DATA CENTER DEBACLE STARTED IN TULSA

With Project Clydesdale & Stan Sallee

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What we now know about data centers is that the work to implement multiple ones in our counties started WAY before any of us saw or heard even a whisper. Who knew what and when, is the question.

In 2023, negotiations began in Tulsa County with Beale Infrastructure looking for a point person. It became Stan Sallee, Tulsa County Commissioner, Dist 1, when he signed a non-disclosure agreement for what is now known as the Project Clydesdale data center.
It was the beginning of what will cost our cities and counties MILLIONS every single year.

Beale Infrastructure has been the developer behind:
- Project Clydesdale (Tulsa/Owasso)
- Project Mustang (Claremore)
- Project Atlas (Coweta)
- Project Spring (Sand Springs) is White Rose Partners
- Project Anthem (East Tulsa) – Meta
- While new projects are being pursued in Muskogee County & Stillwater by Google.

The projects were given these clandestine names allegedly for secrecy which fits in with the NDA pursuit.

Project Atlas, the Coweta project, has been officially shut down and Beale Infrastructure sent packing, after citizens continued to object. Notably, Darren Blanchard worked tirelessly to obtain communications between Beale and city officials, which showed not only a lack of transparency on the project, but downright misrepresentation, as they admitted they created emails from residents in support of the project. What came to light is the residents didn't write the emails—evidently a program did.

In Claremore, Blanchard was arrested after talking 30 seconds over the allotted time during public comments regarding Beale's Project Mustang. To compound matters, the city then tried to charge Blanchard under $20K for an Open Records Request to obtain documents between Beale and Claremore and relating to his arrest.

Beale is also the developer of Project Clydesdale currently underway in Tulsa County. Does that make anyone feel like everything is on the up and up?

At the local government and civic level, **Tulsa County Commissioner Stan Sallee** (District 1) has been the key municipal champion, actively guiding the project through the groundbreaking and development phases. From the start, he was a primary political champion for Project Clydesdale, utilizing his legislative and zoning authority to move the $3 billion data center complex forward.

He has directly facilitated the project through several key actions:

Zoning and Land Realignment

Commissioner Sallee's primary official role was leading the **rezoning process** for the 400+ acres of unincorporated county land situated just west of Owasso. He successfully guided the land-use approvals required to convert the rural site into a heavy industrial zone suitable for a massive technology campus.

Tax Incentive Approval

Sallee and the Board of County Commissioners voted unanimously to pass the **Project Clydesdale Economic Development Project Plan**, creating four distinct alternative Tax Increment Districts (TID) to negotiate a tax in lieu of payments or incentive districts. It allows them to pay a substantially lower amount than the normal amount. The vote was on Sept 29, 2025 and public support was already divided. What the public didn't know was it was already a done deal.

- **The Structure**: The board granted a 25-year ad valorem property tax exemption to secure the developer's multi-billion-dollar private investment.
- **The Financial Compromise**: Sallee clarified that this functions as a "50% tax break" rather than a complete giveaway. Under this structured deal, the developer skips traditional property taxes but instead pays a negotiated **$1.5 million annual payment per phase** (escalating 1% annually) plus $500,000 per year specifically toward local community infrastructure improvements.

While that may sound like the city/county is receiving a lot of money, it is minuscule when compared to what they would have received had the waiver not been put into place. Using the projections from Beale's own model, there would be an estimated loss of $127 million of tax revenue over the next twenty-five years on this one facility alone. Per year that equals a loss of around $3.5 million. Think what could have been done with that.

But guess what, we learned they are planning to build five more projects, which will continue to extend the tax abatement. Plus, if they buy new software or anything electronic for the building, they don't have to pay state sales tax.

Just how much money will Tulsa and Owasso lose over the Project Clydesdale project alone over the next twenty-five years?

It appears Beale worked to have a key person in each county who all had to sign non-disclosure agreements. For Tulsa it appears it was Sallee. In Coweta, at least the latter part, was city manager, Julie Casteen and in Claremore, city manager John Feary. His wife, Chelsea Feary, is the director of the Owasso Chamber of Commerce, who also has been behind Claremore's big push for the data center.

Public Advocacy and Economic Justification

Sallee has served as the public face of the project, defending it on local platforms like News On 6. He focused his advocacy on three distinct points:

- **Tax Generation**: Highlighting that the land originally brought in only $850 in annual taxes but will generate **over $2 million in annual revenue** for Tulsa County and Owasso Public Schools once operational.
- **Job Creation**: Promoting the influx of **600 to 1,000 temporary construction jobs** and permanent high-tech trade roles.
- **Local Workforce Commitments**: Publicly pushing the developers to prioritize local union and trade hiring over out-of-state workers.

While those were the points made, already we see, because of at least Beale's lack of integrity on Project Atlas, that promises made aren't necessarily promises kept.

Data center locations in other states have reported that promised construction jobs have typically gone to out-of-state firms, and the data centers themselves don't employ thousands. Depending on the size of the data center, many only employ 10-50 people.

🤝 Community Engagement and Groundbreaking

Sallee actively pushed the project past local friction regarding water usage and power grid capacity by hosting town halls and public oversight meetings over a multi-month period. After finalizing the approvals, Sallee joined state leaders—including the Lieutenant Governor and mayoral representatives—to **officially break ground** on the campus.

A primary concern for residents across the board on all proposed projects has been the alarming use of electricity and water which are needed by the large data centers. Citizens were told Project Clydesdale won't cause residential customers' power bills to increase. However, a fact check by ReadFrontier.org revealed that might not be 100% true.

"While the Project Clydesdale is paying for a new substation and other transmission needs, the center will be a grid-connected customer of PSO and will not generate its own power, a spokesperson for project developer Beale Infrastructure said in an email. Estimates on how much power the Project Clydesdale will need weren't immediately available, the spokesperson said. PSO also said it doesn't give out information on specific customer service needs for privacy and security reasons.

"While it's unclear how much power Project Clydesdale will use, PSO is actively seeking to pass costs to build new power generation along to customers, in part because of increased demand from data centers and other large industrial users, according to testimony filed with the Oklahoma Corporation Commission."

It has been these vague statements and lack of transparency that have residents not just concerned but mad.

But the bottom line is data centers aren't going away. They are part of our future whether we like it or not.

The question is are we going to continue to see these back-room deals, NDA's and lack of transparency? Or are our elected officials going to close down the developers who work in that manner to find those who can work above board in a fashion that we can trust and find solutions to the citizen's concerns?