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Tuesday, January 09, 2007

## Commissioners to take action on equipment purchases

By Amy Karpinsky, Herald-Standard  
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The Fayette County commissioners took action Tuesday to purchase lawn maintenance and law enforcement equipment.

Jack Frith of the building and grounds department presented the first proposal, to buy two John Deere lawnmowers for \$14,269. He said the newest lawnmower the county has is 24 years old, and the commissioners could buy a cheap tractor for \$800 or \$900, but they wouldn't last.

Commission Chairman Vincent A. Vicites said if the commissioners put the mowers out to bid, they could ask for a set of specifications. However, Frith said he looked at different types of lawnmowers and his option is the cheapest.

Commissioners Sean M. Cavanagh and Ronald M. Nehls then voted to place on Thursday's agenda a motion to purchase the tractors.

When Sheriff Gary Brownfield brought a proposal to purchase two 2001 police cars at a cost of \$47,005, Vicites again questioned if it would be better to put it out for bid.

Brownfield said he probably couldn't find any other 2001 models, and 2002 models would be more expensive. He said two cars have been out of commission since earlier this year.

Cavanagh and Vicites then voted to place on Thursday's agenda a motion to purchase the vehicles out of the county's bond issue, but Nehls questioned if it is a valid expense.

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Vicites said it is allowable by law, and Cavanagh then modified the motion to indicate that the vehicles will be purchased from either the bond issue or the capital reserve account.

In other items, Michelle Shumar of the Human Services Department reported that she recently attended a meeting with members of the airport authority regarding construction of an intermodal transit facility at the airport. She said the authority is poised to move forward, but the holdup is where to locate the facility at the airport.

Vicites said the issue has gone full circle. A year ago, the county learned that a 10-acre piece of land at the airport was needed for retention ponds for storm water. Although the county found another site, Vicites said they couldn't agree on a price with the landowner and they again spoke with the airport authority.

He credited the airport authority board members with revisiting the issue.

"We'll be the only county in the state with buses and an airport all in one location," Vicites said.

Shumar said she has until September to find a location.

The commissioners announced that 277 acres of the former county farm real estate in South Union and Menallen townships has been transferred from the county to the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority.

The Fayette County Business Park is being developed on the site. Vicites said the authority now needs to focus on getting employees from outside the area instead of merely transferring jobs. To date, only one development at the site is new; the others are moving from other areas in the county.

Vicites said the commissioners can apply for up to \$750,000 in transportation ARC funds and can seek up to \$1 million in competitive grants for the property.

The commissioners voted to place on Thursday's agenda motions to give donations in the following amounts: \$10,000 for the State Theatre Center for the Arts; \$1,000 for Connellsville Timber Day; and \$1,500 for the Hopwood Village Project. Vicites said the Brownsville Area Revitalization Corporation and Nemaocolin Castle likely will seek funds, as well.

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