

LMC gets clearer picture of tech project

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BENTON TOWNSHIP
— By late spring, Lake Michigan College expects to have a pretty clear grip of the issues and costs associated with building a new technology center at its Napier Avenue campus.

Of course, the construction timeline depends on what types of figures come back through the bidding process, LMC President Bob Harrison said.

“We’ll do the design work, send out the bids, and come back to the board for approval. Time-wise, it’s still unclear—clearly, nothing be-

fore spring. It’ll take some time to put all that together. But it’ll be a brand new building.”

Harrison’s comments followed Tuesday’s meeting in which the board authorized the college’s management team to put together construction bids for the new center.

Tuesday’s action marks the next step in the college’s long-term plan to house all its manufacturing technology programs in one location.

The board started the process in December when it voted to sell the M-TEC building—where those programs are mainly housed—to Whirlpool Corp. in late

December.

As part of that process, the college has applied to the Michigan Economic Development Corp. for funding through the Community College Skilled Trade Equipment Program.

The new center will be housed between Western Michigan University’s Southwest campus and the Napier Avenue camps, Harrison said.

He expects site preparation bids to come back first for board approval, followed by the actual construction bids.

“It’s going to depend on the bidding process, and how long it takes to do the con-

struction documents, so the contractors know what they’re bidding on—so there’s a lot of work yet to be done,” he said.

In other matters, the board approved a resolution to levy its full 2 mills of current operating millage.

State law requires the board to estimate—by the third Monday in April—how much it plans to collect in taxes for the 2015–16 fiscal year.

Formal action occurs when the board wraps up its budget process. The college’s fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.

For fiscal year 2015, the board has budgeted \$31.5

million in revenue—with the majority coming from property taxes (\$15.1 million) and tuition and fees (\$10.7 million).

State appropriations make up the next major category, at \$5.3 million, followed by noncredit tuition and fees (\$193,000), and other revenue sources (\$62,000).

For fiscal year 2016, the college doesn’t expect big changes, with total revenue estimated at \$32 million.

The breakdown includes \$15.4 million in property taxes, followed by tuition and fees (\$11 million), state appropriations (\$5.3 million), noncredit tuition and fees (\$193,000), and other

revenues (\$128,000), according to an overview prepared for Tuesday’s meeting.

In making those 2015–16 projections, the college is assuming 2 percent increases in enrollment and property tax revenue, “due to an increase in underlying property values,” the overview states.

As the figures show, the college expects state appropriations and noncredit tuition and fee revenues to remain flat.

The increase in other revenue reflects continued interest in occupying Beckwith Hall, the college’s first on-campus housing complex, the overview states.