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FEATURED

Municipal building set for remodel in Shenango Township

BY MICHAEL ROKNICK Herald Business Editor Feb 24, 2019



SHENANGO TOWNSHIP – Work is set to begin this spring on a project to remodel and build a large addition on the Shenango Township Municipal Building.

Tom Hubert, chairman of the township's supervisors, announced a timetable for the long-planned project Thursday at the supervisors' regular monthly meeting.

Projected to cost between \$2.4 million and \$2.8 million, the project could be completed without having to raise taxes, Hubert said after the meeting. The project is expected to be completed by April 2020.

The township already has paid \$200,000 for architectural and engineering costs as part of last year's budget designated for the project.

Hubert said Shenango Township has up to \$1.2 million, mostly a combination of budget surpluses from previous years and funds in the capital improvement fund.



Tom Hubert, chairman of Shenango Township's supervisors, looks over drawings of the planned expansion and remodeling of the municipal building. Construction for the project is expected to begin this spring.

MICHAEL ROKNICK | Herald

Further, the township budgeted \$100,000 for the project in case something unexpected surfaces during construction.

“We budgeted for the worst case scenario,” Hubert said. “If something goes wrong we’ll be prepared financially for it. But if everything goes as planned we’ll get to save that \$100,000.”

Also, there could be savings in construction. The plan currently calls for \$43,000 to be spent on a water treatment system for the building, which uses well water.

“The water is so bad here you can’t drink it,” Hubert said. “Believe me, it’s that bad.”

But the township has contacted Aqua Pennsylvania to see if the utility would run a water line to the building.

“If they do, we wouldn’t need the water treatment system,” he said.

Figures for the project are based on bids received for remodeling and construction. No contract has been awarded yet, as the township is waiting to see what interest rate it can get for a bank loan, Hubert said.

The loan amount would vary based on the interest rate.

“If it’s a high interest rate we would use more of the \$1.2 million we have sitting in cash,” he said. “If it’s a low rate we would borrow more and keep more of our cash.”

The building now has 2,144 square feet, not including the garage space. The project calls for an addition of 3,164 square feet, which would more than double the building’s size.

Hubert said little work has been done on the building since it was dedicated on Jan. 28, 1968. A top construction priority is giving the township’s 11-man police force more room.

“Right now they’re crammed into a tiny space,” Hubert said. “And the evidence room they have now really isn’t a room – it’s a closet. “And now they have to use the community room to interview someone. But if that room is being used they have to use the (police) chief’s office.”

The project would give police an interviewing room and a locker room, with a shower, where they can change uniforms.

“If our police comes in contact with someone involved with drugs, the drug residue could get on their uniforms and skin,” Hubert said. “And that’s why we want them to have a locker room and shower. You don’t want them to carry that drug around with them.”

On the building’s office side, there would be a conference room, and separate spaces for records and storage. Plans call for the windows facing Route 318 and Jackson Road to be made with bulletproof glass.

The building’s largest space will continue to be the community room, where the township will add a kitchen.

“That way people in the community who want to use the room would be able to serve light meals,” Hubert said.

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