



State funds will improve rec center

By DAVID L. DYE Herald Staff Writer

Nov 21, 2017

The grant was provided by the Commonwealth Financing Authority's Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program and was announced by state Rep. Mark Longietti and state Sen. Michele Brooks.

The Buhl Community Recreation Center in Sharon will receive \$150,000, which will go toward installing an Americans with Disabilities Act-accessible elevator.

An elevator would especially benefit the center since the century-old building has three floors but only stairs. That makes it difficult for those with limited mobility, handicaps or the elderly to reach programs on the second or third floors.

While the first floor has mostly locker rooms and prep or changing areas, the second floor includes the pool, gym, tennis court and day care center. The third floor has a studio and exercise floor, but many of the rooms don't see any use despite being in good condition, said Jason Kmick, the center's executive director.

"We have a lot of great rooms and space, but because it's on the third floor and the only way to get there is the stairs, it's not used as much as the rest of the building," he said.

Because so much space is available and how difficult it is for some people to use the stairs, the center had recognized the need for an elevator before. However, money was always the main hurdle.

"This grant has provided us an opportunity to add to that effort in updating our historic building," Kmick said.

"These projects will increase recreational opportunities for citizens of all ages in our community and will add to our rich quality of life," Longietti said in the press release. "I appreciate the partnership between local and state officials in securing these important grants."