

2015 Bar Association Presenter Profiles



Bryan Kleinmaier | Stafford Rosenbaum LLP

Bryan Kleinmaier is a partner with Stafford Rosenbaum LLP, Madison. Bryan has appeared before the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin in utility law matters on behalf of both investor-owned and municipal utilities. In the utility law field, Bryan has experience on a wide range of issues, including rates, affiliated interest agreements, general contract work, and boundary issues.

Bryan received his J.D. from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 2000. He received his B.A. from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Bryan also practices in the areas of municipal law and labor/employment law.



Cynthia Smith | Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

Since 2004, Cynthia Smith has been the Chief Legal Counsel for the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. Prior to joining the Commission, Cindy was a partner at Michael Best & Friedrich where she spent 17 years practicing environmental law and litigation. Cindy is a 1993 graduate of Marquette University Law School and a graduate of Kenyon College.



Mike Varda | Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

Michael Varda is an Assistant General Counsel with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, specializing in telecommunications law, with an additional emphasis since 2009 on electric construction and rate cases, and wholesale electric matters before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc. A 1974 graduate of the UW-Madison School of Law, he was in private practice engaging in transportation law, small commercial litigation, and bankruptcy before joining the Commission in 1990. He is admitted to practice in the Wisconsin Supreme Court, the Eastern and Western District of Wisconsin Federal Courts, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court. Mr. Varda is a member of the State Bar of Wisconsin and is active in its Public Utilities Section, serving on its Program Committee and as Chair (2012-13) and Secretary (2013- current) of the Section's Board of Directors.



Judd Genda | Axley Brynelson in Madison

Judd Genda is a partner of the law firm of Axley Brynelson, LLP. He is a member of the firm's Executive Committee and the former chair of the Business Practice Group. Mr. Genda is the current Chair of the Board of Directors, State Bar Public Utilities Section. Mr. Genda represents a wide array of businesses including manufacturers, service providers, contractors, subcontractors and design builders with contract preparation, review and negotiations.

Mr. Genda actively represents businesses involved in the provision of telecommunications, video and broadband services in all aspects of their business including: the development of business strategies; contract preparation, review and negotiations; regulatory compliance; advising clients with respect to telecommunications, cable and internet law, including orders, decisions and rulings of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin and the Federal Communications Commission as well as state and federal courts interpreting the same; and representing clients before local, state and federal governmental bodies.



Kira Loehr | Citizens Utility Board of Wisconsin

Kira Loehr is the Executive Director and General Counsel for the Citizens Utility Board of Wisconsin. CUB is a nonprofit organization that advocates for reliable, affordable and sound utility service on behalf of Wisconsin's residential and small business utility customers. Kira represents CUB in all proceedings before the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, MISO, FERC, and the courts. She also manages the organization and helps develop positions on utility policy and other issues of importance to CUB's members. Before joining CUB in 2010, she practiced public utility and environmental law with Cullen Weston Pines & Bach LLP. Kira served on the Board of the State Bar of Wisconsin's Public Utility Law Section from 2007 to 2014 and was the Chair of that Section Board from 2013-2014. Kira received a J.D. degree, cum laude, from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 2002, and a B.A. degree in psychology and philosophy magna cum laude from Saint Louis University in 1997.



David Gilles | Godfrey and Kahn, S.C.

David J. Gilles is a shareholder and a member of the environmental and energy law practice group in the Madison office and has expertise in energy regulatory law matters. In addition, he works with the antitrust, consumer protection and government practice team. Dave is also an Adjunct Law Professor at the University of Wisconsin Law School where he teaches an energy law seminar.

Prior to joining Godfrey and Kahn, Dave served as General Counsel to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (2003-2007). As General Counsel, Dave was responsible for all legal matters affecting the agency. Dave supervised and directed legal representation in state and federal courts and before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and Federal Communications Commission. While at the agency, legislation streamlining procedures for approval of energy facilities was enacted (2003 Wisconsin Act 89). In addition, legislation setting renewable resource portfolio standards for energy providers became law (2005 Wisconsin Act 141).



Anita Gallucci | Boardman and Clark LLP

Anita advises municipalities that own electric distribution systems or generation facilities on all facets of the energy business including power contract negotiations, construction, asset transfer and regulatory compliance. Anita's work also includes telecommunications-related contracts (dark fiber license agreements; collocation agreements; tower lease agreements), electric service territory issues, pole attachment agreements, video franchise issues, intergovernmental agreements and advising municipalities on right-of-way use issues. She has over 22 years of experience and has regularly appeared before the Wisconsin Public Service Commission and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Anita serves municipalities and municipal electric and telecommunications utilities in Wisconsin and Illinois.



Lawrie Kobza | Boardman and Clark LLP

Attorney Lawrie Kobza, a partner at the Madison law firm of Boardman & Clark LLP, has represented municipal utilities for over 25 years. In rate-setting cases before the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, Lawrie has represented both wholesale water suppliers and wholesale water customers. She has also represented municipal wastewater and stormwater utilities in complaint proceedings before the Commission. She is a past chair of the Wisconsin section of the American Water Works Association. Lawrie is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin Business School and Law School.



Lauren Azar | Azar Law LLC

Lauren Azar served as the Senior Advisor to the U.S. Secretary of the Department of Energy from 2011 to 2013, advising him on the electric industry and on institutional barriers to developing the Nation's electric infrastructure. At the DOE, she co-led negotiations among nine federal agencies to overhaul their evaluation of electric transmission.

From 2007-2011, Azar was a Wisconsin Public Service Commissioner. Azar served as President of the Organization of MISO states--an organization of states within the then Midwest Independent System Operator (MISO)--Azar initiated and chaired a regional planning and cost allocation effort in 2009 for developing transmission over 13 states and one Canadian province. Later, she co-founded the Eastern Interconnection States' Planning Council which spearheaded planning efforts over the entire Eastern Transmission interconnection. Since 2013, Azar has been practicing law at Azar Law LLC, focusing on the electric industry, including business, regulatory and policy advice, as well as legal services such as project development, permitting, and siting.