

A trip to the steel yard

LMC plots next steps in building tech center

By **RALPH HEIBUTZKI**
HP Correspondent

BENTON TOWNSHIP — Now that the earthmovers are keeping busy outside, Lake Michigan Col-

lege is ready to bid the concrete and steel phase of its new manufacturing and technology center.

Board members have authorized the college's management team to accept the lowest qualified concrete and structural steel bid, which is due back by May 28.

The bid package's timing reflects the need to order appropriate building mate-

rial ahead of time, said Anne Erdman, LMC's vice president of administration.

"You'll probably not see a lot of action initially because it'll be a lot of ordering. The steel has to be made and fabricated to our specs," Erdman said. "In some cases, it takes as long as 12 weeks to create the steel. If we want to get it in winter, we need to push as

quickly as possible."

Kalin Construction of Sodus is doing site preparation and remediation.

The board hired Kalin last month for \$608,058. The company's to-do list includes removing soil considered unsuitable for construction and preparing the ground for the foundation.

Erdman said she expects

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Don Campbell / HP staff

Lake Michigan College board members have authorized the college's management team to accept the lowest qualified concrete and structural steel bid for its new manufacturing and technology center. Kalin Construction of Sodus is clearing the site.

TECH CENTER

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Kalin to wrap up its work by the end of June. The board will then award the general contracting bid, which is the third and final piece of the project, she said.

“We’ll come to the June board meeting with that package, and that’s when you’ll understand the full scope,” she said.

LMC is building the center to place all its manufacturing technology programs in one place at its main campus along Napier

Avenue in Benton Township.

The board began the process in December by closing the M-TEC in Benton Harbor, where most of the programs were previously housed, and selling the building to Whirlpool Corp.

The estimated cost is \$9.6 million, which will come out of the general fund and a capital campaign that’s underway.

The new center is going in on the northeast side, on an apple orchard that’s between the main campus building and Western Michigan Uni-

versity’s building. The site covers about 40,000 square feet.

In other business, Clinton Gabbard, vice president of student services, reported that activity at LMC’s student housing complex, Beckwith Hall, isn’t slowing down as its summer session begins.

This week, 33 interns moved into Beckwith as part of a partnership agreement with Whirlpool Corp. In July, the First Tee organization will bring 35 young people that it’s sponsoring for a week-long camp, Gabbard said.

“These are two great

ways to reach out to the community, to use our rooms when they are empty. We’ll still have around 20 students who will be here throughout the summer, but it’s great to see them used for other things,” he said.

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