Governor appoints advisory committee to study Texas earthquakes

There’s a lot shaking in the world of Texas earthquakes, as a new committee appointed by Gov. Greg Abbott to study what’s moving beneath North Texas could busy.

Last month, Abbott appointed nine people to serve on the Technical Advisory Committee to the Bureau of Economic Geology at the University of Texas in Austin to study about $4.5 million for a comprehensive study after a rash of earthquakes hit North Texas in recent years, the largest a 4.0-magnitude tremor near Venus and Mansfield last May.

Leading the group will be Bobie Youngs of Dallas, owner of Youngs Capital. He is the co-founder and member of the Dallas Produce Club and a member of the Dallas Produce Club. Joining him are Scott Tinker, the state geologist for Texas and director of the Texas Bureau of Economic Geology, and Craig Purvitis, seismologist for the Texas Railroad Commission.

Other members include Brian Stump, a professor at Southern Methodist University who has studied the North Texas earthquakes; Dan Hill, a petroleum professor at Texas A&M University; Dana Judd, a manager of seismic analysis for EnergyTransfer; Hill Mornings, a geoscientist manager for Pioneer Natural Resources; and Kris Nygaard, a consultant for ExxonMobil Upstream Research.

Irving City Manager Chris Hillman, who works for a city that has endured more earthquakes than they’d like to recall, is the only non-seismologist, non-energy industry member of the committee.

The committee oversees a bit of what’s called the TexNet system that will place 200 permanent seismograph stations and 36 portable stations around the state to measure seismic activity. The remaining $2 million goes to study the results.

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According to a spokesman for the Bureau of Economic Geology, a contractor for the TexNet hardware has been selected, contract negotiations have been finalized, and the first installations are expected early this summer.

Of the $4.5 million the committee oversees, $2.47 million is dedicated to buy equipment for the so-called TexNet system to monitor earthquake activity. The remaining $2 million goes to study the results.

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The survey, “Livability For All in Fort Worth,” was done to help decision-makers craft policies to improve livability for all residents regardless of age or ability, AARP said.

The respondents also said healthcare facilities, safe streets and well-maintained properties and public spaces are the leading features making Fort Worth a livable city.

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AARP surveys Fort Worth members

A recently released AARP survey of its Fort Worth members finds many saying the city is a good place to live. About half, 49 percent, said they have lived in Fort Worth for more than 15 years.

But while the majority say Fort Worth has been good to them, job opportunities for older adults is a gap, AARP said. Respondents indicated that more is needed to improve job training, job flexibility and jobs adapted to needs of the disabled, AARP said.

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The Carlyle Group, based in Washington, D.C., is planning a hotel project between University Drive and Norwood Street at Crow Street, and the Mills-Foundation owns land that is likely being sold to Charleston, S.C.-based Greystar, which is planning an apartment community on adjacent property between Morton and Bledsoe streets.

Deed restrictions control the use of the property. They tied with the deed to succeeding buyers unless a new owner removes them through legal action. Many deeds in the Van Zandt additions have been successfully challenged.

Between 1945 and 1991, 17 judgments were awarded property owners invalidating the restrictions.

Recent examples include the first residential, hotel and retail project on the western edge of Trinity Park off West Seventh Street, across the street at the Montgomery Plaza development.

In related matters, the City Council on Tuesday approved vacating alleys on two blocks where the projects are planned.

A Carlyle Group spokesman did not return a phone call seeking comment on the project.

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