

Nelson Co. demands info on pipeline

BY JOHN BRUCE • STAFF WRITER

MONTEREY — Will Highland take the same course of action that Nelson County supervisors did in going on record asking for a meeting with Dominion Resources?

The Recorder asked the chair of Highland supervisors that question Tuesday.

Responding to public outcries including a petition signed by more than 350 county residents, Nelson supervisors passed a resolution Tuesday asking Dominion to meet with them before surveying begins in preparation for building a proposed interstate natural gas transmission pipeline.

The same pipeline would cross Highland.

The Nelson board “requests that a representative of Dominion meet with the entire board at the earliest possible date to fully explain the project, the proposed route, and address our questions and concerns; and that until such time as that meeting takes place, no further research or surveys be undertaken on the proposed natural gas pipeline in Nelson County,” the resolution states.

The Recorder provided a copy of the resolution to board chair Kevin Wagner for comment and asked whether he felt Highland should follow suit.

Wagner said the board hasn’t considered a resolution to compel Dominion to appear at a public meeting with respect to the proposed Southeast Reliability Project.

“Their (Dominion’s) spokesman has said he will meet with local governments as soon as their process calls for it. At this time, I understand that will be in August,” Wagner said.

“This time frame has been explained by them as time needed to establish contact with the landowners that would be impacted and conduct an actual survey of the route. We look forward to meeting with them and have extended an invitation to meet as soon as possible,” Wagner said.

In their declaring their request, which does not carry the force of law, Nelson supervisors confirmed that notice included a crude general location map of the proposed route, some talking points, and a copy of the letter to be sent to landowners to be affected by the proposal.

Dominion has failed to provide the county or its residents the rationale for the route selection and has failed to provide technical details as to the proposed specifications for the pipeline, the resolution continues.

The declaration further cites insufficient information to understand or evaluate the project’s consequences. The county has requested a meeting with Dominion representatives as well as a more accurate depiction of the proposed route and Dominion has failed to provide either, the document states.

Driving pipeline opposition in Nelson are two citizens groups, Friends of Nelson and Free Nelson. Free Nelson has announced a service for landowners. “Our trained non-violent, peaceful, lawful response team is available to any Nelson County property owner wanting our presence as a protest when the surveyors are on your property,” the group said in a statement.

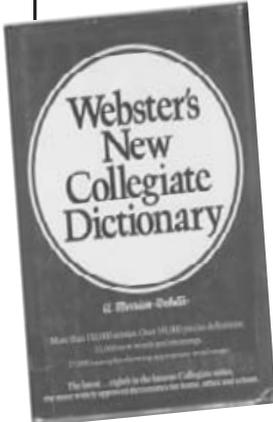
Highlanders for Responsible Development has taken a position of asking serious questions about the project which have gone

unanswered by Dominion. President Lew Freeman told The Recorder Wednesday the group has called a special meeting next week. The possibility of public engagement will be a topic of discussion, he said.

For its part, Dominion issued the following statement Wednesday to The Recorder in response to Nelson’s resolution.

“We are aware of and will respond to the resolution passed by the Nelson County Board of Supervisors. As we have said, the proposed Southeast Reliability Project is

still in its preliminary stages. We recognize there is a need for additional dialogue and will be scheduling meetings with Nelson County and others along the proposed pipeline route, if we decide to move forward with the project. If so, there will be plenty of opportunities throughout the review process for government officials, landowners and other interested parties to view the latest maps, ask questions and provide additional input.”



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