

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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NINETY - FIFTH LEGISLATURE

Legislative Document

No. 967

S. P. 407

In Senate, February 28, 1951.

Referred to Committee on Highways. Sent down for concurrence and ordered printed.

CHESTER T. WINSLOW, Secretary.

Presented by Senator Barnes of Aroostook.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
FIFTY-ONE

AN ACT Relating to Regulation of Posts and Wires.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows :

R. S., c. 46, § 31, amended. Section 31 of chapter 46 of the revised statutes, as amended, is hereby further amended to read as follows :

'Sec. 31. Permit to construct lines must be had from municipal officers or county commissioners; lines so erected are legal structures; proceedings and right of appeal. No Except as hereinafter provided, no such company, person or association shall construct lines upon and along highways and public roads, without first **making an application for and** obtaining a written permit, signed by the ~~mayor and aldermen~~ **municipal officers** in case of cities, the selectmen in case of towns, and the county commissioners in case of plantations and unorganized townships, specifying the kind of posts, where and how they shall be located and set, and the height of the wire above the ground; and if the line specified in the permit is a telephone line and is not constructed and public telephone service established in connection therewith within 18 months from the time the decision is filed, the permit shall be void. ~~Before granting such permit, 14 days' public notice thereof shall be given, and residents and owners of property upon the~~

~~highways to be affected thereby shall have full opportunity to show cause why such permit should not be granted. Before granting such permit, 14 days' public notice thereof shall be given by posting a true copy of said application in some public and conspicuous place in the city or town affected and notice of said application shall be mailed to the state highway commission by the applicant. During said period residents and owners of property upon the highways to be affected thereby, or the state highway commission in all instances where a permit is sought hereunder with reference to post or wire lines to be located upon and along state and state aid highways, may file written objections to the granting of such permit with the municipal officers or the board of selectmen of the city or town concerned. Upon receipt of such objections the municipal officers or the board of selectmen shall fix a time and place for a hearing to be had within 7 days after the expiration of said 14-day period to show cause why such permit should not be granted. Such public~~ Public notice shall be given by publication in a county newspaper when the county commissioners are to act ~~and in some newspaper printed in such city or town, if any, the last publication to be 14 days before said hearing; if in a town and no newspaper is printed therein; then by posting the same in some public and conspicuous place therein 14 days before said hearing. When the application for such permit is filed, personal notice, if deemed necessary, may be ordered by such officers and shall be given by such company, persons, or association to the residents and owners of property to be affected thereby.~~ At the hearing such company, persons or associations, before proceeding, shall first prove that such order of notice has been complied with and public notice given as hereinbefore required, and the adjudication of the ~~mayor and aldermen~~ municipal officers, selectmen or county commissioners that such ~~personal and~~ public notice has been given shall be final and conclusive. If from any cause the notice given appears to have been defective, said officers may order new notice, not exceeding 7 days, and adjourn said hearing to a time named in said new order of notice. If no written objection is filed as hereinbefore provided for, the applicant may then proceed with the construction of said lines in accordance with the specifications therefor, set forth in said application. After the erection of the lines, having first given all persons interested an opportunity to be heard, such officers may direct or approve any alteration from the original permit. Such applications, permits, specifications and decisions shall be recorded in the records of the city, town or county commissioners. ~~Posts and wires erected and maintained in accordance with the provisions of this section~~ Posts and wires heretofore erected, maintained and now in use by corporations, persons and associations engaged in business as a public

utility and posts and wires hereafter erected and maintained in accordance with the provisions of this section shall be deemed legal structures and the party maintaining the same shall be liable on account thereof only for carelessness or negligence in the erection or maintenance of the same. In case of plantations and unorganized townships any person or corporation interested may appeal from the decision of the county commissioners to the superior court in the manner provided in sections 56 to 59, inclusive, of chapter 79, relating to highways, and in case of cities and towns as follows: the decision of the ~~mayor and aldermen~~ **municipal officers** or the selectmen shall be filed with the clerk of the city or town within 1 week from their final hearing; and within 2 weeks from such filing any person or corporation interested may appeal from their decision by filing notice of appeal with a copy of the original petition and adjudication with the clerk of the city or town and with the clerk of the board of county commissioners; the commissioners shall immediately entertain such appeal and give 2 weeks' public notice in a county newspaper of the time and place of hearing, which time shall be within 30 days from the time such appeal is filed; such hearing may be adjourned from time to time, not exceeding 30 days in all, and the commissioners shall file their decision within 30 days from the time the hearing is closed, and transmit a copy of the same to the clerk of the city or town, who shall forthwith record it.'