

Commission considering retaining wind energy attorney
(KNZA)--The Brown County Commission is considering whether to retain a Kansas City attorney to assist in negotiations if a developer decides to move forward with a wind energy project in the county.

County Attorney Kevin Hill on Monday presented commissioners with an engagement letter with James Neeld for their consideration.

Neeld, who has extensive experience in complex energy negotiations, was retained by Nemaha County to assist the county in their negotiations with NextEra Energy Resources for the Soldier Creek Wind farm.

At this point, the commission has not been contacted by a company wanting to develop a wind energy project in Brown County.

Hill said he's trying to be pro-active. He said the commission can retain Neeld, find their own wind energy expert or go without anyone to protect the county's interests.

He said the county can't legally ban all windmill development in the county, but can negotiate reasonable restrictions to protect property owners and the public.

Commissioner Bill Pollock said he would like to postpone approval of the engagement letter with Neeld until they receive public input and visit with Nemaha County.

The Commission voted to table a decision for two weeks, until their May 15 meeting.

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