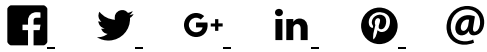


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ALERT

Farrell awards school contracts

By ERIC POOLE Herald Assistant Editor | News May 1, 2018



FARRELL — Moments after voting Monday to spend a little more than \$9 million on a renovation project, Farrell Area School Board Vice President Anthony Retone admitted he was “scared but excited.”

“Obviously, this is going to be a massive undertaking for a small district,” he said. “You don’t know what’s going to happen in the next two years.”

The school board unanimously approved spending \$9.16 million in seven contracts for the project, which is scheduled to begin in June and continue through the 2018-19 school year. Plans call for installation of air-conditioning systems at the elementary and high schools, and a new tech education center — called STEAM, for science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics — at Farrell High School.

Board members approved Hudson Construction Inc. of Hermitage as general contractor for \$3,778,600. Lugaila Mechanical Inc. of the Pittsburgh suburb of Crafton won the bid for the air-conditioning system at \$3,082,400. Penn-Ohio Electrical Co. of Brookfield, Ohio, received a \$1,553,310 contract for the project’s electrical service.

Farrell has no air-conditioning systems at either the elementary or high school, which means contractors will have to install ductwork and other infrastructure. That added to the cost, officials said.

The remaining contracts approved were: Reno Brothers Inc., New Brighton, \$311,238 for plumbing; Allegheny Educational Systems Inc., Tarentum, \$271,700 for STEAM equipment; Clarion Environmental, Clarion, \$48,954 for asbestos removal; and WAE Balancing Inc., Coolspring Township, \$115,600 for testing and adjusting the air-conditioning system.

Superintendent Dr. Lora Adams-King said there were multiple bids for the work, but did not say how many companies bid on the project.

“It was a competitive bidding process,” she said.

One company, Shipley Brothers of Cranberry Township, Butler County, was allowed to withdraw its bid due to mathematical errors in its proposal. King said Shipley Brothers’ bid was lower than that for Reno Brothers, which won the contract. However, district solicitor James Nevant II said companies are allowed under to withdraw bids due to math errors.

“They clearly made a calculation error, not a substantive error,” Nevant said.

In his remarks after the board cast its votes to approve the contracts and seek approval for the renovation plans from the state Department of Education, Retone said officials plan to meet with residents about the proposal and called on board members to support the expenditure.

He called the STEAM spending particularly important.

“We’re not doing this for any of us,” Retone said. “Our kids have to be given the opportunity to compete with any school district — of our size, at least.”

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