

Redevelopment authority adopts 2012 budget

By Amy Revak HeraldStandard.com | Posted: Wednesday, January 4, 2012
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The Fayette County Redevelopment Authority Tuesday adopted a 2012 budget that includes no furloughs and a pay raise for all employees.

Executive director Andrew French said the balanced \$1.6 million budget is only the authority's operating budget, and doesn't include the funding the authority receives for the numerous projects the authority undertakes throughout the county. The main source of revenue is Community Development Block Grant funding, as well as other grants the authority receives.

The authority is developing the Fayette County Business Park in South Union Township and also administers infrastructure projects using CDBG money and implements a weatherization program.

French said the authority has 24 full-time employees and one part-time employee. Included in the budget is a one percent pay raise.

French said with the decreasing amounts of CDBG and other grant funding, the authority is starting to feel the impact. He said last year, the CDBG allocation was 17 percent less and will likely be dropping an additional 11 percent this year.

However, French said the county is losing two entitlement townships for CDBG, so the impact will be more.

Also, this year the additional money from the federal stimulus bill will run out, although it may be extended, French said.

"It will be a year of transition. We will continue to try to identify additional funding," French said.

The budget lists \$617,749 in CDBG funding that will be received.

The authority also approved reappointing Herbert Margolis as the solicitor for the authority for a term to expire Dec. 31, 2012.

Margolis, who has been with the authority for 50 years, will receive \$650 a month to attend meetings and review contracts and provide legal advice and will receive

\$90 an hour additionally for preparing contracts, conducting title searches or providing additional consultation.

The authority also approved a contract with the state office of the budget for a \$750,000 allocation throughout the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program to support the North Union Township Recreation Center Project.

The allocation will help fund the \$3.2 million project, which is about 50 percent complete. French said state Sen. Rich Kasunic, D-Dunbar, was very instrumental in getting the allocation for the project, located along Starlite Drive.

Kasunic announced receipt of the money in November.

The center will house a gym, multipurpose, community and senior citizens' activity room, nautilus and free weight exercise room, suspended indoor walking track and locker rooms.