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Wednesday, October 6, 2010

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Peters Twp. delays hiring consultant for gas drilling

By Carla Valentine Myers For The Almanac writer@thealmanac.net

After requesting proposals for consulting on natural gas lease bidding, Peters Township Council decided Sept. 13 not to pursue hiring a consultant at this time.

Council Chairman David Ball said there was no point in hiring a consultant until they had an ordinance regulating gas drilling in place.

"We are a long way away from talking about this," he said. "The first thing they are going to ask us is 'what are your rules for drilling?' and we don't have them yet."

Councilman Robert Atkison agreed "At this point in time, we have nothing to talk about. I would wait on this deal."

Township Manager Michael Silvestri said the township received three proposals. They were from: Reed Day, Esq.; Smith Butz, attorneys at law; and Terra Energy Associates.



He told council that he had a brief meeting with all three and that Smith Butz and Terra Energy have a lot of experience in the field. He recommended council interview those two firms if they were interested in proceeding.

Silvestri said he felt that the township should focus on getting its drilling ordinance in place first.

Council earlier this year had jointly advertised with the township's school district for bids for drilling on public property, and received only one bid - from Chesapeake Energy. The lease would have earned nearly \$1.9 million for the township, and about \$330,000 for the district.

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