

## Person County Commissioners Working to Protect Prosperity by Intervening in Duke Carbon Plan Case at NC Utilities Commission

May 26, 2022 – MEDIA RELEASE

At their May 16, 2022, meeting, the Person County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the engagement of two firms as part of the County's efforts to protect prosperity in the local community by intervening in the North Carolina Utilities Commission's case on Duke Energy's Carbon Plan. The Carbon Plan calls for the retirement of Duke's Mayo plant in 2029 and Roxboro plant as early as 2029 or by 2034, under different options Duke has proposed.

"There's too much at stake for Person County for us not to do all that we can to seek Person County's inclusion in the Carbon Plan," says Person County Commission Chair, Gordon Powell. "The Roxboro and Mayo Plants here make up nearly 20% of our tax base, funding schools, public safety, public health and other government operations. These power plants are part of the life-blood of our community, but the plants are also critical to Duke Energy's ability to provide reliable and affordable power to their customers across the state.

"We will ask the Utilities Commission to keep these plants generating as long as possible and to take advantage of the large transmission infrastructure and the qualified workforce that is already here in Person County by locating replacement generation in our community. That is a reasonable path forward to protect affordability and reliability of Duke's electric service while meeting the environmental mandates of the new law," Chair Powell added.

Duke Energy's Carbon Plan is required under legislation that Governor Roy Cooper signed into law last year. House Bill 951, the "Energy Solutions for North Carolina" bill, requires the North Carolina Utilities Commission to take steps to achieve a 70% reduction in carbon emissions from 2005 levels by the year 2030 and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. That will require Duke to close about 10 coal-burning power plants across the state and to find replacement generation resources to maintain reliability and affordability of Duke's electric service.

In joining the Carbon Case at the NC Utilities Commission, Person County will be able to file comments on Duke Energy's Carbon Plan, gain access to Duke's modeling and analysis, propose improvements, and to appeal if the final Carbon Plan falls short of the requirements of House Bill 951.

The law gives the NC Utilities Commission the final word on the Carbon Plan, and the Commission must make its decision by December 31, 2022. Before that happens, the NCUC will hold public hearings across the state, including a hearing in Durham County on July 11, the closest public hearing location to Person County.

To represent the County on this front, Patrick Buffkin, of Buffkin Law Firm, will provide legal support while Kevin O'Donnell, of Nova Consulting, will assist with providing technical support. Both are former state utility regulators and well-positioned to help the County make the case that the Mayo and Roxboro Plants, and the transmission assets that serve the plants continue to be useful in producing reliable and affordable power and that Person County is the ideal place for locating replacement generation assets.

Ultimate closure of the plants would not only impact the tax base, there would be ripple effects to the community, impacting many other organizational interests, such as tourism, workforce development, and other development throughout the City and County. Recognizing this, leadership from the Roxboro Area Chamber of Commerce, City of Roxboro, Uptown Roxboro Group, Economic Development Commission, Tourism Development Authority, and Piedmont Community College have rallied together around this effort with Person County Government.

The Chamber has developed a webpage with links to important information for any that wish to learn more and follow along with the process. Also included on that page is a place for citizens to have their voices heard by writing letters to the Utilities Commission to be considered as a part of the docket.

Each partner organization will also share this information on its website and social media outlets and be a resource for community updates.

"We want the people of Person County to know that this is important to all those tasked with serving the citizens' best interests," continued Powell, "and we are working together not only to be present in this process but also to continue to diligently pursue other avenues of growth for Person County."

*Person County has a population of approximately 39,259 and a median household income of approximately \$43,381. The North Carolina Department of Commerce designates Person County as a Tier 2, or moderately distressed county, based upon the average unemployment rate, median household income, percentage growth in population, and adjusted property tax base. Duke Energy's Mayo and Roxboro Plants have a combined annual property tax value of \$869,175,056, equating to \$6,258,060 in tax revenue to*

*Person County, and representing 18.5% of Person County's \$34.65 million in annual property tax revenue. Visit [personcountync.gov](http://personcountync.gov) for more information.*