circle, Sheridan, WY 82801

12 p.m.

1. Attendance

a. Community Members Present:

- i. Georgia Boley – owner of Lot 1 and 2 in Little Goose Subdivision
- ii. Laurie and Beverly Goodman – owner of 17 Sandstone Circle
- iii. Scott Wendt – owner of 13 Sandstone Circle
- iv. Doug Merrill – owner of Lot 3 Little Goose Subdivision
- v. Lori and Don Alexander – owner of Lot 5 Little Goose Subdivision
- vi. Carmine LoGuidice – owner of Lot 6 Little Goose Subdivision
- vii. Cathy and Greg Bealer- owner of 18 Sandstone Circle
- viii. John Aitchison – owner of 8 Sandstone Circle
- ix. Melanie Kawulok (via phone) – owner of 16 Sandstone Circle

b. Montana-Dakota Utility:

- i. Kenneth Sisson – Land Agent

2. Discussion

a. Ken provided those in attendance a multipage pamphlet addressing electromagnetic frequency (EMF) exposure from typical transmission lines. The majority of the research, except for one 2010 reference, is from last century (1985-1994), and **the community members present request more updated research be provided**. They expressed particular concern with 24-7 EMF exposure that would be eliminated with burial of new line.

b. Ken stated that the 4 mile 41.6kV transmission line will contain poles that are 70' tall with 61' above ground, with approximately 310'-342' spacing between poles if placed above ground is estimated to cost \$48M if it were to be buried, and if the portion of this line that is elbow on the south and west perimeter of Little Goose Subdivision and Sandstone Subdivision were to be buried, it was verbally estimated to cost \$4-5 million per MDU (no specifics were provided to back up this estimate). It was not made clear by MDU if this is total cost, or additional cost from the original project. **The community members present re-iterated the request in the July 7 letter from Sandstone Circle subdivision, asking for specifics of MDU costs rather than ballpark estimates, including the difference between the cost of burying the elbow versus it being above ground.** There was also discussion about whether a unit "rate" change for all those using the electricity (including other subdivisions to Big Horn, and any other areas benefiting from the transmission line) would be looked at as a way to offset the cost of the request to **bury the transmission line in this viewshed, and would like MDU to answer this question.**

c. Ken reported MDU's options they would offer as an alternative to above ground transmission line are as follows, along with the community discussed response (does not include the response of Doug Merrill or Carmine LoGuidice as they left the meeting prior to the below discussion):

i. **Put the transmission in above ground this year, and when the community can come up with the money for the cost to bury it, and pay this to MDU, then MDU will bury it.** **Discussion:** The community homeowners present did not find this option

acceptable, as it places the entire burden of this cost as the responsibility on a few landowners rather than the community at large whom will all be affected to one degree or another by a 70' transmission line along a new right-of-way corridor which is currently free of any obstruction of the viewshed.

ii. **Bury the transmission line on the elbow (South perimeter of Sandstone Circle, West perimeter of Sandstone Circle and Little Goose Subdivision), and charge \$4-5 M to these community members for this.** **Discussion:** Like i. above, the community

homeowners present did not find it acceptable to place the entire burden of the cost of burying this section of new right-of-way on a limited number of landowners given

the entire community will benefit from its burial. Homeowners also noted that it is becoming standard operating procedure for utility companies to bury new electric lines in neighborhoods rather than string them above-ground which is becoming less and less acceptable to the public.

- iii. **Choose another route on the county road, but have all the landowners who this route would require further easements, waive their right to have MDU require purchase of said easements.** Due to the height and span this transmission line will require a 50' easement. MDU has a 30'-33' easement along county roads and would need to acquire an additional 20' easement from landowners adjacent to the county road to accommodate line swing and sag. Trees present that are large enough to obstruct this within the 50' easement would need to be removed. **Discussion:** Many questions were raised regarding this option.

These included:

1. How and why MDU came to a conclusion to not pursue one of multiple county road options and instead put the line in many of those attending's viewshed?
2. If routed on Box Cross and Upper Road, when asked directly by Georgia Boley, Ken confirmed this line would go on the existing line where there is currently a distribution line at the corner of Box Cross and Upper Road, and the distribution line could be mounted on the same pole as the transmission line. This existing distribution line is currently on the 30'-33' easement along the county road (It should be noted per Carmine LoGuidice, who was not present during this part of the meeting, reported via e-mail on 7/15/25 that he had a follow-up verbal conversation with Ken, who stated that these poles would go in "similar alignment", and not exactly on the existing line as stated during the meeting, and so this pole placement issue needs clarification from MDU).
3. It was not 100% clear whether MDU is proposing these landowners forgo payment for such easements, and we request that clarification from MDU.
4. It was also not clear how MDU would compensate for the loss of trees, repairs/reclamation of land and landscape, etc. along a revised right-of-way and we request that clarification from MDU.
5. Don Alexander asked the question if MDU had considered placing the poles closer together to reduce need for accommodating sway of the line, and therefore reducing or eliminating the need for additional easement rights on the county road.

Many members present voiced strong preference to have this transmission line buried in the Shunk easement and paid for by MDU, to protect their viewshed, instead of supporting this option as we currently understand it, with many unanswered questions. It was voiced that once MDU provides the community the requested information about costs along options C.i and C.ii, and worked with community homeowners and elected officials, we hope MDU negotiates and compensates fairly for required rights-of-way. Carmine LoGuidice, previous to this discussion, had voiced during the meeting his strong objection to this option, and should be noted has multiple e-mails recording his objections denouncing this option with specific reasons regarding his property. Other owners present whose property is on the county road were Georgia Boley, representing Frank and Georgia Boley, and Boley Properties LLC, and they voiced willingness to discuss this option further with MDU during the meeting.

- d. Ken did relay that MDU recognizes the uniqueness of this current right-of-way between the Schunk agricultural land and this subdivision of valuable homes. Homeowners informed Ken that the Schunk's created this subdivision with covenants that require burial of all electric lines, so the

intent was clear to avoid above-ground lines. We purchased these 1.5 acre subdivided lots with the knowledge that above-ground lines were not acceptable and now find it disingenuous to have an above-the-ground line placed 40' west of the fence-line. The community members present informed Ken that as community stakeholders in this land and the developmental impacts, their property value is dependent on the viewshed of the mountains, exactly where this proposed transmission line is slated to be built. If this transmission line does go in above ground, the community members present whose property will suffer significant devaluation ask MDU what they plan to do to compensate for this great loss, in good faith and to maintain a good relationship with their clients here in the Big Horn community.

- e. Schunk easement- There was discussion whether this easement has been signed and secured or not. Ken Sisson stated that it has been signed and the check has been cut by MDU. Georgia Boley reported she spoke with the Schunk land owner- Rosemary Schunk, and that her understanding from Rosemary was that she had not received a check, and therefore the easement in Rosemary's opinion was that it was not a secured right-of-way (ROW). She also reported that Rosemary said she was under the impression that the route through her property was the only route option MDU had, after exploring others, and she was told that MDU has the right of eminent domain and so she did not have the option to not grant it.
- f. It was recognized that an informal complaint with the Wyoming Public Service Commission (PSC) has been filed on date 6/25/25. To address this complaint, the community members request that MDU provide in writing their response to the letter provided July 7th addressed to MDU, from the Sandstone Circle home owners. The community members will wait until July 17th for this response in the hope we can come to an agreeable solution before filing a formal complaint.

Meeting completed at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted- Georgia Boley and Laurie Goodman