
LMC renews push for state building funds

The big 'if': Mich. Legislature needs to settle road funding

By **RALPH HEIBUTZKI**
HP Correspondent

BENTON TOWNSHIP — Hope springs eternal, which is why Lake Michigan College will try again for a state grant to cover 10 long-desired improvements for its Napier Avenue campus.

LMC Board members unanimously voted Tuesday to resubmit a \$17.8 million capital outlay grant for the 2017 fiscal year. LMC will have to match half the total if the state approves.

LMC's proposal joins others from West Shores Community College of Scottville and Ferris State University that have sat on the state legislative agenda, President Bob Harrison said.

"This is called 'waiting for Godot,'" Harrison said. "Right now, the big issue is ... the legislature's finalizing what they're going to do on roads. Once they've got that out of the way, they'll start to look at other critical legislation, including capital outlay."

The overall list hasn't changed since the college began seeking the funds

See **LMC**, page A4

LMC

From page A3

about three years ago, Harrison said.

“We’re required to update that each year, and so basically what we’ve been doing is updating the project (list) and the cost to reflect current market conditions,” he said.

Despite the apparent slowness of the legislative calendar, Harrison remains upbeat about LMC’s chances.

“It’s in the House (of Representatives) now, and so with (state) Rep. Al Pscholka we feel optimistic that he’ll help move these projects,” Harrison said. “It’s ourselves, Ferris State

and West Shore, so our hope is that the legislature will deal with those first.”

The biggest items include a renovation of LMC’s two large lecture halls and Student Success Center (\$5.7 million); upgrading the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems (\$4.5 million); renovation of the Learning Resource Center (\$2.1 million); numerous improvements of its classrooms, including ceiling and lighting systems (\$2.1 million); and a series of restroom renovations (\$2 million).

Other projects include a full-time and adjunct faculty service center (\$380,819), and miscellaneous classroom improvements that don’t fall into the larger

budget (\$309,945).

The college is pursuing many of the projects to make better use of existing space. For example, the Learning Resource Center project will focus on combining all of LMC’s various support services, including its honors and transitional studies programs – under one roof.

If the grant does come through, any construction is a year away because of the additional planning and design work, Harrison said. The governor’s office would also have to sign off.

“Assuming we get it wrapped up in December we’d take the calendar year of 2016 to plan, and start to implement (the projects) in 2017,” he said.