

DALLAS TOWNSHIP

# Solicitor 'very close to finalizing' gas agreement

By SARAH HITE  
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Solicitor Thomas Brennan said Tuesday the township has not yet finished an agreement with Williams Midstream Operations LLC, a natural gas company planning to construct a pipeline and metering station about 1,800 feet away from the Dallas schools.

Brennan said he is "very close to finalizing" an agreement with Williams. The main component of the agreement would be that both parties acknowledge zoning as a requirement for pipeline construction.

"These are contentious issues," said Brennan.

He said he hopes to have the agreement available for supervi-

sors' and public inspection by the next meeting on July 19 or sooner.

Other factors in the agreement include the need for land development prior to pipeline construction and whittling down plans for a metering station to just the physical building at which gas would be measured.

Williams and another company, Chief Gathering LLC, have plans to run approximately 30-mile gathering lines from northern counties to the township to tap into the Williams-owned Transco interstate pipeline, which runs perpendicular to the Dallas School District campus.

Both companies are also pursuing plans to build natural gas metering stations within 1,800 feet of the four schools.

Prior to negotiations, Williams

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Frank Wagner  
Dallas Twp. supervisor

had planned to construct a natural gas metering facility with two 3,000-gallon tanks filled with the flammable odorant mercaptan, a flare, a 100-foot communications tower and various pipes, valves and tanks, including condensate tanks.

Residents took the floor at the meeting to discuss concerns with the pending agreement and further discuss its details.

Jane Tolomello of Fairground Road played a recording of several rounds of gunshots she record-

ed with her cell phone on her property around June 26 and asked whether the township has any policies regarding gunfire.

Police Chief Robert Jolley said the township has no ordinance controlling gunfire in the township except for state gaming commission regulations. He said growth in the township could warrant further investigation into this issue.

Tolomello said she's worried for the safety of her family and neighbors if commonplace gun-

fire occurs after natural gas equipment is built about 800 feet from her home.

"I want a 100 percent guarantee," she said.

Resident Jim DeMichele said he agreed with Tolomello, and said that local natural gas development is "creating a new brand of terrorism."

Jeffrey Dickson asked if any companies have threatened suit as a result of the township's stance on zoning issues, and Brennan said lawsuits are a "reality."

"What they say is, if we don't allow them to do it a certain way, (their) avenue is a lawsuit," he said.

Brennan said he continues meetings with each company in private because there are things he "doesn't want to say in public"

due to the issues' complexities. As a lifelong resident of the township, Brennan said he wants to ensure a fair agreement is made. It could be a precedent for future natural gas development in the township, he said.

Supervisor Frank Wagner addressed the crowd about a full-page advertisement published in The Times Leader and The Dallas Post by the Dallas Parents-Taxpayers Group. He said the ad, which criticized the board of supervisors' dealings with natural gas companies, wasn't "fair."

"Give us a chance," he said. "I don't want to sell nobody down the drain. I've lived here all my life and I love my water. If anybody ruins that, then I'll be the first Rambo in this area."

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# Lake-Lehman Foundation does much more than raise funds

Group teaches young people how to give back to their community through service.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- The Fourth Annual Lake-Lehman Foundation Golf Tournament will be held Friday, July 15 at Irem Temple County Club in Dallas Township. Registration will begin at noon for a shotgun start at 1 p.m. The cost is \$120 per golfer and includes lunch, dinner and a gift. A cocktail hour and dinner dance will immediately follow the tournament. Additional dinner dance tickets can be purchased for \$50 per person. For more information, contact Committee Chair Lynn Daddio at ldaddio@comcast.net.
- Lake-Lehman Foundation's first annual Battle of the Bands will be held from 3 to 7 p.m. on Saturday, July 30 at the Lake-Lehman High School Stadium. The format of the event will be five bands competing, each having a 20-minute set with 10 minutes between sets. Order of competition will be determined by drawing numbers prior to the event. The audience will vote for the winning band which will receive a \$500 cash prize.

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The Lake-Lehman Foundation has aided the Lake-Lehman School District in more ways than just raising funds - providing internships, hosting Zumba classes and teaching youngsters about nonprofits are just a portion of what the group has to offer in the name of helping the district expand its horizons.

Johnna Evans, president of the foundation, said the organization restructured in 2008 after being initially founded in 1995. The nonprofit, tax-exempt organization's first project was to aid in the development and construction of a wellness center in the junior/senior high school.

Several designs were considered, including one that would cost as much as \$500,000. In late 2009, the school board voted for an expansion of existing space to construct the wellness center for the purpose of allowing athletes and students to utilize free weights and cardiovascular equipment after school hours.

The district paid for renovations, but the foundation was able to provide additional equipment needed for the center. Evans said the group has provided a refurbished elliptical trainer at a cost of \$2,900 and two new air purifiers at a cost of \$359

each. A gift of \$1,000 was also provided by the foundation towards the completion of the project.

Now the foundation is on a mission to continue to help students and programs in the district reach their highest potential.

"Right now we're still making our presence known," said Debbie Anderson, public relations director for the foundation. "We don't get a lot of requests."

The foundation was able to award eight scholarships to graduating seniors this year and raised funds for extracurricular activities and other programs.

The organization recently donated \$500 to the high school girls' and boys' lacrosse teams for the purchase of equipment. The teams are not funded by the district so parents and players are responsible for most equipment purchases or for raising funds to make ends meet.

The foundation also boosts so-

cial interactivity within the community - programs such as Zumba classes and its annual golf outing ensure the group can raise funds while still making connections in the community it supports.

Anderson said a new program for elementary students also teaches youngsters the benefits of raising funds for nonprofits.

"We want them to know their good deeds haven't gone unrecognized," said Anderson. "We want them to know we're here for them."

Each month the foundation recognizes classes that have worked hard to raise money for organizations like the Luzerne County S.P.C.A., David's Place in Wilkes-Barre and the Back Mountain Food Pantry.

The organization matches funds raised by elementary students up to \$100 and treats the class to a pizza party or popcorn and a movie.

"This program is in honor of



Members of the committee planning the Lake-Lehman Foundation's Golf Tournament are, from left, first row, Patty Harrison and Sande Holena. Second row, Karli Doran and Rachel Holena, Foundation interns.

The Lake-Lehman Foundation welcomes community volunteers and student interns (grades 10-12). The next meeting of the LLF is set for 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 21 in the Lake-Lehman Junior/Senior High School Conference Room. The public is welcome to attend. For more information about the Lake-Lehman Foundation, call 255-2906 or e-mail llfoundation@lake-lehman.k12.pa.us.

those students who are seeing what they could do in terms of community service," said Anderson. "This is part of citizenship."

The foundation also runs a "Change Fund Drive" for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. Each grade raises its own money to be placed in a savings account in a local bank. The money will then be "unlocked" during the class's senior year to be used in any way the students wish.

"It's like a little competition to see who could raise the most money," said foundation treasurer Bill Holena.

As if teaching young students how to save money isn't enough, the foundation also provides internships for high school students looking to learn the ins and outs of working in an office setting.

Evans said the foundation's interns learn a wide variety of skills involved in working with a

nonprofit entity. "They learn a lot of very practical skills, from basic office duties to getting out into the community on a broader scale," she said.

The application process also requires students to submit resumes and interview with members of the foundation's board - practice for applying for college and jobs in the future.

"We're all here for the kids," said Anderson.

HARPIN' ON THINGS

# With so much to do, it's hard to decide what should be done first

If you're looking for something to read that will brighten your mood and make you laugh, you have to pick up a book by Patrick McManus. None of his stories are long.

Yes, reading one may require more than watching a 30-second news story on television or reading five paragraphs of a story on the Internet but the time will be well spent.

Two books I recommend are "The Night the Bear Ate Goomba" and "They Shoot Canoes, Don't They?" The author deals with everyday situations or events which we all go through.

My favorite is the story about sequences - wanting to do one thing but having to do

many others to accomplish that. I had a recent day like that. I wanted to get the grass cut but it was early in the morning and there would be time to get another project out of the way first.

I figured it would be good to open the pool for the Fourth of July since the temperature had been over 60 degrees most days (my blood is still thin from living in the Keys) and I might even put my feet in it sometime around August once the sun warms the water to about 80 degrees. Also, the frogs who have taken up residence in the green water are starting to keep me awake at night with their chorus, especially the one with the real deep voice.

Step number one is to get into the cellar and turn on the water to the pool. Fighting through the cobwebs to the corner, I find the valve which has a little tag marked "pool" hanging on it just where it was left last year when I couldn't

find the valve. It's very hard to turn and I'm careful not to really crank on it. The sound of water going through the line signals success at this point.

Getting to the pool, I hear the air being pushed through the line and I see a little bit of water coming from the hose connection which was left open to drain during the winter. It should be gushing out since the line runs downhill and is fed by a pressure pump. I close the hose spigot and go into the pool house to close the faucet on the sink. It's still pushing out air so I let it go for a minute.

Water starts to come out so the faucet is closed and the toilet is checked. No water is coming into the tank so I work the floating ball up and down a few times and still nothing. The tank filler was replaced some time ago and is one of those that can be unscrewed from the top. Firm pressure down and a turn to the left and we have water. Unfortunately, it is going

onto the wall and not in the tank and now the darn top won't go back on the valve.

A few quick turns on the shut-off knob which supplies the tank stops Old Faithful. Put one toilet valve filler on the mental list of things needed. It's now time to see if the water is coming from the hose hookup which was turned off. There is no water spraying from the hose hookup but the ground around the water line is very wet. This means only one thing. The line must have frozen during the winter.

A few handfuls of gravel and dirt are moved and there it is - a nice split in the black water line. Add water line, hose clamps, since those in place are rusted, shovel and hack saw to the list of items needed.

Ignoring that for the moment, I pull open the door to the little wood shed which houses the pump just to take a look at things and see several hornets come out of the opening. I quickly close the door

and add a can of foaming wasp and hornet killer to the store growing list.

Trudging back to the house to turn off the water since no work can be done with the lines full, I take off my sneakers which are now mud covered from the leak by the pool. Wanting to avoid getting scolded for muddy footprints in the house, I leave the sneakers outside.

Opening the cellar door to turn off the water since nothing can be fixed with it turned on, I hear what sounds like running water. Funny, I didn't remember leaving anything on.

The pool of water seeping under the door which goes out of the cellar is at least five feet wide and growing. The sound of running water is coming from the other side of the door where the copper water line which runs to the pool is located. Obviously, it has broken from the winter cold and improper draining on my part.

Into the water I go to turn off

the valve and the sound of water stops. To see what's wrong, I have to get to the door.

The door has a lock, along with a sliding bar which is easy enough but Mom was extra cautious about security and had me push an old refrigerator and small pool table in front of the door as extra deterrents. It takes two people to move those things and I'm standing in water in my socks, watching leaves and other unidentifiable debris float by.

I decide then that it would be best just to cut the grass and when I receive my lunchtime text from the Mrs., asking how the day is going, I tell her everything is fine and the mower is working.

Harp Heffernan was the associate publisher, outdoor editor and chief photographer of the Sunday Independent, a newspaper that was in his family for 87 years in Wilkes-Barre. You can e-mail him at news@mydallaspost.com.