

# Director Jim Roth introduces Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg to Oklahoma, state's clean energy potential



Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook founder and CEO, visits NextEra Energy with Jim Roth, Phillips Murrah Director and Chair of the Firm's Clean Energy Practice Group

Jim Roth, Phillips Murrah Director and Chair of the Firm's Clean Energy Practice, was quoted in [a Duncan Banner article by Katherine Farrow](#) regarding a recent meeting he and Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg had in Duncan, OK on Nov. 8 in regards to Oklahoma's clean energy future.

Read Roth's comments from the article below:

*Jim Roth, Director and Chair of law firm Phillips Murrah's Clean Energy Practice Group, said that he was contacted by Zuckerberg's office approximately four months ago to set up*

the visit.

“Mr. Zuckerberg has undertaken a year of travel challenge where he’s going to all parts of America, and particularly states he’d never been to before – his office reached out to me about four months ago – inquiring about if they were to come to Oklahoma, what would I recommend they see,” Roth said. “I began to describe to them the promise of Oklahoma’s wind energy and future solar energy and that seemed to pique their interest.”

Kismet dictated that Zuckerberg and his team would be visiting the week before Veteran’s Day, and Roth knew that wind energy giant NextEra would be the perfect destination due to their veteran-friendly hiring policies.

“One of Oklahoma’s larger wind developers also has a program where they actively recruit and employ veterans and this week of his planned visit being near Veteran’s Day, I think that was also interesting to them,” said Roth. “So, it was nice that NextEra wind energy, with its Rush Springs wind project that came online just last year, was able to play host.”

Zuckerberg spent his time at the wind farm speaking with wind technicians, land owners and neighbors of the project about the ways wind energy has been beneficial to their lives.

“Mr. Zuckerberg wanted a chance to have a casual, relaxed, engaging conversation with actual Oklahoma wind technicians,” Roth said. “He asked that some surrounding neighbors and landowners that had turbines on their properties come and join and sit down for lunch. So, it led to just a really great dialogue where he asked questions and they provided some neat answers and he got to learn about – what it takes to be a certified wind technician. What other careers that some of those employees had – before and why they loved being in wind energy today. He’s heard from the landowners, their appreciation for how the funding goes directly to local

*schools, how the wind turbine royalty payments have helped their farms with some secondary income and generally just had a really nice exchange. He's very gracious, the guests and the wind techs – had a great time engaging with him and all in all it was definitely a nice conversation."*

*A look at a horizontal blade that was on the ground as well as a tour of an actual wind turbine and tower were two of the items on the agenda for Zuckerberg, who according to Roth, very much enjoyed the time spent and knowledge gleaned from the experience.*

*"He just talked about how kind everybody was – how much he enjoyed it, I think he really enjoyed the back-and-forth with the local landowners and the wind-techs, so I would say all-in-all he seemed to have a really positive experience," Roth said.*

*Even Zuckerberg's advance team enjoyed their look at Duncan and the surrounding areas, according to Roth. The team reportedly was in the area several days in advance to make sure the visit ran smoothly and had nothing but glowing reviews for Duncan and Stephens County.*

*"His team had arrived a few days in advance, enjoyed themselves in Duncan, had a chance to site visit the day before just to make sure everything went smoothly," said Roth. "They shared with me they had a wonderful, positive visit to Duncan and they loved, 'How friendly everyone in Duncan is.' "*

*Roth said he was extremely impressed with Zuckerberg, as well and hopes to be able to boast of another Facebook founder visit to the state someday.*

*"There's just this human element, right? Where he arrives in jeans and a hoodie and is unassuming and was just down-to-earth and very gracious and treated everybody equally. I saw him really demonstrate a level of intellectual curiosity and*

*just a graciousness toward people that was nice to get to witness firsthand,” Roth said. “I’m thrilled that – they had such a good visit and I hope they’ll come back and even invest more in Oklahoma.”*

[Read the full article from the Duncan Banner.](#)