

WHITING PETROLEUM CORP

Form PRE 14A

February 28, 2011

**Table of Contents**

UNITED STATES  
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549

**SCHEDULE 14A**

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 Pursuant to §240.14a-12

**Whiting Petroleum Corporation**

---

(Name of Registrant as Specified In Its Charter)

---

(Name of Person(s) Filing Proxy Statement, if other than the Registrant)

Payment of Filing Fee (Check the appropriate box):

- No fee required.
- Fee computed on table below per Exchange Act Rules 14a-6(i)(1) and 0-11.

1) Title of each class of securities to which transaction applies:

---

2) Aggregate number of securities to which transaction applies:

---

3) Per unit price or other underlying value of transaction computed pursuant to Exchange Act Rule 0-11 (set forth the amount on which the filing fee is calculated and state how it was determined):

---

4) Proposed maximum aggregate value of transaction:

---

5) Total fee paid:

---

- Fee paid previously with preliminary materials.
-

Edgar Filing: WHITING PETROLEUM CORP - Form PRE 14A

o Check box if any part of the fee is offset as provided by Exchange Act Rule 0-11(a)(2) and identify the filing for which the offsetting fee was paid previously. Identify the previous filing by registration statement number, or the Form or Schedule and the date of its filing.

1) Amount Previously Paid:

---

2) Form, Schedule or Registration Statement No.:

---

3) Filing Party:

---

4) Date Filed:

---

SEC 1913 (11-01)

**Persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB control number.**

---

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

PROXY STATEMENT

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

PRINCIPAL STOCKHOLDERS

APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO OUR CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION TO INCREASE

THE NUMBER OF AUTHORIZED SHARES OF COMMON STOCK

COMPENSATION DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

COMPENSATION COMMITTEE REPORT

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

ADVISORY VOTE ON THE COMPENSATION OF OUR NAMED EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

ADVISORY VOTE ON THE FREQUENCY OF THE ADVISORY VOTE ON THE COMPENSATION

OF OUR NAMED EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

RATIFICATION OF APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT REGISTERED PUBLIC ACCOUNTING

FIRM

AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

SECTION 16(a) BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP REPORTING COMPLIANCE

MISCELLANEOUS

---

**Table of Contents**

**WHITING PETROLEUM CORPORATION**  
**NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS**  
**To Be Held May 3, 2011**

Dear Stockholder:

The annual meeting of stockholders of Whiting Petroleum Corporation will be held on Tuesday, May 3, 2011, at 10:00 a.m., Mountain Time, in the Prospector Suite located in The Brown Palace Hotel, at 321 17th Street, Denver, Colorado 80202, for the following purposes:

to elect two directors to hold office until the 2014 annual meeting of stockholders and until their successors are duly elected and qualified;

to approve an amendment to our certificate of incorporation to increase the number of authorized shares of common stock;

to consider an advisory vote on the compensation of our named executive officers as disclosed in the accompanying proxy statement;

to consider an advisory vote on the frequency of the advisory vote on the compensation of our named executive officers;

to ratify the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as the independent registered public accounting firm for 2011; and

to consider and act upon such other business as may properly come before the meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof.

The close of business on March 11, 2011 has been fixed as the record date for the determination of stockholders entitled to notice of, and to vote at, the meeting and any adjournment or postponement thereof.

A proxy for the meeting and a proxy statement are enclosed with this notice.

By Order of the Board of Directors

WHITING PETROLEUM CORPORATION

Bruce R. DeBoer  
*Corporate Secretary*

Denver, Colorado  
April 1, 2011

**Important Notice Regarding the Availability of Proxy Materials for the Stockholder Meeting To Be Held on May 3, 2011. The proxy statement and annual report to stockholders are available at <http://www.edocumentview.com/WLL>.**

**Your vote is important no matter how large or small your holdings may be. To assure your representation at the meeting, please date the enclosed proxy, which is solicited by the Board of Directors, sign exactly as your name appears thereon and return immediately.**

---

**Table of Contents**

**WHITING PETROLEUM CORPORATION  
1700 Broadway, Suite 2300  
Denver, Colorado 80290-2300**

**PROXY STATEMENT  
For  
ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS  
To Be Held May 3, 2011**

This proxy statement is being furnished to stockholders by the Board of Directors (the *Board*) of Whiting Petroleum Corporation beginning on or about April 1, 2011 in connection with a solicitation of proxies by the Board for use at the annual meeting of stockholders to be held on Tuesday, May 3, 2011, at 10:00 a.m., Mountain Time, in the Prospector Suite located in The Brown Palace Hotel at 321 17 th Street, Denver, Colorado 80202, and all adjournments or postponements thereof (the *Annual Meeting*) for the purposes set forth in the attached Notice of Annual Meeting of Stockholders.

Execution of a proxy given in response to this solicitation will not affect a stockholder's right to attend the Annual Meeting and to vote in person. Presence at the Annual Meeting of a stockholder who has signed a proxy does not in itself revoke a proxy. Any stockholder giving a proxy may revoke it at any time before it is exercised by giving notice thereof to us in writing or in open meeting.

A proxy, in the enclosed form, which is properly executed, duly returned to us and not revoked will be voted in accordance with the instructions contained therein. The shares represented by executed but unmarked proxies will be voted FOR the two nominees for election as directors referred to in this proxy statement, FOR approval of the compensation of our named executive officers as disclosed in this proxy statement, to hold the advisory vote on the compensation of our executive officers every year, FOR the proposed amendment to our certificate of incorporation to increase the number of authorized shares of common stock and FOR the ratification of the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm for 2011 and in accordance with the judgment of the persons named as proxies in the enclosed form of proxy on such other business or matters which may properly come before the Annual Meeting. Other than the election of two directors, the advisory vote on the compensation of our named executive officers as disclosed in this proxy statement, the advisory vote on the frequency of the advisory vote on the compensation of our named executive officers, the amendment to our certificate of incorporation to increase the number of authorized shares of common stock and the ratification of the appointment of Deloitte & Touche LLP as our independent registered public accounting firm for 2011, the Board has no knowledge of any other matters to be presented for action by the stockholders at the Annual Meeting.

Only holders of record of our common stock at the close of business on March 11, 2011 are entitled to vote at the Annual Meeting. On that date, [118,115,582] shares of our common stock were issued and entitled to vote, each of which is entitled to one vote per share.

Except as otherwise expressly stated, all historical share and per share amounts in this proxy statement have been adjusted to reflect the two-for-one split of our common stock distributed on February 22, 2011 to holders of record as of February 7, 2011.

**ELECTION OF DIRECTORS**

Our certificate of incorporation and by-laws provide that our directors are divided into three classes, with staggered terms of three years each. At the Annual Meeting, the stockholders will elect two directors to hold office until the

2014 annual meeting of stockholders and until their successors are duly elected and qualified. Shares of our common stock represented by executed but unmarked proxies will be voted in favor of the election as directors of the persons named as nominees in this proxy statement; provided that, if you hold shares of our common stock through a broker-dealer, bank nominee, custodian or other securities intermediary, the intermediary will not vote those shares for the election of any nominee for director unless you give the intermediary specific voting instructions on a timely basis directing the intermediary to vote for such nominee. The Board has no reason to believe that the listed nominees will be unable or unwilling to serve as directors if elected. However, in the event that

---



## **Table of Contents**

any nominee should be unable to serve or for good cause will not serve, the shares represented by proxies received will be voted for another nominee selected by the Board. Each director will be elected by a plurality of the votes cast at the Annual Meeting (assuming a quorum is present). Consequently, any shares not voted at the Annual Meeting, whether due to abstentions, broker non-votes or otherwise, will have no impact on the election of the directors.

The following sets forth certain information, as of March 11, 2011, about the Board's nominees for election at the Annual Meeting and each director whose term will continue after the Annual Meeting, including an account of their specific business experience; the names of publicly held and certain other corporations of which they also are, or have been within the past five years, directors; and a discussion of their specific experience, qualifications, attributes or skills that led to the conclusion that they should serve as directors.

### **Nominees for Election at the Annual Meeting**

#### ***Terms expiring at the 2011 Annual Meeting***

*D. Sherwin Artus*, 73, has been a director of Whiting Petroleum Corporation since 2006. Mr. Artus joined Whiting Oil and Gas Corporation in January 1989 as Vice President of Operations and became Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer in July 1999. In January 2000, he was appointed President and Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Artus became Senior Vice President in January 2002 (upon the appointment of Mr. Volker as President and Chief Executive Officer) and retired from the Company on April 1, 2006. Prior to joining Whiting, he was employed by Shell Oil Company in various engineering research and management positions. From 1974-1977, he was employed by Wainoco Oil and Gas Company as Production Manager. He was a co-founder and later became President of Solar Petroleum Corporation, an independent oil and gas producing company. He has over 49 years of experience in the oil and natural gas business. Mr. Artus holds a Bachelor's Degree in Geological Engineering and a Master's Degree in Mining Engineering from the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. He is a registered Professional Engineer in Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and North Dakota. Mr. Artus is a member, and a past officer, of the Society of Professional Well Log Analysts and is a member of the Society of Petroleum Engineers. Mr. Artus's technical expertise and vast industry experience coupled with his management experience with our company and intimate knowledge of our company culture led to the conclusion that he should serve as a director.

*Philip E. Doty*, 67, was appointed on August 11, 2010 as a director of Whiting Petroleum Corporation. Mr. Doty is a certified public accountant. Since 2007, Mr. Doty has been counsel to Ehrhardt Keefe Steiner & Hottman PC, the largest Colorado-based accounting and consulting firm, where he previously was a partner from 2002 to 2007. From 1967 to 2000 he worked at Arthur Andersen and Co., where he was a partner since 1978 and served as an audit partner and head of the Denver office oil and gas practice until his retirement in 2000. He is a graduate of Drake University with a Bachelor's degree in accounting. Mr. Doty's 40 years of experience as a certified public accountant and his expertise in oil and gas financial reporting and accounting led to the conclusion he should serve as a director. Mr. Doty was recommended to our Nominating and Governance Committee by our chief executive officer.

**The Board recommends the foregoing nominees for election as directors for terms expiring at the 2014 Annual Meeting and urges each stockholder to vote FOR such nominees.**

### **Directors Continuing in Office**

#### ***Terms expiring at the 2012 Annual Meeting***

*James J. Volker*, 63, who serves as Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, has been a director of Whiting Petroleum Corporation since 2003 and a director of Whiting Oil and Gas Corporation since 2002. He joined Whiting Oil and Gas Corporation in August 1983 as Vice President of Corporate Development and served in that position

through April 1993. In March 1993, he became a contract consultant to Whiting Oil and Gas Corporation and served in that capacity until August 2000, at which time he became Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. Mr. Volker was appointed President and Chief Executive Officer of Whiting Oil and Gas Corporation in January 2002. Effective January 1, 2011, Mr. Volker serves as our Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Volker was co-founder, Vice President and later President of Energy Management Corporation from 1971 through 1982. He has over 30 years of experience in the oil and natural gas industry. Mr. Volker has a degree in finance from the University of Denver, an MBA from the University of Colorado and has completed H. K. VanPoolen and Associates course of study in

**Table of Contents**

reservoir engineering. Mr. Volker's status as our chief executive officer who applies his considerable industry experience and management qualifications and serves as a valuable resource for the other directors as to all operational and administrative aspects of our company led to the conclusion that he should serve as a director.

*William N. Hahne*, 59, has been a director since 2007. Mr. Hahne was Chief Operating Officer of Petrohawk Energy Corporation from July 2006 until October 2007. Mr. Hahne served at KCS Energy, Inc. as President, Chief Operating Officer and Director from April 2003 to July 2006, and as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer from April 1998 to April 2003. He is a graduate of Oklahoma University with a BS in petroleum engineering and has 37 years of extensive technical and management experience with independent oil and gas companies including Unocal, Union Texas Petroleum Corporation, NERCO, The Louisiana Land and Exploration Company (LL&E) and Burlington Resources, Inc. He is an expert in oil and gas reserve estimating, having served as chairman for the Society of Petroleum Engineers Oil and Gas Reserve Committee. Mr. Hahne's experience in budgeting, planning and implementing effective exploration, drilling, acquisition and development programs, expertise in horizontal drilling and shale development and knowledge of oil and gas regulation, litigation and government reporting led to the conclusion that he should serve as a director.

*Allan R. Larson*, 72, was named as a director of Whiting Petroleum Corporation effective January 1, 2011. He has more than 40 years experience in oil and gas exploration and development, primarily in the Rocky Mountains and the Midcontinent regions. For 30 years he has operated Larson Petroleum, LLC, a geological consulting company. His previous affiliations include Jade Drilling Company, Belleview Capital Corporation, Mesa Petroleum Company and Amoco Production Company. Mr. Larson earned a PhD in Geology at the University of California, Los Angeles. He earned his M.S. in Geology from UCLA and his BS degree in Geology at Pennsylvania State University. He is a member of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, the Rocky Mountain Association of Geologists, the Wyoming Geological Association, the Montana Geologic Society and the Utah Geologic Association. Mr. Larson's geological training, technical expertise and industry experience in evaluating exploration prospects and conducting drilling and production operations within our company's core operating areas led to the conclusion that he should serve as a director.

***Terms to expire at the 2013 Annual Meeting***

*Thomas L. Aller*, 62, has been a director of Whiting Petroleum Corporation since 2003. Mr. Aller has served as Senior Vice President - Energy Resource Development of Alliant Energy Corporation since January 2009 and President of Interstate Power and Light Company since 2004. Prior to that, he served as President of Alliant Energy Investments, Inc. since 1998 and interim Executive Vice President - Energy Delivery of Alliant Energy Corporation since 2003 and Senior Vice President - Energy Delivery of Alliant Energy Corporation since 2004. From 1993 to 1998, he served as Vice President of IES Investments. He received his Bachelor's Degree in political science from Creighton University and his Master's Degree in municipal administration from the University of Iowa. Mr. Aller's particular experience with our company, including from 1997 through 2003 when he served as a director of our company's operating subsidiary prior to our initial public stock offering, and his business acumen and experience in the energy sector led to the conclusion that he should serve as a director.

*Thomas P. Briggs*, 62, has been a director of Whiting Petroleum Corporation since 2006. During the last five years, Mr. Briggs served as chief financial officer of Healthy Food Holdings, Inc., a private holding and management company for branded food companies. Prior to that, he served as chief financial officer of Horizon Organic, a publicly-held, organic foods company, and Vice President-Finance of a private, Denver-based food manufacturer and supplier. During the 1970s and 1980s, he was a tax and M&A consultant to oil and gas exploration companies, and chief financial officer and senior officer in two Denver-based, publicly-held independent oil and gas companies. Mr. Briggs, an inactive certified public accountant, has 26 years of management experience as a chief financial officer in public and private companies primarily in the oil and gas and food industries, and also has 10 years of public

accounting experience in two of the current four worldwide public accounting firms. He is a past director of the Western Energy Alliance. Mr. Briggs holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in accounting from Duke University and a Juris Doctorate degree from the Georgetown University Law Center. From 2004 until March 2009, he was a board member and chairman of the audit committee of Corpro Companies, Inc., a publicly held company. Mr. Briggs' accounting and legal background as well as his considerable experience as a chief financial officer and independent certified public accountant led to the conclusion that he should serve as a director.

**Table of Contents**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

**Corporate Governance Guidelines**

The Board has adopted Corporate Governance Guidelines that are available on our website at [www.whiting.com](http://www.whiting.com).

**Code of Business Conduct and Ethics**

The Board has adopted the Whiting Petroleum Corporation Code of Business Conduct and Ethics that applies to our directors and employees, the full text of which is available on our website at [www.whiting.com](http://www.whiting.com). Each of our directors and employees annually confirms in writing that he or she has reviewed and will fully comply with the Code of Business Conduct and Ethics.

**Transactions with Related Persons**

We had no transactions during 2010, and none are currently proposed, in which we were a participant and in which any related person had a direct or indirect material interest. Our Board has adopted written policies and procedures regarding related person transactions. For purposes of these policies and procedures:

a related person means any of our directors, executive officers or nominees for director or any of their immediate family members; and

a related person transaction generally is a transaction (including any indebtedness or a guarantee of indebtedness) in which we were or are to be a participant and the amount involved exceeds \$120,000, and in which a related person had or will have a direct or indirect material interest.

Each of our executive officers, directors or nominees for director is required to disclose to the Nominating and Governance Committee certain information relating to related person transactions for review, approval or ratification by the Nominating and Governance Committee. Disclosure to the Nominating and Governance Committee should occur before, if possible, or as soon as practicable after the related person transaction is effected, but in any event as soon as practicable after the executive officer, director or nominee for director becomes aware of the related person transaction. The Nominating and Governance Committee's decision whether or not to approve or ratify a related person transaction is to be made in light of the Nominating and Governance Committee's determination that consummation of the transaction is not or was not contrary to our best interests. Any related person transaction must be disclosed to the full Board of Directors.

**Independence of Directors**

Of the seven directors currently serving on the Board, the Board has determined that each of Messrs. Aller, Artus, Briggs, Doty, Hahne and Larson has no material relationship with us and is independent under New York Stock Exchange listing standards. The Board has established categorical standards within our Corporate Governance Guidelines to assist in making determinations of director independence. These categorical standards are available in Appendix B to our Corporate Governance Guidelines on our website at [www.whiting.com](http://www.whiting.com). In making its determination of independence, the Board found that each of Messrs. Aller, Artus, Briggs, Doty, Hahne and Larson met these standards.

**Board Committees**

The Board has standing Audit, Compensation and Nominating and Governance Committees. The Board has adopted a formal written charter for each of these committees that is available on our website at [www.whiting.com](http://www.whiting.com).

**Table of Contents**

The table below provides the current composition of each standing committee of our Board:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Audit</b>	<b>Compensation</b>	<b>Nominating/ Governance</b>
Thomas L. Aller	X	X	
D. Sherwin Artus			X
Thomas P. Briggs	X	X	
Philip E. Doty	X		X
William N. Hahne		X	X
Allan R. Larson			X

The Audit Committee's primary duties and responsibilities are to assist the Board in monitoring the integrity of our financial statements, the independent registered public accounting firm's qualifications and independence, the performance of our internal audit function and independent registered public accounting firm and our compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. The Audit Committee is directly responsible for the appointment, retention, compensation, evaluation and termination of our independent registered public accounting firm and has the sole authority to approve all audit and permitted non-audit engagement fees and terms. The Audit Committee is presently comprised of Messrs. Doty (Chairperson), Aller and Briggs, each of whom is an independent director under New York Stock Exchange listing standards and Securities and Exchange Commission rules applicable to audit committee members. The Board has determined that Mr. Doty qualifies as an audit committee financial expert as defined by Securities and Exchange Commission rules. The Audit Committee held five meetings in 2010.

The Compensation Committee discharges the responsibilities of the Board with respect to our compensation programs and compensation of our executives and directors. The Compensation Committee has overall responsibility for determining the compensation of our chief executive officer, approving the compensation of our executive officers and reviewing director compensation. The Compensation Committee is also charged with administration of our Production Participation Plan and Equity Incentive Plan. The Compensation Committee is presently comprised of Messrs. Briggs (Chairperson), Aller and Hahne, and each of whom is an independent director under New York Stock Exchange listing standards, an outside director for purposes of Section 162(m) of the Internal Revenue Code and a non-employee director for purposes of Rule 16b-3 under the Exchange Act. The Compensation Committee held five meetings in 2010. Additional information regarding the Compensation Committee and our processes and procedures for executive compensation, including, among other matters, our use of compensation consultants and the role of our executive officers in determining compensation, is provided below under "Compensation Discussion and Analysis".

The principal functions of the Nominating and Governance Committee are to identify individuals qualified to become directors and recommend to the Board nominees for all directorships, identify directors qualified to serve on Board committees and recommend to the Board members for each committee, develop and recommend to the Board a set of corporate governance guidelines and otherwise take a leadership role in shaping our corporate governance. The Nominating and Governance Committee is also charged with administering our policies and procedures regarding any transactions with related persons. The Nominating and Governance Committee is presently comprised of Messrs. Hahne (Chairperson), Artus, Doty and Larson, each of whom is an independent director under New York Stock Exchange listing standards. The Nominating and Governance Committee held seven meetings in 2010.

In identifying and evaluating nominees for director, the Nominating and Governance Committee seeks to ensure that the Board possesses, in the aggregate, the strategic, managerial and financial skills and experience necessary to fulfill its duties and to achieve its objectives, and seeks to ensure that the Board is comprised of directors who have broad and diverse backgrounds, possessing knowledge in areas that are of importance to us. In addition, the Nominating and

Governance Committee believes it is important that at least one director have the requisite experience and expertise to be designated as an audit committee financial expert. The Nominating and Governance Committee looks at each nominee on a case-by-case basis regardless of who recommended the nominee. In looking at the qualifications of each candidate to determine if their election would further the goals described above, the Nominating and Governance Committee takes into account all factors it considers appropriate, which may include strength of character, mature judgment, career specialization, relevant technical skills or financial acumen, diversity of viewpoint and industry knowledge. At a minimum, each director nominee must have



## **Table of Contents**

displayed the highest personal and professional ethics, integrity and values and sound business judgment. In addition, the Nominating and Governance Committee believes that the following minimum qualifications are necessary for a director nominee to possess to be recommended by the Committee to the Board:

Each director must be highly accomplished in his or her respective field, with superior credentials and recognition and broad experience at the administrative and/or policy-making level in business, government, education, technology or public interest.

Each director must have relevant expertise and experience, and be able to offer advice and guidance to the Chief Executive Officer based on that expertise and experience.

Each director must be independent of any particular constituency, be able to represent all of our stockholders and be committed to enhancing long-term stockholder value.

Each director must have sufficient time available to devote to activities of the Board and to enhance his or her knowledge of our business.

The Nominating and Governance Committee will consider persons recommended by stockholders to become nominees for election as directors in accordance with the foregoing and other criteria set forth in our Corporate Governance Guidelines and Nominating and Governance Committee Charter. Recommendations for consideration by the Nominating and Governance Committee should be sent to our Corporate Secretary in writing together with appropriate biographical information concerning each proposed nominee. Our By-Laws also set forth certain requirements for stockholders wishing to nominate director candidates directly for consideration by the stockholders. With respect to an election of directors to be held at an annual meeting, a stockholder must, among other things, give notice of an intent to make such a nomination to our Corporate Secretary in advance of the meeting in compliance with the terms and within the time period specified in the By-Laws. Pursuant to these requirements, a stockholder must give a written notice of intent to our Corporate Secretary no earlier than the 120th day and no later than the 90th day prior to the first anniversary of the preceding year's annual meeting of stockholders.

## **Compensation Committee Interlocks and Insider Participation**

During 2010, Messrs. Aller, Briggs and Hahne served on the Compensation Committee of our Board. Mr. Hubbard, who retired December 31, 2010, also served on the Compensation Committee from January 1, 2010 through May 31, 2010. None of such persons has served as an employee or officer of ours. None of our executive officers serve as a member of the board of directors or compensation committee of any entity that has one or more of its executive officers serving as a member of our Board or Compensation Committee.

## **Board Leadership Structure and Role in Risk Oversight**

The position of board chairman is filled by our chief executive officer. We believe this combined leadership structure is appropriate for our company because our chairman and chief executive officer (i) conveys a singular, cohesive message to our stockholders, employees, industry partners and the investment community and (ii) eliminates any ambiguity as to who is accountable for company performance. Our directors and management team engage frequently and directly in the flow of information and ideas and we believe our combined leadership structure facilitates the quality, quantity and timeliness of the information flow and communication.

A presiding director is designated to preside over each executive session of the non-management directors at Board meetings. The presiding director is the chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee.

One of the responsibilities of our Board is to review and evaluate the process in place to assess the major risks facing our company and periodically review management's assessment of the major risks as well as options for their mitigation. Our Board leadership structure and our practice of a high degree of interaction between our directors and members of senior management facilitates this oversight function. The information flow and communication between our Board and senior management regarding long-term strategic planning and short term operational reporting includes matters of material risk inherent in our business of exploration for and production of oil and gas. Also, our Audit Committee, among other duties, is charged with overseeing significant financial risk exposures and the steps management has taken to monitor, control and report such exposures and has compliance oversight responsibilities.

**Table of Contents****Communication with Directors**

Stockholders and other interested parties may communicate with the full Board, non-management directors as a group or individual directors, including the presiding director, by submitting such communications in writing to our Corporate Secretary at Whiting Petroleum Corporation, c/o the Board of Directors (or, at the stockholder's option, c/o a specific director or directors), 1700 Broadway, Suite 2300, Denver, Colorado 80290. Such communications will be delivered directly to the Board.

**Meetings and Attendance**

The Board held twelve meetings in 2010. No director attended less than 90% of the total number of Board and committee meetings on which they served. Directors are expected to attend our annual meeting of stockholders each year and all of our directors serving at the time, other than Mr. Hubbard (who retired on December 31, 2010), attended our 2010 annual meeting of stockholders.

**Director Compensation**

We use a combination of cash and equity incentive compensation to attract and retain qualified and experienced candidates to serve on the Board. In setting this compensation, our Compensation Committee considers the significant amount of time and energy expended and the skill-level required by our directors in fulfilling their duties. Our Compensation Committee grants restricted stock to our non-employee directors annually on the first of the month following the annual stockholders meeting (June 1 in 2010) to align the grants with directors' terms of office. Grants of shares of restricted stock vest one-third each year over three years and become fully vested upon a change in control of our company. We also reimburse expenses incurred by our non-employee directors to attend Board and Board committee meetings and to attend continuing education seminars, conferences and classes. Directors who are our employees receive no compensation for service as members of either the Board or Board committees. From January 1, 2010 through May 31, 2010, non-employee directors were compensated pursuant to the schedule as follows:

	<b>Board Service</b>	<b>Audit</b>	<b>Committee Service Compensation</b>	<b>Nominating and Governance</b>
Annual Retainer	\$ 42,000			
Restricted Stock (value)	\$ 100,000			
Committee Chair Annual Retainer		\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
Committee Chair Restricted Stock (value)		\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
Committee Member Annual Retainer		\$ 5,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Meeting Fee	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500

Effective June 1, 2010, non-employee directors were compensated pursuant to the schedule as follows:

	<b>Board Service</b>	<b>Audit</b>	<b>Committee Service Compensation</b>	<b>Nominating and Governance</b>
--	--------------------------	--------------	---	--

Edgar Filing: WHITING PETROLEUM CORP - Form PRE 14A

Annual Retainer	\$ 45,000			
Restricted Stock (value)	\$ 115,000			
Committee Chair Annual Retainer		\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
Committee Chair Restricted Stock (value)		\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
Committee Member Annual Retainer		\$ 5,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Meeting Fee	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500

In addition, we make medical and dental coverage available to directors and their spouses, but directors who elect to receive such coverage are charged a premium that is equal to the COBRA rates associated with our insurance plan. As such, we consider the ability to participate in this coverage to be non-compensatory.

**Table of Contents**

The following table reports compensation earned by or paid to our non-employee directors during 2010.

**Director Compensation**

Name(1)	Fees Earned or Paid in Cash (\$)	Stock Awards \$(2)	Non-Equity Incentive Plan Compensation \$(3)	Total (\$)
Thomas L. Aller	82,750	108,750		191,500
D. Sherwin Artus	73,750	108,750		182,500
Thomas P. Briggs	96,750	123,750		220,500
Philip E. Doty	33,375	79,937		113,312
William N. Hahne	97,750	123,750		221,500
Graydon D. Hubbard(4)	98,500	133,750		232,250
Allan R. Larson(5)	0	0		0
Palmer L. Moe(6)	53,583	108,750		162,333

- (1) Mr. Volker, our Chief Executive Officer, is not included in this table as he is an employee of ours and receives no separate compensation for his services as a director. The compensation received by Mr. Volker as an employee is shown below under Executive Compensation Summary Compensation Table.
- (2) Reflects the full grant date fair value of restricted stock awards granted in 2010 calculated in accordance with Financial Accounting Standards Board ( FASB ) Accounting Standards Codification ( ASC ) Topic 718. Assumptions used in the calculation of these amounts are included in note 8 to our audited financial statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2010 included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on February 24, 2011. In 2010, Messrs. Aller, Artus, Briggs, Doty, Hahne, Hubbard and Moe were respectively awarded 2,806, 2,806, 3,172, 1,818, 3,172, 3,416 and 2,806 restricted shares of our common stock. The aggregate number of unvested restricted stock awards outstanding at the end of 2010 for Messrs. Aller, Artus, Briggs, Doty, Hahne, Hubbard and Moe were 6,248, 6,248, 7,130, 1,818, 7,024, 0 and 0, respectively. (See notes 4 and 6 regarding the retirements of Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Moe.)
- (3) Mr. Artus receives payments under our Production Participation Plan not for director services but with respect to his vested plan interests relating to his prior employment with us from 1989 to 2006. For 2010, Mr. Artus was paid \$266,582 under the Production Participation Plan.
- (4) Mr. Hubbard retired from the Board as of December 31, 2010, and, in recognition of his service to the company as a director and chairman of our Audit Committee, the restrictions on his unvested stock were removed by the Board as of the date of his retirement.
- (5) Effective January 1, 2011, Mr. Larson was elected by the Board, so Mr. Larson received no director compensation during 2010.
- (6) Mr. Moe retired from the Board on August 11, 2010. Until his retirement, Mr. Moe served on the Audit Committee and the Nominating and Governance Committee.

## **Stock Ownership Guidelines**

In February 2010, our Board adopted stock ownership guidelines to further align the interests of our directors with the interests of our stockholders and to promote our commitment to sound corporate governance. Non-employee directors are required to hold shares of our common stock with a value equal to two times the amount of the annual retainer paid to outside directors for service on the Board (excluding additional committee retainers, if any). Non-employee directors are required to achieve the applicable level of ownership within two years of the later of the date these guidelines were adopted or the date the person first became a non-employee member of the Board. Shares that count towards satisfaction of the guidelines include: (i) shares owned outright by the director, and (ii) shares held in trust for the benefit of the director. Unexercised and/or unvested equity awards do not count towards satisfaction of the guidelines. The value of a share will be measured on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year as the average month end closing price for the 12 months preceding the date of calculation. All of the non-employee directors, other than our new directors Mr. Doty and Mr. Larson, currently own a sufficient number of shares of our common stock to satisfy the guidelines.

**Table of Contents****PRINCIPAL STOCKHOLDERS****Certain Beneficial Owners**

The following table sets forth information regarding beneficial ownership by persons known to us to own more than 5% of our outstanding common stock as of March 11, 2011. The beneficial ownership information set forth below has been reported in filings made by the beneficial owners with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

<b>Name and Address of Beneficial Owner</b>	<b>Amount and Nature of Beneficial Ownership</b>				<b>Percent of Class</b>	
	<b>Voting Power</b>		<b>Investment Power</b>			
	<b>Sole</b>	<b>Shared</b>	<b>Sole</b>	<b>Shared</b>	<b>Aggregate</b>	
Fidelity Management & Research LLC 82 Devonshire Street Boston, MA 02109	524,356		12,807,810		12,807,810	10.9%
BlackRock, Inc. 40 East 52 <sup>nd</sup> Street New York City, NY 10022	10,606,406		10,606,406		10,606,406	9.1%

**Management and Directors**

The following table sets forth information regarding the beneficial ownership of our common stock as of March 11, 2011 by: (i) each director and nominee; (ii) each of the named executive officers in the Summary Compensation Table set forth below; and (iii) all of the directors, nominees and executive officers (including the named executive officers in the Summary Compensation Table) as a group. Each of the holders listed below has sole voting and investment power over the shares beneficially owned. None of the holders listed below have pledged as security any of the shares beneficially owned.

**Shares of  
Common Stock  
Beneficially Owned**