

Editorial: Kure Beach Should Reconsider Stance On Seismic Testing And Offshore Drilling During Jan. 19th Meeting

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In July the Wilmington City Council followed the lead of many other communities along the east coast including, Carolina Beach, in opposition to seismic testing for off shore oil and gas exploration. The information gained from those tests would eventually lead to drilling rigs pumping crude or natural gas ashore for processing and transportation. The obvious concerns are environmental.

Last year the Kure Beach Council permitted Mayor Dean Lambeth to send a letter to Washington supporting seismic testing for offshore oil and gas exploration. They failed to adopt a resolution opposing testing after massive public outrage at the Mayor for speaking on their behalf without first asking for public input.

The Carolina Beach Council adopted a resolution (for a second time) at their October 13th meeting opposing drilling and seismic testing.

The Kure Beach Town Council will once again consider a resolution opposing seismic testing and offshore drilling at their January 19th, meeting.

Former Mayor Lambeth is no longer in a position to influence the issue. Newly elected Mayor Emilie Swearingen is vocally opposed to seismic testing and offshore drilling.

Perhaps the Council will vote the right way this time around.

One major incident on a drilling rig, a ship, or a pipeline would absolutely destroy our environment and in turn the heart of our tourism based economy in coastal North Carolina. Claims by supporters of the industry say North Carolina will gain over 55,000 related jobs and share in the revenues from production. Drilling in federal waters does not make revenue sharing with our state very likely. The money will go to Washington coffers. As for jobs, ponder this aspect of the industry, where will our state permit a processing plant along the oceanfront in the face of immense public opposition and legal challenges spanning decades? Current coastal regulations make it hard enough to build an oceanfront home let alone an industrial oil refinery. What local government is going to permit such a large operation along a coastline where none presently exist under the sales pitch of jobs and money?

One incident and a coastal town like Carolina Beach would become an economic ghost town begging for federal money to clean it up. The state should chose environment over oil dollars. The risk is too high.