

MILLER PETROLEUM INC
Form PRE 14A
January 18, 2011

SCHEDULE 14A INFORMATION

Proxy Statement Pursuant to Section 14(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934
(Amendment No. ____)

Filed by the Registrant
Filed by a party other than the Registrant

Check the appropriate box:

- Preliminary Proxy Statement
- Confidential, for Use of the Commission Only (as permitted by Rule 14a-6(e)(2))
- Definitive Proxy Statement
- Definitive Additional Materials
- Soliciting Material Under Rule 14(a)(12)

Miller Petroleum, Inc.
(Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

Not Applicable
(Name of Person(s) Filing Proxy Statement, if other than the Registrant)

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To our Shareholders:

You are cordially invited to attend our fiscal year 2010 annual meeting of shareholders which will be held at _____, Anchorage, Alaska on Friday, March 11, 2011 beginning at 12:00 pm, local time.

Items of business to be considered at the meeting will include the:

- election of nine directors,
- ratification of the appointment of our independent registered public accounting firm,
- Adoption of the 2011 Equity Compensation Plan,
- Amendment of our Charter to change of our company's name to "Miller Energy Resources, Inc.";
- Amendment of our Amended and Restated Bylaws to adjust the quorum for a shareholders' meeting from 50% to 33-1/3%;
- proposal to consider and act upon an advisory resolution on executive compensation; and
- proposal to consider and act upon an advisory resolution on the frequency of the shareholders' advisory resolution on executive compensation.

The proxy statement is designed to answer your questions and provide you with important information regarding our Board of Directors and senior management.

We are furnishing proxy materials to our shareholders over the Internet. We believe that this e-proxy process expedites shareholder's receipt of proxy materials, while also lowering costs and reducing the environmental impact of our annual meeting. On [date], 2011, we mailed our shareholders a Notice of Internet Availability of Proxy Materials which contains instructions on how to access our proxy statement and annual report, and how to vote online. The notice also provides instructions on how you can request a paper copy of these documents if you desire and how you can enroll in e-delivery.

Whether or not you plan to attend the annual meeting, your vote is important. Instructions regarding the various methods of voting are contained on the proxy card, including voting by toll-free telephone number, by facsimile or the Internet. If you received a paper copy of your proxy card by mail, you may still vote your shares by marking your votes on the proxy card, signing and dating it and mailing it in the envelope provided.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we would like to express our appreciation for your continued interest in the affairs of our company. We look forward to greeting in person as many of our shareholders as possible.

Sincerely,

/s/ Scott M. Boruff
Scott M. Boruff,
President and Chief Executive Officer

[date], 2011

NOTICE OF 2010 ANNUAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS

TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 2011

We will hold the 2010 annual meeting of shareholders of Miller Petroleum, Inc. at _____, Anchorage, Alaska on Friday, March 11, 2011 at 12:00 pm, local time. At the annual meeting you will be asked to vote on the following matters:

1. To elect nine directors to serve a one year term or until their successors have been elected and qualified,
2. To ratify the appointment of Sherb & Co., L.L.P. as our independent registered public accounting firm,
3. To adopt the 2011 Equity Compensation Plan,
4. To approve the change of our name from “Miller Petroleum, Inc.” to “Miller Energy Resources, Inc.”;
5. To amend our Amended and Restated Bylaws to adjust the quorum for shareholder meetings from 50% to 33-1/3%;
6. To consider and act upon an advisory resolution on executive compensation;
7. To consider and act upon an advisory resolution on the frequency of the shareholders’ advisory resolution on executive compensation ; and
8. To consider and act upon any other business as may properly come before the 2010 annual meeting or any adjournments thereof.

The Board of Directors recommends that you vote FOR Proposals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

The Board of Directors has fixed the close of business on January 18, 2011 as the Record Date for determining the shareholders that are entitled to notice of and to vote at the 2010 annual meeting and any adjournments thereof.

Your vote is important regardless of the number of shares you own. All shareholders are invited to attend the annual meeting in person.

By Order of the Board of Directors

/s/ Scott M. Boruff
Scott M. Boruff,
President and Chief Executive Officer

Huntsville, TN
[date], 2011

Important Notice Regarding the Availability of Proxy Materials for the Annual Meeting to be Held on March 11, 2010: This proxy statement, along with our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended April 30, 2010 (“fiscal 2010”), are available free of charge on our website www.millerenergyresources.com.

MILLER PETROLEUM, INC.

PROXY STATEMENT

2010 ANNUAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS

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Shareholders Should Read the Entire Proxy Statement
Carefully Prior to Returning Their Proxies

PROXY STATEMENT
FOR
ANNUAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS

Questions and Answers

Following are some commonly asked questions raised by our shareholders and answers to each of those questions.

Why did I receive these proxy materials?

Our Board of Directors has made these materials available to you on the Internet or, upon your request, has delivered printed versions to you by mail, in connection with the solicitation of proxies by the Board for the 2010 annual meeting of shareholders which will be held on March 11, 2011. Proxies are solicited to give all shareholders of record at the close of business on January 18, 2011 an opportunity to vote on matters that come before the 2010 annual meeting.

Why did I receive a one-page notice in the mail regarding the Internet availability of proxy materials this year instead of a full set of proxy materials?

As permitted by the rules adopted by the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC"), we are making this proxy statement and our annual report available on the Internet. On [date], 2011, we mailed a Notice of Internet Availability of Proxy Materials to our shareholders containing instructions on how to access the proxy statement and annual report and vote online. In addition, shareholders may request to receive proxy materials in printed form by mail or electronically by email on an ongoing basis.

Choosing to receive your future proxy materials by email will save us the cost of printing and mailing the documents to you. If you choose to receive future proxy materials by email, you will receive an email next year with instructions containing a link to those materials and a link to the proxy voting site. Your election to receive proxy materials by email will remain in effect until you terminate it.

What may I vote on at the 2010 annual meeting?

At the annual meeting, shareholders will consider and vote upon the following matters:

- To elect nine directors to serve a one year term or until their successors have been elected and qualified,
- To ratify the appointment of Sherb & Co., L.L.P. as our independent registered public accounting firm,
- To adopt the 2011 Equity Compensation Plan,
- To approve the change of our name from "Miller Petroleum, Inc." to "Miller Energy Resources, Inc.";
- To amend our Amended and Restated Bylaws to adjust the quorum for shareholder meetings from 50% to 33-1/3%;
- To consider and act upon any other business as may properly come before the 2010 annual meeting or any adjournments thereof;
- proposal to consider and act upon an advisory resolution on executive compensation; and

proposal to consider and act upon an advisory resolution on the frequency of the shareholders' advisory resolution on executive compensation.

Who is entitled to vote?

Shareholders of record as of the close of business on January 18, 2011, the Record Date, are entitled to vote on matters that come before the meeting. Shares can be voted only if the shareholder is present in person or is represented by proxy.

How many votes do I have?

Each share of Miller Petroleum, Inc. common stock that you own as of the Record Date entitles you to one vote. On January 18, 2011 there were [38,409,751] shares of our common stock outstanding.

What is the difference between holding shares as a shareholder of record and as a beneficial owner of shares held in street name?

Shareholders of Record. If your shares are registered directly in your name with our transfer agent, Interwest Transfer Company, Inc. you are considered the shareholder of record with respect to those shares, and the notice was mailed directly to you.

Beneficial Owner of Shares Held in Street Name. If your shares are held in an account at a brokerage firm, bank, broker-dealer, or other similar organization, then you are the beneficial owner of shares held in "street name," and the notice was forwarded to you by that organization. The organization holding your account is considered the shareholder of record for purposes of voting at the annual meeting. As a beneficial owner, you have the right to direct that organization on how to vote the shares held in your account.

How do I vote?

All shareholders may vote by proxy over the Internet by following the instructions provided in the Notice of Internet Availability of Proxy Materials, or, if you request printed copies of the proxy materials by mail, you can also vote by mail, by telephone or by facsimile.

If you are a shareholder of record, you may vote in person at the 2010 annual meeting. We will give you a ballot when you arrive. However, you may vote by proxy before the meeting and still attend, if you prefer.

If you are a beneficial owner of shares held in street name and you wish to vote in person at the annual meeting, you must obtain a valid proxy from the organization that holds your shares. If you do not obtain a valid proxy from your bank or broker, you will not be entitled to vote your shares, but you can still attend the 2010 annual meeting if you bring a recent bank or brokerage statement showing that you were the beneficial owner of the shares on January 18, 2011, the Record Date for voting.

What happens if I do not give specific voting instructions?

Shareholders of Record. If you are a shareholder of record and you:

- Indicate when voting that you wish to vote as recommended by our Board of Directors; or
- If you sign and return a proxy card without giving specific voting instructions,

then the proxy holder will vote your shares in the manner recommended by our Board on all matters presented in this proxy statement and as the proxy holders may determine in his discretion with respect to any other matters properly

presented for a vote at the meeting.

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Beneficial Owners of Shares Held in Street Name. If you are a beneficial owner of shares held in street name and do not provide the organization that holds your shares with specific voting instructions, under the rules of various national and regional securities exchanges, the organization that holds your shares may generally vote on routine matters but cannot vote on non-routine matters. We believe Proposal 2 (ratification of the appointment of our independent registered public accounting firm) will be considered routine. Proposals 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, however, likely would be considered “non-routine” matters. If the organization that holds your shares does not receive instructions from you on how to vote your shares on a non-routine matter, the organization that holds your shares will inform us that it does not have the authority to vote on these matters with respect to your shares. This is generally referred to as a “broker non-vote.” When the vote is tabulated for any particular matter, broker non-votes will be counted for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present, but will not otherwise be counted. We encourage you to provide voting instructions to the organization that holds your shares by carefully following the instructions provided in the notice.

Can I change my vote?

You may revoke your proxy and change your vote at any time before the final vote at the annual meeting. You may do this by signing a new proxy card with a later date, by voting on a later date by using the Internet or by telephone or facsimile (only your latest Internet, telephone or facsimile proxy submitted prior to the annual meeting will be counted), or by attending the annual meeting and voting in person. However, your attendance at the annual meeting will not automatically revoke your proxy unless you vote at the annual meeting or specifically request in writing that your prior proxy be revoked.

What does it mean if I get more than one proxy card?

Your shares are likely registered differently or are in more than one account, such as individually and also jointly with your spouse. To assist us in saving money and to serve you more efficiently, we encourage you to have all your accounts registered in the same name and address by contacting our transfer agent, Interwest Transfer Company, Inc., 1981 Murray Holladay Road, Suite 100, Salt Lake City, UT 84117, telephone (801) 272-9294, or, if your shares are held by your broker or bank in “street name,” you should contact the broker or bank who holds your shares.

Why did I receive only one set of proxy materials although there are multiple shareholders at my address?

If one address is shared by two or more of our shareholders, we send only one set of proxy materials to that address unless we receive instructions to the contrary from any shareholder at that address. This practice, known as householding, is used to reduce our printing and postage costs. If a shareholder of record residing at such an address wishes to receive a separate set of proxy materials in the future, he or she may contact our Corporate Secretary. If you are a beneficial owner of shares held in street name, you can request or cancel householding by contacting your bank, broker, or nominee.

What constitutes a quorum?

The presence of at least 50% of the voting power, regardless of whether the proxy has authority to vote on all matters, constitutes a quorum which is required in order to hold the 2010 annual meeting and conduct business. Presence may be in person or by proxy. You will be considered part of the quorum if you voted on the Internet, by telephone, by facsimile or by properly submitting a proxy card or voting instruction form by mail, or if you are present and vote at the 2010 annual meeting.

Abstentions and broker “non-votes” are counted as present and entitled to vote for determining whether a quorum is present. For the purpose of determining whether the shareholders have approved a matter, abstentions and broker

“non-votes” are not treated as votes cast affirmatively or negatively, and therefore have no effect on the outcome of any matter being voted on at the 2010 annual meeting .

If a broker indicates on its proxy that it does not have discretionary authority to vote on a particular matter, the affected shares will be treated as not present and not entitled to vote with respect to that matter, even though the same shares may be considered present for quorum purposes and may be entitled to vote on other matters.

What is required to approve each proposal?

Election of directors: The nominees who receive the most votes will be elected. Any shares not voted (whether by abstention, broker non-vote, or otherwise) have no impact on the vote.

Ratification of the appointment of Sherb & Co., L.L.P. The ratification of this appointment will require the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast. Any shares not voted (whether by abstention, broker non-vote, or otherwise) have no impact on the vote.

Adoption of the 2011 Equity Compensation Plan. The adoption of the plan will require the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast. Any shares not voted (whether by abstention, broker non-vote, or otherwise) have no impact on the vote.

Name change to “Miller Energy Resources, Inc.” The change of our company name to “Miller Energy Resources, Inc.” will require the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast. Any shares not voted (whether by abstention, broker non-vote, or otherwise) have no impact on the vote.

Amendment of our Amended and Restated Bylaws to adjust the shareholders’ meeting quorum from 50% to 33-1/3% The amendment of our Bylaws will require the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast. Any shares not voted (whether by abstention, broker non-vote, or otherwise) have no impact on the vote.

Vote Required for the Advisory Resolution on Executive Compensation Proposal. This proposal is non-binding on us and our Board of Directors.

Vote Required for the Advisory Resolution on the Frequency of the Shareholders’ Say on Pay Proposal. This proposal with respect to the frequency for submission of a resolution to the shareholders soliciting support for our named executive officer compensation policies and programs is non-binding on us and our Board of Directors.

Other Matters: Approval of any unscheduled matter, such as a matter incident to the conduct of the meeting, would require the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast. Any shares not voted (whether by abstention, broker non-vote, or otherwise) have no impact on the vote.

What are the Board’s recommendations on the proposals?

The Board recommends a vote FOR Proposals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

How can I attend the 2010 annual meeting?

You are invited to attend the annual meeting only if you were a Miller Petroleum, Inc. shareholder or joint holder as of the close of business on January 18, 2011, the Record Date, or if you hold a valid proxy for the 2010 annual meeting. In addition, if you are a shareholder of record (owning shares in your own name), your name will be verified against the list of registered shareholders on the Record Date prior to your being admitted to the 2010 annual meeting. If you are not a shareholder of record but hold shares through a broker or nominee (in street name), you should provide proof of beneficial ownership on the Record Date, such as a recent account statement or a copy of the voting instruction card provided by your broker or nominee. The meeting will begin at 12:00 pm local time. Check-in will begin at 11:30 am local time.

How will we solicit proxies and who is paying for this proxy solicitation?

The cost of soliciting proxies will be borne by us. These costs will include the expense of preparing, assembling, printing and mailing the notice to shareholders of record and beneficial owners and printed proxy materials to shareholders who specifically request them, and reimbursements paid to brokerage firms and others for their reasonable out-of-pocket expenses for forwarding proxy materials to shareholders and obtaining beneficial owner’s voting instructions. We have not retained a proxy solicitor in conjunction with the annual meeting. In addition to soliciting proxies by mail, our Board members, officers and employees may solicit proxies on our behalf, without additional compensation, personally or by telephone. We may also solicit proxies by email from shareholders who are our employees or who previously requested to receive proxy materials electronically.

Where can I find voting results of the 2010 annual meeting?

We will announce preliminary voting results at the 2010 annual meeting and publish final results in a Current Report on Form 8-K to be filed with the SEC within four business days from the date of the meeting.

What is the deadline for submitting proposals for next year's annual meeting or to nominate individuals to serve as directors?

You may submit proposals, including director nominations, for consideration at future shareholder meetings as follows:

Shareholder Proposals: As of the date of this proxy statement, we had not received notice of any shareholder proposals for the 2010 annual meeting described herein and proposals received subsequent to the date of this proxy statement will be considered untimely. For a shareholder proposal to be considered for inclusion in our proxy statement for the 2011 annual meeting, the Corporate Secretary must receive the written proposal at our principal executive offices no later than the deadline stated below. Such proposals must comply with SEC regulations under Rule 14a-8 regarding the inclusion of shareholder proposals in company-sponsored proxy materials. Proposals should be addressed to:

Miller Petroleum, Inc.
Attention: Corporate Secretary
3651 Baker Hwy
Huntsville, TN 37756
Facsimile: (865) 691-8209

Under Rule 14a-8, to be timely, a shareholder's notice must be received at our principal executive offices not less than 120 calendar days before the date of our proxy statement release to shareholders in connection with the previous year's annual meeting. However, if we did not hold an annual meeting in the previous year or if the date of this year's annual meeting has been changed by more than 30 days from the date of the previous year's annual meeting, then the deadline is a reasonable time before we begin to print and send our proxy materials. Therefore, shareholder proposals intended to be presented at the 2011 annual meeting must be received by us at our principal executive office no later than September 10, 2011 in order to be eligible for inclusion in our 2011 proxy statement and proxy relating to that meeting. Upon receipt of any proposal, we will determine whether to include such proposal in accordance with regulations governing the solicitation of proxies.

Nomination of Director Candidates: You may propose director candidates for consideration by the Board's Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee. Any such recommendations should include the nominee's name and qualifications for Board membership, information regarding the candidate as would be required to be included in a proxy statement filed pursuant to SEC regulations, and a written indication by the recommended candidate of her or his willingness to serve, and should be directed to the Corporate Secretary of Miller Petroleum, Inc. at our principal executive offices: Miller Petroleum, Inc., 3651 Baker Hwy, Huntsville, TN 37756 within the time period described above for proposals other than matters brought under SEC Rule 14a-8.

How may I communicate with the Board of Directors or the non-management directors on the Board?

You may contact any of our directors by writing to them c/o Miller Petroleum, Inc., 3651 Baker Hwy, Huntsville, TN 37756. Each communication should specify the applicable director or directors to be contacted as well as the general topic of the communication. We may initially receive and process communications before forwarding them to the applicable director. We generally will not forward to the directors a shareholder communication that is determined to be primarily commercial in nature, that relates to an improper or irrelevant topic, or that requests

general information about Miller Petroleum, Inc. Concerns about accounting or auditing matters or communications intended for non-management directors should be sent to the attention of the Chairman of the Audit Committee at the address above. Our directors may at any time review a log of all correspondence received by us that is addressed to the independent members of the Board and request copies of any such correspondence.

WHO CAN HELP ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS?

You may seek answers to your questions by writing, calling or emailing:

Anna R. East, Esq.
General Counsel
9051 Executive Park Dr., Suite 103
Knoxville, TN 37923
Telephone: (865) 223-6575
Telecopier: (865) 691-8209
aeast@millerenergyresources.com

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Summary of Corporate Governance Framework

We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of honest and ethical conduct in running our business efficiently, serving our shareholders' interests and maintaining our integrity in the marketplace. To further this commitment, we have adopted our Code of Conduct, which applies to all our directors, officers and employees.

To assist in its governance, our Board has formed three standing committees composed entirely of independent directors: Audit, Compensation and Nominating and Corporate Governance. A discussion of each committee's function is set forth below.

Our Amended and Restated By-Laws, the charters of each Board committee, the independent status of a majority of our Board of Directors, and our Code of Conduct provide the framework for our corporate governance. Copies of our Amended and Restated By-Laws, charters and Code of Conduct may be found on our website at www.millerenergyresources.com. Copies of these materials also are available without charge upon written request to our Corporate Secretary.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors oversees our business affairs and monitors the performance of management. In accordance with our corporate governance principles, the Board of Directors does not involve itself in day-to-day operations. The directors keep themselves informed through discussions with the Chief Executive Officer and our Chief Financial Officer and by reading the reports and other materials that we send them and by participating in Board of Directors and committee meetings. Directors are elected for a term of one year. Our directors hold office until their successors have been elected and duly qualified unless the director resigns or by reason of death or other cause is unable to serve in the capacity of director. If any director resigns, dies or is otherwise unable to serve out his or her term, or if the Board increases the number of directors, the Board may fill any vacancy by a vote of a majority of the directors then in office, although less than a quorum exists. A director elected to fill a vacancy shall serve for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor. Vacancies occurring by reason of the removal of directors without cause may only be filled by vote of the shareholders.

The following is biographical information on the current members of our Board of Directors:

Deloy Miller, Age 63 Mr. Miller has been Chairman of the Board of Directors since December 1996, and was Chief Executive Officer from December 1997 to August 2008. Since then, Mr. Miller has been our Chief Operating Officer. From 1967 to 1997, Mr. Miller was the founder and Chief Executive Officer of our company. He is a

seasoned gas and oil professional w