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TOPICAL ALERT FEATURED

## Shenango Twp. to get new offices

By MICHAEL ROKNICK Herald Business Editor Jul 24, 2019

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Lynnett Beck, Shenango Township’s secretary-treasurer, uses the phone in the township’s office.

CORY BYKNISH | Herald

**SHENANGO TOWNSHIP** – It’s been only a month, but Lynnett Beck already misses her old office. But she is looking forward to moving into her new one.

“It was bigger,” Shenango Township’s secretary-treasurer said of her former spot. “I had a closet where I could keep the files.”

To make way for an upcoming \$2.35 million construction project to expand and to renovate its municipal building, Shenango Township has moved its office and police department to a temporary location on Carbaugh Street.

The office sits behind Shenango Steel Buildings in West Middlesex.

The move went well, Beck said.

“It was a smooth transition,” she said.

As with most moves, there were stumbles along the way. The phone system at the temporary location was down for most of the day Monday.

“We got back up again shortly after 2 (p.m.),” Beck said.

In terms of serving its residents, Shenango Township’s office never was in a high traffic area. Beck said most of the people who walk into the office are seeking zoning permits, building applications, garbage collection stickers or police reports.

The construction project is just about ready to go, said Tom Hubert, chairman of the township’s supervisors.

“All we’re waiting for now is approval from the state,” Hubert said Monday. “We’re waiting for that approval any day now.”

The state has to approve the project to ensure the community can afford it, he said.

Hubert said he hoped expenses associated with the project wouldn’t force the township to increase property taxes.

“In the upcoming months we’ll be starting to put our budget together for next year,” he said. “We’ll have to look at everything.”

To make way for construction, the township has moved its office and police department to the Carbaugh Street location.

The Shenango Township Volunteer Fire Department and the township's road crew will remain at their current location next to the township's municipal building.

"They're not affected by the construction," Hubert said.

The project will add 3,640 square feet to the existing building, which is now about 2,100 square feet.

Improvements include the addition of an interview space and expanded evidence room for the police department. After the renovation, police officers will have dressing and shower areas.

"Our police right now don't have the room they need for their jobs," Hubert said.

The project includes safety enhancements, including bulletproof windows facing Route 318 and Jackson Road. Also, the township's regular office will get a conference room and space for records and storage.

"We wanted our office to have more security for employees and our secretary," Hubert said. "The entrance will be set up so someone can't come through the door and be right in the secretary's office like it is now."

The community room will be another significant improvement.

"The biggest room will continue to be the community room, which will get a little bigger and where we'll be adding a kitchen," Hubert said. "It's a place where people can rent to have showers and anniversary parties."

The construction contracts, in every case, went to the lowest bidders.

Hudson Construction Inc. is the general contractor, at a cost of \$1.47 million.

D&G Mechanical was awarded the contract for mechanical work, which includes heating and air conditioning, with a \$229,000 bid. Hickory Plumbing got the plumbing contract at \$162,000 and Hudson Electric was awarded the electric contract, including the installation of an emergency

generator, with a bid of \$456,000.

A couple items were removed from the initial plans.

“Instead of putting in asphalt in the parking areas we decided to use tar and chipping,” Hubert said. “That’s something our road crews do with roads so we can maintain our own service.”

Also, plans for new roofs on the fire department and maintenance garage were shelved for now.

“We wanted to put a hold on that until we see how the rest of the project goes,” Hubert said.

Township officials expect the project to be completed by late spring 2020.

“We set aside \$100,000 as a contingency plan,” he said. “We want to be prepared if something happens.”

While Shenango Township’s temporary office is in West Middlesex, its main phone number will continue to be 724-528-9571. The police department’s non-emergency number, remains 724-528-3334.

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