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Ringgold gearing up for construction of new baseball/softball field

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NEW EAGLE – Work could begin this summer on a new field for Ringgold’s baseball and softball teams.

On Wednesday, representatives from HHSR Architects & Engineers unveiled sketches of the field during the monthly meeting of Ringgold’s school board.

According to Matt Franz, HHSR executive vice president, the project would include regrading the outfield, removing topsoil and sod, adding outfield drains and an outfield infiltration trench, preparing the site for erosion control, adding a sod outfield and adding an outfield warning track. Other enhancements could include adding a removable pitcher's mound, replacing the first- and third-base fences and gates at both dugouts, replacing the crushed stone in the dugouts and replacing existing first- and third-base storm lines and inlets.

While the board was given the option of choosing between a clay infield and artificial turf infield, it appears to be leaning toward an artificial turf surface.

"The clay infield doesn't include any drainage because clay doesn't drain as well as other surfaces," said Randy Skrinjorich, director of operations and financial services.

The total projected cost for the field with turf infield and all new drainage for both the infield and outfield is \$840,000. Once bids go out in July, work should start in August. Renovations to the field are expected to be completed by late fall.

Skrinjorich said the new baseball field will help make the Rams baseball and softball teams more competitive.

"Because the baseball season starts so early, there is a lot more rain," he said. "That makes it difficult to play games in March and April. Remodeling the baseball field will make it easier for our teams to keep to their schedules. Also, Ringgold will have a better chance of hosting more conference games if we have a new field."

Added Ringgold Superintendent Megan Marie Van Fossan, "We are still in the initial phases to find out what the actual cost of the field will be."

Last June, the Ringgold High School baseball team won the PIAA Class 4A Championship.

In other business, the board:

- Accepted a change order from Three Rivers Electric Inc. in the amount of \$362,628 for services related to data networking at Ringgold High School.
- Agreed to purchase three 2019 Ford Transit 10-passenger vans in the amount of \$94,542, based on COSTARS pricing.
- Accepted a proposal from AstroTurf in the amount of \$54,439 for sideline drainage aid and approved a proposal from GeoMechanics Inc. in the amount of \$15,000 for inspection services for the Ringgold High School track.

- Hired Shannon Crombie as director of curriculum and Cindy Magone as a school nurse for both of Ringgold's elementary schools.
- Hired Sherry Black as school counselor at Ringgold Middle School, effective July 1, 2019. Black currently serves as principal of Ringgold Elementary School South. The board is expected to hire a replacement for this position in May or June.

In addition, a group of Ringgold Middle School students performed one of the selection from their upcoming musical, "Mary Poppins," which is scheduled May 10-11 at the middle school.