

December 30, 2008

ND Oil and Gas Research Council Grant program

**Town Hall project 2007-April 2008- FINAL REPORT**

Vicky Steiner, Executive Director, NDAOGPC Attachments: 2

This grant successfully provided for public education in a series of open town hall meetings which included participation from the ND oil and gas industry and local governments. The public responded in satisfactory and sometimes overflow capacity numbers to this project.

The mission of this grant was to bring oil and gas exploration, production, tax distributions, oil tax law and mineral royalty and surface owner information to the public and to find out what questions were common among the various stakeholders and publics.

A team of 6 oil and gas experts was assembled for a series of 8 public meetings in various locations in western North Dakota beginning in February 2008. Initially, 6 meetings were held in Watford City, Tioga, Stanley, New Town and Killdeer. The public requested two additional meetings in Beulah and Mohall. Those final two cities' events were held in April 2008. Presenters at the 8 events included a land man, an oil industry spokesman, an oil county representative, the state oil Department of Minerals office director, a pipeline authority staff person and the ND state treasurer.

The presentation lasted about 60-90 minutes depending on questions from the audiences. The presenters also answered questions informally at the conclusion of the event and these questions were also included along with questions asked during the formal presentation.

The Town Hall meetings included a light meal of barbecues or shredded beef sandwiches, chips, pickles and coffee. The host community and industry partners donated funds for this aspect of the meeting. The oil industry staff participated and encouraged the public to attend these meetings to gain more information. Total direct expenses for all these town hall meetings totaled \$13,770.70.

An advertising company, MABU, assisted with the ads for the Town Hall advertisements. Newspaper ads were run two weeks prior to the meetings in the local weekly newspapers and also in the daily newspapers in the area. Because of inclement blizzard weather, the Bowman meeting was re-scheduled and the local radio station ran additional ads to reach the public about the change in the date and time.

Approximately 965 people participated in the 6 Oil and Gas Town Hall meetings under this grant. The attendance was as follows: Watford City-120 people, Tioga-60, Killdeer-178, Stanley-200, New Town 80, Bowman-60, Beulah-190, Mohall-75.

From these meetings, the group gathered the lists of the most frequently asked questions (FAQs). These questions were researched by the group and an answer was formally written to each question.

This collection of questions was posted on several websites including the state's oil and gas web site, the oil trade association website and the ND Association of Oil and Gas Producing Counties web address [www.ndoilgas.govoffice.com](http://www.ndoilgas.govoffice.com). A list of the FAQs are included as an attachment to this report along with contact phone numbers on a brochure card.

Due to the interest in this project and the support of the oil industry, it's anticipated there will be additional Town Hall events for the public to participate in 2009.