

# Energy board back for modernization hearings

SARAH PETZ TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL



The National Energy Board is returning this week to gather feedback on how best to modernize its regulatory processes. PHOTO: KURT PEACOCK/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

SAINT JOHN • The National Energy Board is returning to Saint John this week, this time to gather feedback on how it can better regulate energy issues in Canada.

The federal government is currently undertaking a modernization of the NEB. To this end, it has established an expert panel to review its structure, role and mandate.

The panel has been on a cross-country tour collecting comments from the public since January.

Its second last stop is in Saint John, where the panel will hear presentations from stakeholders and the public over a two-day period, starting Tuesday.

Clean air activist Gordon Dalzell, who was named an intervener in the NEB's review of the proposed Energy East pipeline, is planning on attending Tuesday morning to make some comments.

"It's a good opportunity for those who have been involved to influence some changes that I

think are very relevant, and very needed,"he said.

Dalzell says he would like to see the rules around the NEB review process become more relaxed so that more people can participate, and in different ways. Currently, only those who have been listed as interveners are allowed to make comments.

He also said he believes the National Energy Board should make the final decision on whether a project moves forward, rather than only making a recommendation to the federal government.

This,he argued,would take the politics out of any decision making.

Lynaya Astephen,a Red Head resident who is another intervener in the review of the Energy East project, said she also plans on attending Tuesday's sessions.

She also said she'd like to see the public have more of a voice in the NEB review process if it were to be modernized.

David Duplisea,CEO of the Saint John Region Chamber of Commerce, said the chamber respects and has complete faith in the NEB and the review process, but did not want to comment further on the modernization sessions given the chamber's intervener status in the Energy East review.

The modernization expert panel sessions begin at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, at the Delta Hotel in Brunswick Square.

It will hear five to seven minute-long presentations in the morning, followed by dialogue sessions in the afternoon.

An open house is also planned for the evening, from 7 to 9 p.m., where members of the public will also have the opportunity to present to the panel.

Wednesday's sessions will focus on hearing from the indigenous community.