

# Lewiston to vote on firm to battle LOOW site plans

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LEWISTON — The Town Board will decide tonight whether to hire the Washington, D.C., law firm Dow, Lohnes and Albertson to fight federal plans for the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works.

Town Attorney Benjamin N. Hewitt has tentatively scheduled a meeting between the firm's attorneys and the board for Nov. 29.

The board is considering contracting with an outside law firm with strong environmental credentials to fight the U.S. Department of Energy. Hewitt said he lacks the environmental expertise required to represent the town.

In a related matter, a town environmentalist will ask board members to acquire a "cease and desist" order against the DOE to prevent further work at the site.

Hewitt Sunday said he has recommended that Dow, Lohnes and Albertson be hired by the board. The town earlier decided to pursue legal action against the DOE, which intends to develop the 191-acre LOOW site into a storage center for low-level radioactive wastes.

The board likely will vote on whether to hire the firm after a 7 p.m. meeting in the board room, during which results of a two-year cancer study in Lewiston and Porter will be released.

The study was completed by Dr. Timothy Byers, an epidemiologist from the Department of Social and Preventative Medicine at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

The study was made in an effort to determine the possible effects of the Pletcher Road site on residents living nearby.

Also at the meeting will be the Rev. Dr. Paul Moore of Lewiston's First

Presbyterian Church. He is expected to reveal an informal study of his own that shows the causes of deaths of the church's parishioners in recent years.

Meanwhile, Steven Nathanson, spokesman for NO LOOW, said the group will recommend that the board contact both the state and federal attorneys general in light of the DOE's illegal discharge of more than 700,000 gallons of waste into Lake Ontario.

NO LOOW, the town citizen's group fighting the DOE plans, also will ask the state Department of Environmental Conservation to place a DEC official on the site permanently to monitor events there, Nathanson said.

Nathanson said he will urge Town Board members to secure a "cease and desist" order preventing the DOE and Bechtel National Inc., which operates the site, to complete further preparatory work at the site.

The order would allow the town to learn of federal plans at the site before any work is begun, he said.

NO LOOW has received support from the Niagara Falls Area Chamber of Commerce environmental committee. Nathanson said the committee will present its resolution to the full chamber for approval.

"This was a real hurdle for us, because it represents a number of big businesses in the area," he said.

Nathanson said NO LOOW members will attend the cancer-study meeting, but will have a representative on hand at another meeting of their own scheduled at the same time in a Town Hall meeting room.

That meeting, sponsored by Citizen's Against Pollution President Danielle DeGolier, was scheduled to coordinate plans among several citizen's groups.

Lewiston Town Hall is located at 1375 Ridge Road.