

# JONES DAY

77 WEST WACKER • CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60601.1692  
TELEPHONE: +1.312.782.3939 • FACSIMILE: +1.312.782.8585

January 8, 2016

No-Action Request  
1934 Act/Rule 14a-8

## Via E-Mail (shareholderproposals@sec.gov)

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission  
Division of Corporation Finance  
Office of Chief Counsel  
100 F Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20549

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of our client OGE Energy Corp., an Oklahoma corporation (the “Company”), we are submitting this letter pursuant to Rule 14a-8(j) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “Act”), in reference to the Company’s intention to omit the shareholder proposal (the “Shareholder Proposal”) filed by shareholder John Chevedden (the “Proponent”) from its 2016 proxy statement and form of proxy relating to its Annual Meeting of Shareholders tentatively scheduled for May 19, 2016. The definitive copies of the 2016 proxy statement and form of proxy are currently scheduled to be filed pursuant to Rule 14a-6 on or about March 31, 2016. We hereby request that the staff of the Division of Corporation Finance (the “Staff”) not recommend any enforcement action to the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “Commission”) if, in reliance on the analysis set forth below, the Company excludes the Shareholder Proposal from its proxy materials. Pursuant to Staff Legal Bulletin 14D, we are submitting this request for no-action relief under Rule 14a-8 by use of the Commission e-mail address, shareholderproposals@sec.gov (in lieu of providing six additional copies of this letter pursuant to Rule 14a-8(j)(2)), and the undersigned has included his name, email address and telephone number in this letter. We are simultaneously forwarding by email a copy of this letter to the Proponent as notice of the Company’s intent to omit the Shareholder Proposal from the Company’s 2016 proxy materials.

## Background

***The Shareholder Proposal.*** The Shareholder Proposal requests that the Company’s Board of Directors (the “Board”) take the steps necessary to change each voting requirement to a simple majority. The Shareholder Proposal includes the following language:

NAI-1500726483v2

ALKHOBAR • AMSTERDAM • ATLANTA • BEIJING • BOSTON • BRUSSELS • CHICAGO • CLEVELAND • COLUMBUS • DALLAS  
DUBAI • DÜSSELDORF • FRANKFURT • HONG KONG • HOUSTON • IRVINE • JEDDAH • LONDON • LOS ANGELES • MADRID  
MEXICO CITY • MIAMI • MILAN • MOSCOW • MUNICH • NEW YORK • PARIS • PITTSBURGH • RIYADH • SAN DIEGO  
SAN FRANCISCO • SÃO PAULO • SHANGHAI • SILICON VALLEY • SINGAPORE • SYDNEY • TAIPEI • TOKYO • WASHINGTON

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission  
January 8, 2016  
Page 2

“Shareholders request that our board take the steps necessary so that each voting requirement in our charter and bylaws that calls for a greater than simple majority vote be eliminated, and replaced by a requirement for a majority of the votes cast for and against applicable proposals, or a simple majority in compliance with applicable laws. If necessary this means the closest standard to a majority of the votes cast for and against such proposals consistent with applicable laws. This proposal includes that our board fully support this proposal topic and commit to spend up to \$10,000 or more on means, such as special solicitations, as needed in a good faith best effort to obtain the super-high vote required for passage as a binding company proposal.”

A copy of the Shareholder Proposal, including the supporting statement, is attached to this letter as Exhibit A.

**History.** In 2012, a non-binding shareholder proposal very similar to the Shareholder Proposal was included in the Company’s 2012 proxy statement and approximately 65 percent of shares voted at the 2012 annual meeting of shareholders (approximately 45 percent of the total shares outstanding) were voted in favor of the proposal. In response, in 2013, the Board adopted resolutions approving and recommending to shareholders amendments to its certificate of incorporation (the “Certificate”) to eliminate the 80% supermajority voting standard. Approval of these amendments to the certificate of incorporation required approval of at least 80 percent of the Company’s outstanding common stock. Despite the Board’s support, this 2013 proposal to amend the Company’s certificate of incorporation failed to pass, receiving less than the required 80 percent of the shareholders of record voting in favor.

The Company received a proposal substantially similar to the Shareholder Proposal prior to its 2015 annual meeting of shareholders and the Company included such proposal in its 2015 proxy materials. Prior to the 2015 meeting, the Board determined to support the shareholder proposal and unanimously recommended that shareholders vote in favor of the proposal. In the proxy materials for the 2015 meeting, the Company committed that if shareholders approved the shareholder proposal at the 2015 annual meeting, the Board would present for a vote of shareholders at the 2016 annual meeting amendments to the Company’s certificate of incorporation that, if approved, would eliminate the 80% supermajority voting standard. In excess of 95 percent of the shares present and entitled to vote at the 2015 annual meeting of shareholders (approximately 66 percent of the total shares outstanding) were voted in favor of the proposal.

Accordingly, at an upcoming meeting, the Board is expected to approve, and recommend to the Company’s shareholders for approval at the 2016 Annual Meeting of Shareholders, a

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission  
January 8, 2016  
Page 3

proposal (the “Company Proposal”) to amend the Company’s Certificate to eliminate voting provisions that require greater than a majority vote (collectively, the “Supermajority Provisions”).

***The Company Proposal.*** The Company’s Certificate currently includes the following Supermajority Provisions:

- Article VI (the “fair price provisions”) requires the affirmative vote of 80% of the Company’s outstanding shares to approve certain business combinations with interested shareholders, subject to certain exceptions, including an exception for transactions approved by the Board;
- Paragraph E of Article VII requires an affirmative vote of at least 80% of the Company’s outstanding shares to amend Article VII of the Certificate, which includes provisions relating to the terms of directors, removal of directors and newly created directorships;
- Article VIII requires an affirmative vote of at least 80% of the Company’s outstanding shares to amend Article VIII (relating to the prohibition of the shareholders to act by written consent); and
- Article IX requires an affirmative vote of at least 80% of the Company’s outstanding shares to amend (i) certain provisions of the Company’s bylaws, including those provisions relating to calling special meetings, no written consent by shareholders, advance notice of shareholder action, number, tenure and resignation of directors and notification of director nominations or (ii) Article IX of the Certificate.

The Company Proposal that is expected to be approved by the Board at its upcoming meeting would:

- delete Article VI (fair price provisions) in its entirety;
- delete Paragraph E of Article VII (requires an affirmative vote of at least 80% of the Company’s outstanding shares to amend Article VII of the Certificate);
- delete the 80% requirement in Article VIII (requires an affirmative vote of at least 80% of the Company’s outstanding shares to amend Article VIII of the Certificate);
- delete the 80% requirement in Article IX relating to the amendment of Article IX; and

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission  
January 8, 2016  
Page 4

- replace the 80% requirement in Article IX relating to specified bylaw amendments with a majority of the votes present and entitled to vote standard.

If the Company Proposal is adopted and Article VI is deleted, under Oklahoma law, subject to certain exceptions, including an exception for transactions approved by the Board, the required vote to approve a business combination with interested shareholders would be 66-2/3% of the Company's outstanding shares. If the Company Proposal is adopted and Paragraph E of Article VII, the 80% requirement in Article VIII and the 80% requirement in Article IX relating to the amendment of Article IX are deleted, under Oklahoma law, amendment of Article VII, Article VIII or Article IX of the Certificate would require a vote of a majority of the Company's outstanding shares. If the Company Proposal is adopted, the 80% requirement in Article IX relating to specified bylaw amendments would be replaced with a majority of the votes present and entitled to vote standard, which is consistent with the general voting standard under Oklahoma law.

The only other provisions in either the Certificate or bylaws that require a voting standard greater than a simple majority of the votes cast are: (i) Paragraph D of Article VII of the Certificate and Section 5.2 of the bylaws that require a majority of the combined voting power of the outstanding shares (i.e., majority of outstanding shares) to remove a director from office; and (ii) Section 4.6 of the bylaws that provides that the general voting standard for actions by the shareholders, unless voting by a greater number of shareholders is required by law or the Certificate, is a majority of the shares represented at a meeting and entitled to vote on a matter at which a quorum is present. Collectively, these three provisions are referred to as the "Non-Supermajority Provisions." These Non-Supermajority Provisions would not be eliminated or amended by the Company Proposal. The voting standard in Paragraph D of Article VII of the Certificate and Section 5.2 of the bylaws is the same as the vote required by Section 1027H of the Oklahoma General Corporation Act for a shareholder vote to remove a director. This will be consistent with the Shareholder Proposal, which requests changes only to the extent in compliance with applicable laws. The majority of the shares represented and entitled to vote standard in Section 4.6 of the bylaws is the default voting standard under Section 1061 of the Oklahoma General Corporation Act and differs from the simple majority of the votes cast standard stated in the Shareholder Proposal only in the way that abstentions are treated. Under Oklahoma law, abstentions are not deemed to be votes cast, and therefore under a simple majority of the votes cast standard, an abstention would have no effect on the vote. Under the majority of the shares represented and entitled to vote standard in Section 4.6 of the bylaws, an abstention would be deemed present and entitled to vote and therefore would be included in the denominator. Accordingly, an abstention would have the effect of a vote against.

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission  
January 8, 2016  
Page 5

### **Discussion of Reasons for Omission**

We hereby respectfully request that the Staff concur in our view that the Shareholder Proposal may be excluded from the 2016 proxy materials pursuant to Rule 14a-8(i)(10). As mentioned above, the Board will consider approving, and recommending to the Company's shareholders for approval at the 2016 Annual Meeting of Shareholders, the Company Proposal that would eliminate the Supermajority Provisions in the Certificate.

We are submitting this no-action request at this time to address the timing requirements of Rule 14a-8. Although the Board has not yet approved the Company Proposal, the Staff has permitted companies to exclude proposals in reliance on Rule 14a-8(i)(10) where the company represents that its board is expected to approve amendments to its charter (subject to approval of the company's shareholders at the next annual meeting) that would substantially implement the shareholder proposal, and then supplements its request for no-action relief by notifying the Staff after the board has approved such amendments. *See e.g., NETGEAR, Inc.* (March 31, 2015); *Applied Materials, Inc.* (December 19, 2008); *Sun Microsystems, Inc.* (August 28, 2008); *H. J. Heinz Company* (May 20, 2008); and *NiSource, Inc.* (March 10, 2008). Accordingly, we will notify the Staff supplementally after the Board has considered the Company Proposal and taken the actions described above.

### **Rule 14a-8(i)(10) – The Shareholder Proposal May be Omitted Because it Has Been Substantially Implemented.**

Rule 14a-8(i)(10) permits a company to exclude a shareholder proposal from its proxy materials if the company has substantially implemented the proposal. Interpreting the predecessor to Rule 14a-8(i)(10), the Commission stated that the rule was “designed to avoid the possibility of shareholders having to consider matters which have already been favorably acted upon by the management.” *Exchange Act Release No. 12598* (July 7, 1976). To be excluded, the proposal does not need to be implemented in full or exactly as presented by the proponent. Instead the standard for exclusion is substantial implementation. *See Exchange Act Release No. 40018* (May 21, 1998, *n. 30 and accompanying text*); *see also Exchange Act Release No. 20091* (August 16, 1983).

The Staff has stated that, in determining whether a shareholder proposal has been substantially implemented, it will consider whether a company's particular policies, practices and procedures “compare favorably with the guidelines of the proposal,” and not where those policies, practices and procedures are embodied. *Texaco, Inc.* (March 28, 1991). *See also, e.g., NetApp, Inc.* (June 10, 2015); *Medtronic, Inc.* (June 13, 2013). The Staff has provided no-action relief under Rule 14a-8(i)(10) when a company has satisfied the essential objective of the proposal, even if the company (i) did not take the exact action requested by the proponent, (ii) did not implement the proposal in every detail or (iii) exercised discretion in determining how to

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission  
January 8, 2016  
Page 6

implement the proposal. *See, e.g., Exxon Mobil Corporation* (March 17, 2015; *recon. denied* March 25, 2015); *Exelon Corp.* (February 26, 2010); *Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc.* (January 17, 2007); *ConAgra Foods, Inc.* (July 3, 2006); *Johnson & Johnson* (February 17, 2006); *Talbots Inc.* (April 5, 2002); *Masco Corp.* (April 19, 1999 and March 29, 1999). In each of these cases, the Staff concurred with the company's determination that the proposal was substantially implemented in accordance with Rule 14a-8(i)(10) when the company had taken actions that included modifications from what was directly contemplated by the proposal, including in circumstances when the company had policies and procedures in place relating to the subject matter of the proposal, or the company had otherwise implemented the essential objective of the proposal.

Under this standard, the Company, following the expected approval of the Company Proposal by the Board, will have substantially implemented the Shareholder Proposal because the amendments in the Company Proposal fulfill the essential objective of the Shareholder Proposal, which is to eliminate supermajority voting provisions in the charter and bylaws. The presence of the Non-Supermajority Provisions that require a slightly different majority vote standard than the majority of the vote cast requested in the Shareholder Proposal do not affect this analysis.

The Board lacks unilateral authority to adopt the amendments to the Certificate that constitute the Company Proposal, but by submitting the Company Proposal to the Company's shareholders at the 2016 Annual Meeting, the Company is addressing the essential objective of the Shareholder Proposal. Accordingly, there is no reason to ask shareholders to vote on a resolution to urge the Board to take action that the Board is already expected to take.

The Staff has, on numerous occasions, including with respect to shareholder proposals that are very similar to the Shareholder Proposal, concurred that a shareholder proposal can be omitted from the proxy statement as substantially implemented under Rule 14a-8(i)(10) when companies have taken actions substantially similar to the Company's actions. *See, e.g., PPG Industries, Inc.* (January 21, 2015); *McKesson Corporation* (April 8, 2011); *Express Scripts, Inc.* (January 28, 2010); *MDU Resources Group, Inc.* (January 16, 2010); *Time Warner Inc.* (February 29, 2008). In this regard, the Staff has consistently granted no-action relief under Rule 14a-8(i)(10) when companies have sought to exclude shareholder proposals requesting elimination of supermajority voting requirements after the board of directors of those companies have taken action to approve (or were expected to approve) the necessary amendments to their respective charters and/or bylaws, and represented that such amendments would be submitted to a vote of shareholders (as applicable) in the next annual meeting. *See, e.g., Applied Materials, Inc.* (December 19, 2008); *Sun Microsystems, Inc.* (August 28, 2008); *H.J. Heinz Company* (May 20, 2008); *NiSource, Inc.* (March 10, 2008). In each of these cases, the Staff granted no-action relief to a company that intended to omit a shareholder proposal that was similar to the

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission  
January 8, 2016  
Page 7

Shareholder Proposal, based on actions by the company's board of directors (and, as applicable, anticipated actions by the company's shareholders) to remove supermajority voting provisions.

Furthermore, with regard to those provisions of the Company Proposal that, due to Oklahoma law, would result in replacing the supermajority voting standards with a voting standard based on the majority of outstanding shares and the continuation of the Non-Supermajority Provisions, the Staff has provided no-action relief under Rule 14a-8(i)(10) where similar proposals have called for the elimination of provisions requiring "a greater than simple majority vote" in favor of a majority of votes cast standard, and where the company has taken action to amend the governing documents to set shareholder voting thresholds based upon a majority of the company's outstanding shares. *See, e.g., McKesson Corporation* (April 8, 2011); *Celgene Corp.* (April 5, 2010); *Express Scripts, Inc.* (January 28, 2010); *MDU Resources Group, Inc.* (January 16, 2010); *Applied Materials, Inc.* (December 19, 2008); *Sun Microsystems* (August 28, 2008); *NiSource Inc.* (March 10, 2008). Similarly, with respect to the effect under Oklahoma law of deleting the fair price provisions of Article VI and the resulting statutory requirement for approval of 66-2/3% of the Company's outstanding shares to approve a business combination with interested shareholders, the Staff provided no-action relief under Rule 14a-8(i)(10) in a very similar context in *MDU Resources Group, Inc.* (January 16, 2010).

As noted above, the Board is expected to approve, at an upcoming Board meeting, the amendments to the Certificate to eliminate the Supermajority Provisions and will direct that the Company Proposal be submitted to a shareholder vote at the 2016 Annual Meeting of Shareholders. Further, the Company expects to pay its proxy solicitor an amount in excess of \$10,000 to assist in the solicitation of proxies for the 2016 annual meeting, including for the Company Proposal. We believe these facts demonstrate the Board's full support for the expected Company Proposal. The Company believes that these actions would achieve the "essential objective" of, and therefore substantially implement, the Shareholder Proposal, so that the Company may properly omit the Shareholder Proposal from the Company's 2016 proxy materials in accordance with Rule 14a-8(i)(10). Accordingly, we respectfully request that the Staff concur that the Shareholder Proposal may be properly omitted from the Company's 2016 proxy materials on the basis of Rule 14a-8(i)(10).

## **Conclusion**

For the reasons given above, we respectfully request that the Staff not recommend any enforcement action from the Commission if the Company omits the Shareholder Proposal from its 2016 proxy materials. If the Staff disagrees with the Company's conclusion to omit the Shareholder Proposal, we request the opportunity to confer with the Staff prior to the final determination of the Staff's position. Notification and a copy of this letter are simultaneously being forwarded to the Proponent.

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission  
January 8, 2016  
Page 8

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert J. Joseph". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert J. Joseph

cc: Patricia D. Horn  
John Chevedden

## JOHN CHEVEDDEN

\*\*\* FISMA &amp; OMB Memorandum M-07-16 \*\*\*

\*\*\* FISMA &amp; OMB Memorandum M-07-16 \*\*\*

Ms. Patricia D. Horn  
Corporate Secretary  
OGE Energy Corp. (OGE)  
321 N. Harvey  
Oklahoma City OK 73101  
PH: 405 553-3000  
FX: 405-553-3760

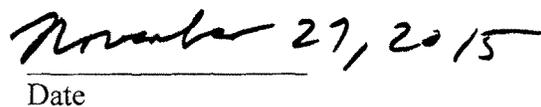
Dear Ms. Horn,

This Rule 14a-8 proposal is respectfully submitted in support of the long-term performance of our company. This Rule 14a-8 proposal is intended as a low-cost method to improve company performance. This proposal is for the next annual shareholder meeting. Rule 14a-8 requirements will be met including the continuous ownership of the required stock value until after the date of the respective shareholder meeting and presentation of the proposal at the annual meeting. This submitted format, with the shareholder-supplied emphasis, is intended to be used for definitive proxy publication.

Your consideration and the consideration of the Board of Directors is appreciated in support of the long-term performance of our company. Please acknowledge receipt of this proposal by email to [alfordbt@oge.com](mailto:alfordbt@oge.com) \*\*\* FISMA & OMB Memorandum M-07-16 \*\*\*

Sincerely,

  
John Chevedden

  
Date

cc: Brian Alford <[alfordbt@oge.com](mailto:alfordbt@oge.com)>

[OGE: Rule 14a-8 Proposal, November 27, 2015]

**Proposal [4] – Simple Majority Vote**

RESOLVED, Shareholders request that our board take the steps necessary so that each voting requirement in our charter and bylaws that calls for a greater than simple majority vote be eliminated, and replaced by a requirement for a majority of the votes cast for and against applicable proposals, or a simple majority in compliance with applicable laws. If necessary this means the closest standard to a majority of the votes cast for and against such proposals consistent with applicable laws. This proposal includes that our board fully support this proposal topic and commit to spend up to \$10,000 or more on means, such as special solicitations, as needed in a good faith best effort to obtain the super-high vote required for passage as a binding company proposal.

Our management promised to submit a Simple Majority Vote proposal to a binding shareholder vote at our 2016 annual meeting. This proposal is focused on preventing a possible predicament that up to 79% of our shares will vote in favor – yet the 2016 proposal will fail because a formidable 80% vote is needed.

Shareowners are willing to pay a premium for shares of companies that have excellent corporate governance. Supermajority voting requirements, the target of this proposal, have been found to be one of 6 entrenching mechanisms that are negatively related to company performance according to “What Matters in Corporate Governance” by Lucien Bebchuk, Alma Cohen and Allen Ferrell of the Harvard Law School. Supermajority requirements are used to block initiatives supported by most shareowners but opposed by a status quo management.

This proposal topic won from 74% to 88% support at Weyerhaeuser, Alcoa, Waste Management, Goldman Sachs, FirstEnergy, McGraw-Hill and Macy’s. Currently a 1%-minority can frustrate the will of our 79%-shareholder majority. In other words a 1%-minority could have the power to prevent shareholders from improving our corporate governance.

Please vote to enhance shareholder value:

**Simple Majority Vote – Proposal [4]**

Notes:

John Chevedden,  
proposal.

\*\*\* FISMA & OMB Memorandum M-07-16 \*\*\*

sponsors this

Please note that the title of the proposal is part of the proposal. The title is intended for publication.

If the company thinks that any part of the above proposal, other than the first line in brackets, can be omitted from proxy publication based on its own discretion, please obtain a written agreement from the proponent.

This proposal is believed to conform with Staff Legal Bulletin No. 14B (CF), September 15, 2004 including (emphasis added):

Accordingly, going forward, we believe that it would not be appropriate for companies to exclude supporting statement language and/or an entire proposal in reliance on rule 14a-8(I)(3) in the following circumstances:

- the company objects to factual assertions because they are not supported;
- the company objects to factual assertions that, while not materially false or misleading, may be disputed or countered;
- the company objects to factual assertions because those assertions may be interpreted by shareholders in a manner that is unfavorable to the company, its directors, or its officers; and/or
- the company objects to statements because they represent the opinion of the shareholder proponent or a referenced source, but the statements are not identified specifically as such.

**We believe that it is appropriate under rule 14a-8 for companies to address these objections in their statements of opposition.**

See also: Sun Microsystems, Inc. (July 21, 2005).

The stock supporting this proposal will be held until after the annual meeting and the proposal will be presented at the annual meeting. Please acknowledge this proposal promptly by email

\*\*\* FISMA & OMB Memorandum M-07-16 \*\*\*