

Kings Mountain Citizens are Up in Arms over High Power Bills!!

Claim KM Town Council incompetent or worse in selecting NTE as the sole Electrical Power source and a KM Water customer. NOW Natural Gas Prices and KM Power Bills are soaring sky high!! And a new betterKM group has formed!!! Eye Witness Reporting and predictions come true by Robert A

Folks, Robert A was in attendance, and paying close attention as always, at a CC Commissioner's meeting years ago when the head knockers at NTE first made their "official" appearance anywhere in Cleveland County to announce their business plans. The NTE officials had given the Commissioners no introductory information of any sort prior to showing up at this meeting. They were not recruited by anybody from Cleveland County, although later the Commissioners would claim that they were recruited by the CC Economic Development folks. They were not on the agenda. They just showed up at the meeting, sat through it all silently and stood up after the adjournment and announced themselves as new businessmen in Cleveland County. And were allowed to have their say-something that would not be allowed by the CC Commissioners today.

The NTE folks made general statements about their company, how and why it was formed and what they wanted to do. (Make money in the natural gas power market!) And Cleveland County was not their first successful enterprise. By all odds, Robert A was probably the only Cleveland County person in attendance that understood what the NTE officials were talking about. In general terms, the NTE folks said:

1. Advances in drilling for oil and natural gas, "fracking," etc. was causing an unusually large and growing surplus in natural gas production which would soon be evident by much lower bulk prices for natural gas. (Note that the City of Shelby, at about that same time, were saying gas prices were going up in an effort to boost their own market for natural gas around Cleveland County,)

2. The NTE officials explained that they took maps of major natural gas pipelines across the US and overlay those maps over maps of the major electrical power transmission lines (the "Grid") across the US. Wherever those major natural gas pipelines intersected with major electrical power transmission lines would be potentially an ideal business opportunity to locate a commercial electrical power plant that would be fueled by the now cheap natural gas and the electrical power could be "dumped" directly onto the US electrical power "grid" with very low costs associated with shorter the gas pipelines and short distances to connect to the electrical transmission lines. One of those ideal locations was just a few miles away from the City of Kings Mountain, in Cleveland County. Also, Kings Mountain had a more than sufficient nearby source of potable water from Moss Lake. This would be a financial benefit to everybody.

("Until the supply of cheap natural gas held out" were the thoughts running through Robert A's mind.)

Heck, the Southern Company from Georgia and Alabama would also get on board with building a natural gas burning power plant in Cleveland County similar to what NTE built. Even Duke Power would later spend big bucks to convert their coal-burning power plant near Cliffside over from burning coal to burning "clean" natural gas; as long as the natural gas prices stay low.

In the aftermath, it seems like the City of Kings Mountain officials got "stuck on stupid." Apparently thinking that the

low natural gas prices would last forever, those KM Officials make some very bad, stupid and maybe illegal business decisions. According to reports, KM agreed to purchase 100% of their electrical power from NTE. And when the natural gas prices began its upward trend, starting on the First Day that President Biden was sworn-in as President of the USA and shut down the Keystone Pipeline. Then NTE's fuel adjustment clauses kicked in. And since NTE's generation was NOT diversified, but was 100% dependent on the price of natural gas, KM's utility bills skyrocketed in direct proportion to NTE's fuel adjustment clause.

But apparently KM officials first attempted to hide the utility bill increases from the public by taking cash from utility reserve funds to make up the differences. Then, a new KM City Manager discovered the city's financial shenanigans and blew the whistle on the situation. The city's utility customers were then charged at an appropriate rate commensurate with the city's expenses and the citizens of Kings Mountain have hit the roof. And, as these kinds of things happen, a large percentage of City of Kings Mountain elected officials are up for election very soon.

In short and general terms this is what has happened in KM. A predictable economical situation that was mishandled and misrepresented in just about every turn and in every way. The political situation is predictable too. Well, mostly predictable. People get mad when they get these very high utility bills and some politicians will surely go into forced "retirement" after their re-election day.

But something else is percolating-up at the grass-roots level in and around Kings Mountain as well as Cleveland County overall. A new group/blog has risen up in Kings Mountain to let citizens know what is going on. Similar in some ways to Robert A and Citizens For Good Government. This new group is called Mountaineers For a Better Community. Their stated purpose is: Building A Better Kings Mountain Together. Better

Government, Better Growth, Better Roads, Schools, and Parks. Better Jobs and Opportunities. And A Better Business District.

Editor's Note: But. this is what everybody says they want. Especially those that want to get re-elected.

Then they (the betterKM folks) go into more detail with these statements on their blog.

What We Are About...

Better Government.

Restoring the trust that has been lost in local government; establishing transparency; creating accountability; and maintaining an open line of communication between our local officials and the citizens, businesses, and organizations they represent.

Better Growth.

Advocating for policies that foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place and create a range of housing opportunities that meet the moment, while encouraging SMART growth and making development decisions predictable, fair, and with an eye towards community and stakeholder collaboration. Promoting policies that maintain our unique small town feel while preparing – and actively planning – for the future.

A Better Business District.

Fostering communication, collaboration and partnership with the individuals and business owners who are investing their time, energy, and money into improving our business community. Promoting investment in our business districts without undue government red tape.

Better Roads, Schools, and Parks.

Identifying opportunities for improvement in the cornerstones of our community, and ensuring that proper investments are made and care is taken to make those improvements. Fixing our roads; improving our schools; and upgrading our parks– all

while planning and preparing for the future.

Better Jobs and Opportunities.

Bringing Kings Mountain into the 21st Century and beyond, and ensuring that every parent of every child who grows up in KM has every opportunity available to help their family succeed. And creating generational opportunities for those children, so they will want to return to Kings Mountain and continue their stories here.

Better Government/Business Collaboration.

Identifying opportunities to remove the red tape and empower our local business community to make the investments and decisions they need to thrive, create jobs and create economic opportunity here.

Robert A wishes the betterkm folks the best. His only recommendation is for somebody to put their name on this blog. Then, they should recruit candidates to run against the KM status quo, support them at the ballot box, elect them and put them into action making the changes they say they want. Even though they will surely be retaliated against by the old guard in Kings Mountain.

The following is the “betterkm’s” latest article titled [What’s Going On With power Bills in KM](#). It is a good piece with lots of good details, information and questions that need answering.