

BAKER AHLES & KASKOVICH APRIL 1, 2016 3:43 PM

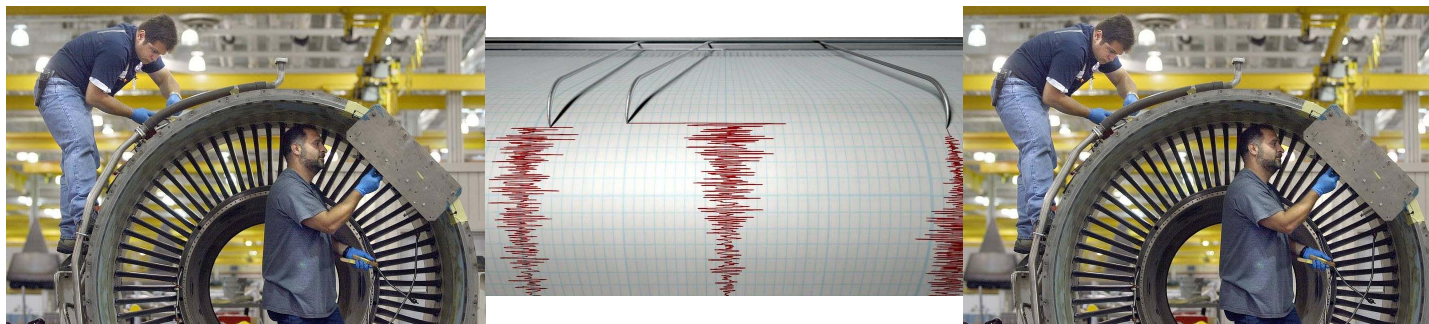
Governor appoints advisory committee to study Texas earthquakes

HIGHLIGHTS

First installations of TexNet seismograph equipment expected by summer

Fort Worth negotiating early termination fee on engine-repair facility at Alliance

Developers go to court to remove century-old deed restrictions along West Seventh



Texas has dedicated \$2.47 million to buy equipment for the so-called TexNet system to monitor earthquake activity.

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Texas has dedicated \$2.47 million to buy equipment for the so-called TexNet system to monitor earthquake activity. ThinkStock - Getty Images/Stockphoto



There's a lot shaking in the world of Texas earthquakes, so a new committee appointed by Gov. Greg Abbott to study what's moving beneath North Texas could be 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 as it spends 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 temblor near Venus and Mansfield last May.

Leading the group will be Robie Vaughn of Dallas, owner of Vaughn Capital. He is the co-founder and member of the Dallas Producers Club and a member of the Dallas Petroleum Club. Joining him are Scott Tinker, the state geologist for Texas and director of the Texas Bureau of Economic Geology, and Craig Pearson, 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 Jurick, a manager of seismic analysis for ConocoPhillips; Hal Macartney, a geoscience 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.

Of the \$4.5 million the committee oversees, \$2.47 million is dedicated to buy equipment for the so-called TexNet system that will place 22 permanent seismograph stations and 36 portable stations around the state to measure seismic activity. The remaining \$2 million goes to study the results.

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.

AARP surveys Fort Worth members

A recently released AARP survey of its Fort Worth members finds many saying the city is good place to live. About half, 49 percent, said they have lived in Fort Worth for more than 25 years.

But while the majority say Fort Worth as 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.

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.

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.

"Community organizations and city leaders are working hard to craft a five-year plan that will set goals for Fort Worth to become an even greater place to live for people of all ages," said Carmel Perez Snyder, head of AARP Fort Worth.

More than 600 AARP members age 50-plus filled out the mail-in survey, the organization said. The survey covered such topics as health and wellness, transportation, house, job opportunities and social participation.

Sandra Baker

TAESL lease termination

American Airlines and Rolls Royce may pay Fort Worth a \$2.2 million fee to terminate the lease at an engine-repair facility at Alliance Airport.

The City Council approved a resolution Tuesday allowing the city manager to negotiate an early lease termination agreement for the Texas Aero Engine Services Limited engine-repair facility at Alliance Airport. TAESL is a 50-50 joint venture between American and Rolls Royce that was created in 1998.

The resolution also directed the city manager to include a \$2.2 million early lease-termination payment and conditions that TAESL remove all equipment and make any necessary repairs to the facility.

The companies decided to shut down the facility last fall, and the final repairs at TAESL were completed earlier this year. About 600 workers were affected and offered positions within American and Rolls Royce.

American spokesman Josh Freed confirmed that the Fort Worth-based carrier was in lease-termination negotiations with the city.

"TAESL is entering negotiations with the city for an early lease termination of the TAESL premises, targeted for September 2016," Freed said.

The lease was originally scheduled to run through 2025.

Van Zandt deed restriction

The Carlyle Group and Fort Worth-based Miles Foundation are seeking to remove a more-than-century-old deed restriction that prohibits alcohol sales on property off University Drive.

The two groups recently filed suit in state district court in Tarrant County against the unknown heirs of the stockholders of the K.M. Van Zandt Land Co., which dissolved in 1947.

The archaic covenants could jeopardize development plans, but it is unlikely.

Van Zandt, a Fort Worth pioneer, platted the near west-side property in the late 1800s and early 1900s, with most of it originally planned for residential use. Instead, West Seventh Street, University Drive and Camp Bowie Boulevard developed into major thoroughfares with commercial and industrial uses.

The Carlyle Group, based in Washington, D.C., is planning a hotel project between University Drive and Norwood Street at Crockett Street, and the Miles 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 travel 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 So7 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 a related matter, the City Council on Tuesday approved vacating alleys on the two blocks where the projects are planned.

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

Sandra Baker

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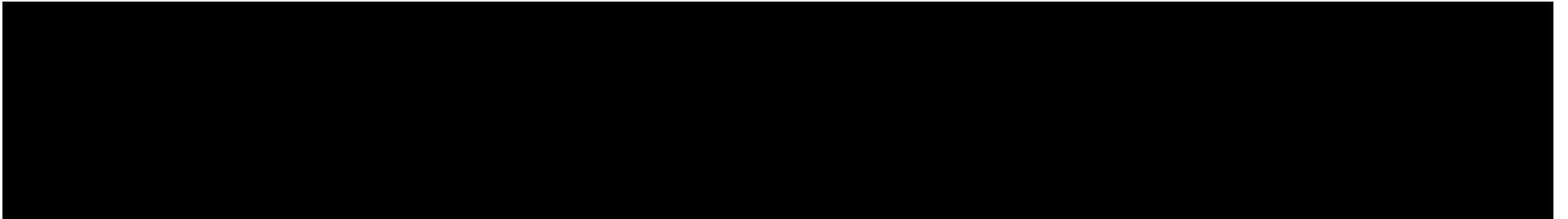


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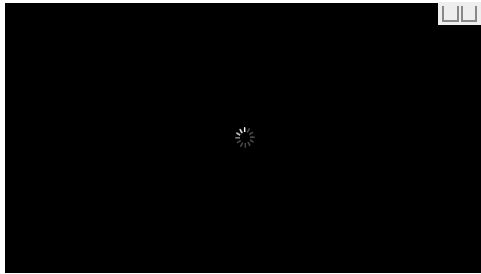


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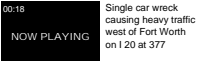
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