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White Lake school project advances

A White Lake High School sports team worked out in the gymnasium.

June 23, 2011

The White Lake board of education continues to move closer toward building referendum, following the lead of a citizens committee that is spearheading the \$3.58 million plan.

At its regularly monthly meeting this week, the board approved entering into a contract with EDS Builders Inc., which has prepared preliminary drawings of a possible school addition.

The approval is contingent upon a board decision to move forward with a referendum, District Administrator Bill Fisher said. If a successful vote is held, EDS would be paid on a percentage basis for the work.

Fisher explained that the district has worked with Doc Smith, an engineer with the company on several projects, including the design of the new heating and cooling system and the demolition of the 1918 elementary building.

"We've been very happy with them," he said. "We've been extremely pleased with their work to date."

The architectural contract was one of three items on the agenda relating to a possible referendum.

The board also heard an update on the demolition, which is being done by Stibbe Excavating of Antigo. The structure sits at the core of the school complex and work has been painstaking.

"It's going very, very well," Fisher said.

The board also discussed possible referendum finances with Lisa Voisin of Robert W. Baird and Company, a financial advisor.

Fisher said that there are a number of unknowns, but said that early indications are that the additional tax impact of a \$3.5 million referendum would be minimal due to cutbacks in other areas.

"That was all good news," he said.

The plan would include a central recreational center, similar to a commons, the exercise room that could be used as a community space, men's and women's locker rooms and restrooms, team locker rooms and an expansive new gymnasium with seating for 250.

There would also be a concession area and remodeling to the existing shop areas and locker rooms.

In other matters, the board:

—approved a reduction in the position of the school psychologist, who is contracted through the Cooperative Educational Service Agency, from 30 percent to 2 percent. Fisher said the job was trimmed based on district needs.

—filled several advisor and coaching positions. They include Nick Ortlieb, National Honor Society advisor; Jason Abendschein, student council advisor; Kim Simon, high school forensics coach; and Abendschein, assistant forensics coach.

—extended its contract with Lamers Buses for student transportation, with a 2.5 percent contract increase.

—and approved the resignation of Janet Williams, who has been food service director for 11 years, with "many thanks for her years of service," Fisher said.

Following a closed session discussion, the board voted to require the three non-union members of the administrative staff, which includes the principal, bookkeeper and secretary, to pay a portion of their health insurance and pension contributions, similar to the requirements for union employees as detailed in the state budget plan. The employees are also under a pay freeze.