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School saves \$1M in renovation costs

Online Scoop



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By Mary Sploer
MEADVILLE TRIBUNE

"The project came in under budget" were the first words members of Crawford County Career & Technical Center's Joint Operating

Committee heard from their architect about the bids recently opened for the school's long-awaited renovation. Make that \$1.8 million under budget, to be exact.

"Discussions are now under way about reducing the amount bor-

rowed for the project by \$1 million while also restoring two components that had been trimmed during an earlier round of cost-cutting.

The project will mark the first major update of the building since it opened its doors more than 40

years ago.

"I've been working out of this building for 20 years," said Robert Englebaugh, executive vice president of HHSDR Architects/Engineers.

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who has served as architect for a number of much smaller projects at the school over the years. "It's nice to get to this point."

Committee members agreed, giving Englebaugh the go-ahead to proceed with a 7 to 0 vote during their monthly meeting Wednesday night. Members Jeff Jackson, representing PENNCREST School District, and Christine Lazusky, representing Crawford Central School District, were absent.

The nine-member committee consists of three representatives from each of the three school districts sending students to the school.

The project will include general renovations as well as specific improvements to plumbing, heating, ventilation and electrical systems. An addition at the back of the building will give the school's food services program a new dining area.

According to Englebaugh, timing on the project was just right. "Lots of building materials have come down in price in recent months," he said, also noting that six to eight prime contractors — significantly above the normal three or four — submitted bids on major components of the project. As a result, a number of items that went out for bid as alternates as part of the school's effort to reduce costs were restored to the project.

Two major expenditures that were eliminated before requests for bids went out are also expected to be restored to the project: the school's rear parking areas and two vehicle paths circling the building will be paved — a step that Director Neil Donovan said was absolutely necessary after this year's unusually brutal winter; and all the school's interior walls will receive a coat of paint and deteriorating floor surfaces in several hallways will be restored.

PENNCREST Superintendent Richard Borchilo described the project as "a long

time coming but much needed" and noted that both of the restored items "would be essential."

The general construction contract in the amount of \$2,527,178 will be awarded to Rein Construction of Brookfield, Ohio.

The HVAC construction contract, \$2,541,850; will go to Rabe Environmental Systems Inc. of Erie.

The electrical construction contract, \$616,789, will go to Shipley Brothers Construction of Cranberry Township.

The electrical construction contract, \$1,607,232, will go to Blackhawk Neff Inc. of New Castle.

And the food service equipment contract, \$530,726, will go to Brysco Food Service LLC of Pittsburgh.

Construction, expected to begin early this spring, is scheduled to be complete by Aug. 13, 2010.

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