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Tonawanda NEWS 3

CANIT to discuss, revue qualifications of technical consultants to aid group

By Joseph C. Genco
Staff Writer

The Coalition Against Nuclear Materials in Tonawanda (CANIT) has sent an inquiry to potential technical consultants. The group will be using a \$50,000 grant to hire a consultant.

CANIT will meet this afternoon at 2 at the Philip Sheridan School, 3200 Elmwood Ave., Town of Tonawanda.

The purpose of the meeting is to review, discuss and evaluate the technical qualifications of the consultants who responded to CANIT's inquiry of Nov. 13.

The consultant hired will be paid with funds from a technical assistance grant of \$50,000 awarded to CANIT by the Department of Energy Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP).

DOE is studying the remediation of radioactive wastes remaining at several sites in the town from the Manhattan Project of World War II.

CANIT sent inquiries requesting further information to 15 different consultants. Assistant Environmental Quality Engineer Mary Sonntag, with the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning said.

Around half of the consulting firms responded.

Sonntag said the meeting will served to discuss the next step in the hiring process, not to interview or retain a consultant.

The technical assistance grant can be used only for a very narrow scope of activity.

Activities permitted within the grant are for the consultant to:

- Provide assistance in reviewing documents produced by the DOE.

- Help review historical documents relating to sites.

- Meet with DOE and its contractors for discussions including recommendations concerning planning, related work and review of reports.

- Meet with CANIT and citizens groups to explain technical information.

- Provide assistance to CANIT in communicating citizens concerns to DOE.

- Comment on the appropriateness of any proposed site remedy selection process.

- Participate in site visits.

- Provide input to CANIT on the field implementation of remedial action.

- Attend meetings and hearing directly related to the sites.

The technical assistance grant also

comes with a caveat: It specifically excludes CANIT from using the grant to fund the following activities:

- ✓ Underwriting or supporting legal actions for intervention in the environmental review process.

- ✓ Independent studies or generation of new primary data such as well drilling, testing or health studies.

- ✓ Tuition or expenses for members of citizens' groups or technical advisors to attend training, seminars or courses.

- ✓ Any activities or travel expenditures for members of the citizens' group, costs associated with any political or lobbying activities.

- ✓ The challenging of final decisions or the underwriting of disputes with the DOE.

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