

# The DALLAS POST

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## Testimony wraps up on gas metering station issue

By SARAH HITE  
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After two hearings this week, representatives from Williams Field Services LLC and residents wrapped up testimony in the company's request to the zoning hearing board to build a natural gas metering station in the township, though the record remains open.

Last week, the board ap-

proved a similar request by Chief Gathering LLC after nearly a year of hearings. The Williams metering facility would be approximately 500 feet away from the Chief site.

Zoning hearing board member Bob Bayer recused himself from the proceedings due to a conflict of interest because his "employer has dealings with Williams," he said.

Williams' attorney Shawn Gallagher said the Williams fa-

### WHAT'S NEXT?

Residents and Williams have until Dec. 28 to submit findings of fact and conclusions of law based on the testimony and will have until Jan. 4 to respond to those documents.

ility is "much less intense" than Chief's approved site. The company is requesting the approval of a metering building, a flow control building, a pig re-

ceiver and a filter at the site, which is located on 4.29 acres with an access entryway off Lower Demunds Road.

Its purpose is to measure the flow and quantity of natural gas flowing from wells in Susquehanna County via the company's Springville Gathering Line.

David Bradford, project engineer for Williams, said the site will be approximately 2,682 feet from the Dallas School Dis-

Last week, the board approved a similar request by Chief Gathering LLC after nearly a year of hearings. The Williams metering facility would be approximately 500 feet away from the Chief site.

tract campus, 1,140 feet from the closest residence, 1,651 feet from the closest residential development and 2,249 feet from the Evangelical Free Church on Hildebrandt Road.

Several aspects have been removed from the proposed site

since Williams submitted its first application in March. A mercaptan tank, odorant building, a 100-foot communications tower, a communications building, a 10-foot flare and conden-

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## Will Ted Jackson be back?

Dallas School Board votes, 8-1, to open head football coaching position.

By SARAH HITE  
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Ted Jackson Sr. said his "emotions are being pushed around" after the Dallas School Board decided Monday night to open the long-time high school football coach's position.

"I'm upset, I'm angry, but I'm not going to make any hasty decisions," he said Wednesday of his future plans as a coach. He did not say whether he will reapply for the Dallas position or coach elsewhere.



Jackson

The board's decision came as a shock to many, but some board members said the choice was in the best interest of students and the community.

"The board spent a lot of time ... looking into the situation," said board president Catherine Wega. "It was not something done on the spur of the moment, and I think we all voted our conscience and did what we thought was best for the kids."

The board decided to open the position in an 8-1 vote, with board member Bruce Goeringer the lone opponent of the measure.

Jackson has held the position of head football coach at Dallas for 27 years with just one losing season, but those years were not free of scandal.

The football program has been on probation for the past four years by the District 2 Athletic Committee, a local branch of the PIAA.

The first two years were for a fight during a game in 2008, and the last two were tacked on after an incident in which Dallas players urinated on the tennis courts at halftime during a game against Tunkhannock in 2009.

Wega said the issue at hand did not concern any one specific incident but rather several occurrences over the course of the last few years.

"It in no way is an easy decision," said board member Karen Kyle. "I'm very much aware of the impact Ted Jackson has had on the lives of his players after 27

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## HELLO, SANTA



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Simon Vieczorek looks intently into the eyes of Santa Claus during his visit with the jolly old man at Gate of Heaven Cub Scout Pack 232's annual Christmas party.

## Businesses think outside box to survive in stale economy

Some local merchants are re-tooling their businesses to attract customers.

By SARAH HITE  
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In tough economic times, small businesses are busting beyond boundaries in order to compete with big chain stores by expanding their original business plan with a little creativity.

Lynn Banta, chairwoman of the Back Mountain Economic Development Council, said expanding upon initial business plans is necessary in today's economy.

"I think it's vital. This is a tough economy," she said. "I've started many businesses over the years, and this is the toughest I've ever seen it. You have to be willing to think outside the box, and take it when it doesn't work and figure another way to do it."

She said small businesses often can't survive on just a local market, and they need to expand their businesses to stand out among the competition.

"You need to have a product to distinguish yourself," she said.

With a little creativity and some risk-taking, several businesses in the Back Mountain are doing just that.

### Taking on a declining market

Cook's Pharmacy in Shavertown hopes to compete in a market that has declined in the past few years - video rentals.

The pharmacy held a grand opening on Dec. 2 of its new video rental section that features about 300 movies for customers looking to see a friendly face while browsing the latest titles.

Meagan Simkulak, public relations coordinator for Cook's, was having trouble finding a popular movie one day, and she and Frank Lombardo, owner and pharmacist at Cook's, got to talking about the lack of rental services in the region.

"The idea is that you can't find a place to rent videos anymore," said Lombardo. "There's something neat about going to rent movies from a store. My family and I used to love to go." Cook's Pharmacy is already

more than just a neighborhood drug store - the business sells trinkets, gift wrap, books and other retail products.

Lombardo, who learned about running the retail business from his father, said it's important to focus on the customers' experiences, not just sales.

"I enjoy the creative side of business," he said. "We strive to create an experience for our customers."

### Selling more than products

Just a few miles away along Memorial Highway, Wild Birds Unlimited in Dallas touts education as one of its business-defining characteristics.

The nature store is a national franchise that sells birdseed, birdhouses and other goods for backyard bird and wildlife watchers.

When owners Craig and Karen Yarrish opened the store eight years ago, they sought to not only make those interested in nature well-equipped, but well-educated, too.

"The franchise does say to be involved in the community, but we went a little bit farther," said Craig Yarrish.



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Meagan Simkulak, marketing director at Cook's Pharmacy, sets up the new movie rental addition at the store in Shavertown.

The local store offers between 50 and 75 free or low-cost informational programs a year, ranging from an in-house presentation on gardening to live animal demonstrations by local environmentalists to bird watching excursions at Frances Slocum State Park.

Most programs are free and if there is a cost involved, it usually just covers supplies. For example, the store hosts many activities for children throughout

the year, including making pine cone feeders.

"We really strive to have all programs held for free," said Yarrish. "We may get charged for it, but we want (people) to feel free to come and not be stopped by a fee."

Yarrish said spreading the word and finding a solid customer base is difficult for small businesses, but it can be done -

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