
ODC Tries to Keep Companies

By Odessa Admin

Published: 01/08/2009 - 15:13

In the wake of making a commitment to keep part of one plant - the current home of Flint Hills - in Odessa, the board of the Odessa Development Corp. discussed a plan to keep another company from taking its operations to Midland.

An unnamed company, known as "Project Pump" is considering moving its operations to Midland. In closed session, the board discussed a possible incentive package to help it build a new facility in Odessa.

Gary Vest, economic development director for the Odessa Chamber of Commerce, said the company would provide an \$8.5 million capital investment.

"If we don't do everything that needs to be done, we could lose the project," Vest said.

Incentives for "Project Pump" could be voted on at the February ODC meeting.

Vest also discussed an economic development agreement approved last week that could give \$5 million in incentives to Orion Pacific-Orrex. The ODC must still negotiate a final contract with the company, which would change its name to Texas Pacific Atactic.

The company is looking to take over a polymer line at the Flint Hills Resources Odessa plant, which is expected to close by June.

The agreement requires Orion to have 101 employees, 25 of whom are current Flint Hills workers, the other 76 now work for Orion. Since the Flint Hills plant is the only place in the world producing an atactic polymer used by Orion, Vest said the company would shut down if it can't keep the line operating.

The agreement requires the company to pay \$1.7 million in salaries, Vest said. The agreement also requires it to make \$19 million in capital investment to the site.

If one line of the plant stays open, Vest said it makes it easier for the ODC to find buyers for its other lines.

Because a letter of intent was passed and not a final contract, the agreement will still need additional ODC approval. It will also have to be approved by the Odessa City Council.

Also at the meeting:

>> James Beauchamp, executive director of the Midland-Odessa Transportation Alliance, said that Lauren Garduño would be leaving his position as the Texas Department of Transportation's Odessa District Engineer for a position in Abilene.

>> Christi Callicoate of CVA Advertising said the company was letting the contracts on billboards across the state

aimed at luring workers to Odessa expire at the end of the month. The company will continue to operate a jobs website and send monthly reminders to employers to post positions there.

Flint Hills shutdown

>> Flint Hills Resources will shut down some of the units of its Odessa plant this weekend. The company warns it could lead to increased flaring and noises not typically associated with its regular operations over the next several days. The units are being closed permanently as part of the shutdown announced in November. All of its units are expected to be offline by June.