

478.2 Petition for franchise — informational meetings held.

1. Any person authorized to transact business in the state including cities may file a verified petition asking for a franchise to erect, maintain, and operate a line or lines for the transmission, distribution, use, and sale of electric current outside cities and for such purpose to erect, use, and maintain poles, wires, guy wires, towers, cables, conduits, and other fixtures and appliances necessary for conducting electric current for light, heat, or power over, along, and across any public lands, highways, streams, or the lands of any person, company, or corporation, and to acquire necessary interests in real estate for such purposes.

2. As conditions precedent to the filing of a petition with the utilities board requesting a franchise for a new transmission line, and not less than thirty days prior to the filing of such petition, the person shall hold informational meetings in each county in which real property or rights will be affected.

a. A member of the board, the counsel of the board, or a hearing examiner designated by the board shall serve as the presiding officer at each meeting, shall present an agenda for such meeting which shall include a summary of the legal rights of the affected landowners, and shall distribute and review the statement of individual rights required under section 6B.2A, subsection 1. A formal record of the meeting shall not be required.

b. The meeting shall be held at a location reasonably accessible to all persons that may be affected by the granting of the franchise.

3. The person seeking the franchise for a new transmission line shall give notice of the informational meeting to each person, company, or corporation determined to be the landowner affected by the proposed project and any person, company, or corporation in possession of or residing on the property.

a. For the purposes of this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) “*Landowner*” means a person listed on the tax assessment rolls as responsible for the payment of real estate taxes imposed on the property.

(2) “*Transmission line*” means any line capable of operating at sixty-nine kilovolts or more and extending a distance of not less than one mile across privately owned real estate.

b. The notice shall contain the following:

(1) The name of the applicant.

(2) The applicant’s principal place of business.

(3) A general description and purpose of the proposed project.

(4) The general nature of the right-of-way desired.

(5) The possibility that the right-of-way may be acquired by condemnation if approved by the utilities board.

(6) A map showing the route of the proposed project.

(7) A description of the process used by the utilities board in making a decision on whether to approve a franchise or grant the right to take property by eminent domain.

(8) A statement that the landowner has the right to be present at such meetings and to file objections with the utilities board.

(9) The place and time of the meeting.

c. The notice shall be served not less than thirty days prior to the time set for the meeting by certified mail with return receipt requested and shall be published once in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least one week and not more than three weeks before the time of the meeting and such publication shall be considered notice to landowners whose residence is not known.

4. A person seeking rights under this chapter shall not negotiate or purchase any easements or other interests in land in any county known to be affected by the proposed project prior to the informational meeting.

[S13, §2120-n; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §8310; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, §489.2; C77, 79, 81, §478.2]

94 Acts, ch 1136, §2; 2000 Acts, ch 1179, §22, 30; 2002 Acts, ch 1048, §2, 5