

DALLAS SCHOOL DISTRICT

# Board will no longer use attorney at zoning meetings

By SARAH HITE  
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Members of the Dallas School Board told a resident Monday there are no plans to keep an attorney working on behalf of the district in township zoning hearing proceedings concerning a natural gas metering station to be constructed near the campus.

Board President Bruce Goeringer told resident Jane Tolomello there is "no retainer" for Atty. Jack Dean of the Scranton-based law firm Elliot, Greenleaf & Dean to continue representation of the

district at Dallas Township zoning hearing board meetings.

Meetings for Chief Gathering LLC's application for special exceptions to build a natural gas metering station about 1,300 feet from the four Dallas schools have been ongoing since January.

Goeringer said the decision to discontinue Dean's services for the district was made about two months ago, after Chief agreed to move its proposed compressor station and mercaptan tanks from the site.

He added that board members will attend zoning hearings if an issue arises, and Dean's services

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Jane Tolomello  
Dallas School District resident

may be utilized in the future should the need become apparent.

Still, Tolomello told the board its representation at the meetings would have supported the cause of the Dallas Taxpayers-Parents Group, of which she is a member.

"It would have been nice to have someone from the district cross-examine (Chief's) experts, the ones that say gas doesn't blow up," she said.

Tolomello said there are other issues with which the board should be concerned, including a few gas companies' plans to tap

into the 53-year-old Transco pipeline four times.

She also explained that two natural gas companies, Chief and Williams Field Services LLC, are working on agreements with Dallas Township officials to determine whether zoning and land development apply to pipeline projects.

"Right now, to characterize where we stand, it's in the hands of the township zoning hearing board," said Solicitor Benjamin Jones III. "And you know it's a matter of law, not fact... what can the school board do?"

Tolomello continued that part

of the zoning ordinance is to determine whether the project would be compatible with the characteristic of the area, and she said putting "3,000 lives in danger" is reason enough for the district to resume its involvement in the hearings.

She also said evacuation in the event of an emergency would also be difficult for the students, faculty and parents within the district.

Jones said that "a clear and present danger does not seem to continue to exist" at the site.

"I do have to say I'm disap-

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DALLAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING

## Solution of zoning dispute will decide approval of pipeline

By SARAH HITE  
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Williams Field Services LLC may have received conditional approval from the township planning commission for its pipeline project Tuesday, but whether the pipeline can actually be constructed still depends on the outcome of a zoning dispute.

The planning commission granted the company conditional approval for its subdivision and land development applications, dependent on the satisfaction of several outstanding issues.

Some of the conditions include submitting final plans signed by property owner William Perry, mapping and surveys of the route of the pipeline on all 18 properties affected by the construction, settling a property ownership dispute in the last leg of the route which will not be completed until at least August 25 and the execution and delivery of a storm water maintenance plan and obtaining an easement for access to the site for inspection.

Planning Commission Solicitor William McCall said the project is still privy to the outcome of an agreement between the township and Williams about whether local zoning laws pertain to pipelines. The company must satisfy any and all zoning requirements before the project can receive the OK for construction.

Williams is planning to construct about five miles of its 33 1/2 mile Springville Gathering Line within Dallas Township to end at a "tap site" off Hildebrandt Road. The pipeline will tap into the Williams-owned Transco interstate pipeline in order to bring the gas to market.

The site is about 1,800 feet from the Dallas School District campus and close to homes and a church which has stirred residents' and parents' concerns over the last five months.

The company initially planned to construct a metering station at

**"I'm dumbfounded."**

Jim DeMichele  
Dallas Township resident

the site but now those plans are on hold until the company and township can reach an agreement.

In the meantime, Williams was granted final land development approval from the Wyoming County Planning Commission to build a metering facility on 5 1/2 acres off Schoolhouse Road in Northmoreland Township.

Williams spokesperson Helen Humphreys said the company plans to move forward with this site until negotiations with Dallas Township are settled.

She added that pipeline construction has begun in Susquehanna County.

Resident John Seman expressed his ill feelings about the project, including concerns about whether the pipeline would affect trees and wetlands near his property.

"I'm taking the brunt of it," he said. "The neighbor's just sitting back collecting the money and it's not near their house - it's near my house."

Some residents were confused about the proceedings, as pages of outstanding comments were not satisfied by the company at the July meeting, but only a few remained at Tuesday's meeting.

"What was solved in the issues that were a problem in the last meeting?" asked resident Jane Tolomello.

Township Engineer Tom Doughton said two engineers working on behalf of the township, Joe Stachokus of SM Design Group and Joe Martarano of Mining and Environmental Engineers, met with Williams' engineers between meetings to hash out the unaddressed comments. Those issues were not further discussed at Tuesday's meeting.

"I'm dumbfounded," said resi-

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Kirby Kidz, a production of the F.M. Kirby Center's and the Harris Conservatory for the Arts outreach programs, will present "101 Dalmatians Kids" and "Into the Woods JR" at 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, Aug. 19 and 20 at the F. M. Kirby Center. From left, first row, Catherine Ziegler, Lindsay Sherrick, Alan Lisman, Sophia Piccolotti, Christa Berrini, Alex Aiello, Megan Dennis, Taylor Grochowski, Hannah Ziegler. Second row, Emma Wheeler, Zuzu Kester, Michala Dennis, Bella Buckland, Jacob Harris, Madison Pertl, Grace Aiello, Audrey Flynn. Third row, Ricky Hosage, Janice Lisman, Giana Piccolotti, Britney Cheskiewicz, Sarah Joseph, Anna Scholl, Justin Yavorski. Fourth row, Amanda Sedor, Anna James, Alexandra Ayers, Nina McCormack, Salena Diaz, Chloe Lacoste, Amelia Sack, Brianna Stilp, Anna Giacometti. Fifth row, Brittany Kodra, Ben Nause, Jaclyn Leighton, Joanne Momfletto, Christian Clinton, Nicole Birosak. Absent at the time of the photo were Maxine Derome, Hope Frantz, Julia Jonelunas, Alexis Legg, Grace Nicolai and Samantha Waichulis.

## Kirby Kidz are on stage next weekend

"101 Dalmatians Kids" and "Into the Woods JR" will be staged at 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, Aug. 19 and 20 at the F. M. Kirby Center.

Several singers, dancers and actors from the Back Mountain communities will be part of the productions.

The production marks the conclusion of a seven-week theater workshop held for regional children which began at the end of June and focused on acting technique, theater fundamentals, vocal performance, dance terminology and performance.

Kirby Kidz is a product of the F.M. Kirby Center's and the Harris Conservatory for the Arts outreach programs and is made possible in part with the support of the Passan Foundation.

The program, unique to Northeast Pennsylvania, is designed to offer that "Kirby Experience" to all aspiring school-age actors, singers and dancers. The program is open to all boys and girls ages 4 to 18 regardless of stage experience or training.

This year, members of the Kirby Kidz have been separated into two different shows. Children

ages 5 to 9 years old make up the cast of "101 Dalmatians Kids," a musical based on the classic Walt Disney movie.

"Into the Woods JR" features Kirby Kidz ages 10 through 15 years old. The musical interlaces the characters of several classic fairytales and develops their stories further expanding on their wishes and quests.

Some of the Back Mountain residents who will be part of this weekend's performances are Grace Nicolai, Justin Yanorski, Anna Giacometti and Maxine DeRome, all of Dallas; Janice

Lisman, Alan Lisman, Hope Frantz, Grace Aiello, and Alex Aiello, all of Shavertown; and Anna James, of Jackson Township.

Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$18 the days of the performance and are available at the Harris Conservatory for the Arts in Luzerne and the Kirby Box Office. Children age 5 and under are free.

For more information on Kirby Kidz or this weekend's productions, call the Harris Conservatory for the Arts at 570-718-0673.

KINGSTON TOWNSHIP

## Residents will pay \$52 local services tax

By SARAH HITE  
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The Kingston Township Board of Supervisors narrowly passed a \$52 local services tax and listened to residents' comments about poor water drainage at a meeting Wednesday.

The board passed the tax in a 3-2 vote, with supervisors Jim Reino Jr., Jeffrey Box and Shirley Moyer voting in favor and supervisors John Solinsky and Frank Natitus voting against the measure.

The tax would be \$52 annually, \$10 of which would be paid to the Dallas School District and would apply to those employed within the township. Those with an income of less than \$12,000 would not be required to pay the tax.

Reino said Kingston Township was one of three municipalities in Luzerne County to not require the tax since it was enacted in 2005. It was previously called the emergency management and municipal services tax.

During a public hearing on the matter in which no residents com-

mented, Reino said the tax, which the supervisors have avoided since its Luzerne County inception, has become necessary for the township to generate revenue.

He said the township could gain about \$40,000 for the 2012 fiscal year, which begins on January 1.

"As everyone is aware, over our last few meetings, we are in a budget shortfall right now and we're not doing any type of... major infrastructure work right now," he said. "Going into this next year, we're in the situation where we have no cash flow."

Reino continued that the township is no longer eligible to receive grants for police cars, and the board is also considering transferring money from its capital improvement budget to the general fund in order to keep funds stable.

Solinsky felt that continuously bringing up the local services tax was "aggravating," as he deemed the tax to be "anti-democratic" and opposed it due to its "inherent unfairness."

"When the government can take money from people who have no political recourse, you no long-

**"I'm really tired of fighting this battle year after year after year."**

John Solinsky  
Kingston Township supervisor

er have democracy, you have tyranny," said Solinsky.

He said one of the reasons he took his name off the ballot for November's election is because the tax was on the table again this year.

"I'm really tired of fighting this battle year after year after year," he said.

Solinsky stated Reino was "not candid" with him about the issue, and therefore he said he could not "operate in good faith with the rest of the board."

"I take exception to what was said, but I believe it's in the best interest of the township at this point and I believe it's fair to the majority of taxpayers in this town that this tax be enacted," he said.

Reino also said residents who work elsewhere in the county are paying the tax, so it would be fair

to require the tax in Kingston Township.

Moyer said she had voted against the tax in previous years, but the township's dismal earned income tax collection warrants another source of revenue.

Reino also said that, if the economy prospers at some point in the future, the board could take action to rescind the tax.

The board also heard from two residents who had concerns about water drainage issues during the most recent storms that dumped over five inches of rain within an hour.

Tanya Sakulich, of Shavertown, showed the board three videos she recorded during the last storm, reporting that her property received severe water damage during

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ROSS TOWNSHIP

## Backhoe may be replaced

Two contributing factors, almost 7,000 hours of operation and tough laws for emission control on heavy equipment have forced supervisors to seek estimates to replace the township's current backhoe.

Supervisors agreed on Tuesday night to seek prices through the state run COSTARS program to replace their 2001 John Deere backhoe. COSTARS is a cooperative purchasing program by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to offer competitive pricing to local municipalities.

Due to the complexity of the emission laws, it is not possible to buy parts to install on the backhoe.

Supervisor Dave Williams said the backhoe is used almost

every day, adding that the almost 7,000 hours of operation logged for the machine is high. Heavy equipment usage is measured in hours versus mileage.

In other news, supervisors ordered four new radio communication units systems at a cost of \$3,495.

This update was required due to the Federal Communication Commission passing of a law requiring all radio systems to operate on narrow band frequencies, versus the wide band frequencies, by October 2011.

By utilizing the narrow band, more frequencies for future use will be created. The remaining eight units owned by the township can be reprogrammed for the narrow band frequency.

- Eileen Godin