

BENTON TWP.

Work underway for new tech center at LMC

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BENTON TOWNSHIP — Site preparation and remediation began Wednesday for the new technology center that Lake Michigan College plans to open by May 2016 at its Napier Avenue campus.

The LMC Board of Trustees decided Tuesday to hire Kalin Construction of Sodus to complete the work for \$608,058. There were no other bidders.

Kalin's bid is the first of three that trustees will decide between now and June, said Anne Erdman, vice president of administration.

"They're going to remove soils that are not effective for construction," Erdman said. "They'll be rutting the ground for the foundation to go in, and they'll be helping to put back some of the asphalt we'll be removing in order to move some of the utilities so that we can construct the building."

Initial soil borings showed "some level of surface soil contamination from the use of pesticides during the years the site was an orchard," a memo in Tuesday's board packet said.

Wightman & Associates of Benton Township developed a plan to address the

See **TECH CENTER**, page A8



Don Campbell / HP staff

Kalin Construction begins site preparation Thursday for the new Lake Michigan College technology center, located between the main campus building and Western Michigan University's building on the Napier Avenue campus.

TECH CENTER

From page A1

contamination, which Abonmarche Group engineers reviewed and confirmed, the memo said.

LMC is pursuing the project to place all its manufacturing technology programs in one spot.

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

Construction for the new center will begin on the northeast side, on an apple orchard that's between the main campus building and Western Michigan University's building, Erdman said. The site is about 40,000 square feet.

The estimated cost is \$9.6 million, which will come out of the general

fund and a capital campaign that's underway, she said.

The other bids are for steel and construction, and general contracting, which Erdman expects the board to decide in May and June, respectively.

Anyone wishing to donate to the project should contact Mary Klemm, the LMC Foundation's interim executive director, at 927-6849 or 800-252-1652.

The board decided to hire a contractor to repair its parking lots and sidewalks at its Bertrand Crossing, Napier Avenue and South Haven campuses, but spend no more than \$147,400.

Bids for the project are due by May 8.

The college has hired Abonmarche of Benton Harbor to help prioritize the most pressing areas, Erdman said.

"We've made a list of all

the things we'd like to do. Depending on how far the money goes is how far we'll go," she said.

Erdman said the project is necessary to repair asphalt breakup resulting from two consecutive winters of severe freeze-thaw cycles.

"While we have made substantive efforts to repair portions of this damage, a concerted effort is required to prevent further degradation of these physical assets," a memo in Tuesday's packet stated.

In other action, the board passed a resolution in support of a state license for its new enology and viticulture program.

The college has received a federal license, but still needs to through the state process, Erdman said.

The board set a public hearing on its proposed 2015-16 budget for 6 p.m. Tuesday, June 23, at the Mendel Center.