

LTCC putting finishing touches on Nov. bond

By Kathryn Reed

Everything is in place for Lake Tahoe Community College to proceed with a general obligation bond in November – except for the board voting to do so.

That is expected to take place at the June 10 board meeting. At the meeting this week the board approved an agreement with Keygent Advisors to provide bond financial advisory services, approved the contract with Orrick, Herrington and Sutcliffe LLP for bond counsel, and had the first reading of the list of projects the bond would cover.

The college, which will celebrate its 40th anniversary next month, is going to voters for the first time to ask for money that will only be spent on facilities. Some of it will be for upgrades, some for new things.

The exact amount has yet to be determined. In some ways it's a guessing game based on what interest rates and assessed values will be. The college does not want people to pay more than \$25 per \$100,000 of assessed value on their property.

Joanna Bowes with Keygent went over different scenarios that would bring the college between \$28.29 million and \$53.729 million.

Her recommendation is to go out for a mix of current interest and capital appreciation bonds that would bring in \$47.36 million at interest rates ranging from 1.5 percent to 3.5 percent, the former for this year and the later estimated for 2016-17. (Bonds are traditionally sold over the course of several years.) This scenario also calls for longer-term assessed value to increase 4.25 percent per year.

One issue staff and the board will have to deal with is the price tag for the project list is \$55 million.

Jeff DeFranco, vice president of administrative services, told board members they will have to prioritize the projects. It's also possible matching funds could come in higher or that the 3 percent inflation rate that is built into the numbers would not come to fruition.

While it was acknowledged the general consensus is the campus is fairly new, the truth is many of the buildings are aging as are the parts inside. The main building was built in 1988, Child Development Center 1993, four garden trailers 1996, two garden trailers 1999, student center/culinary and physical education 2002, and the library in 2005.

The campus includes 164 acres. The idea is to try to cluster buildings and avoid sprawl.

Per Tahoe Regional Planning Agency definitions, the college has 696,723 square feet of coverage. The proposed projects would bring that total to 485,864 square feet. The unallocated coverage would be 110,059 square feet.

Five projects the college hopes will receive state money to supplement the bond dollars include:

- Remodeling the science lab so it is efficient and has 21st century equipment;
- Building a public safety training center;
- Modernizing the main building, which includes enhancing the commons;
- Creating an environmental studies and sustainability center;
- Erecting a multipurpose building.

This last project was originally going to be an expansion of

the phys ed facility, but has morphed into more than that. It would provide classrooms when the garden trailers are removed, storage and meeting space, and physical education rooms.

Money just from the bond would go to:

- Expanding the early learning center, which includes having room for Tahoe Parents Nursery School.
- Solar generating storage facility to house vehicles and equipment. It could be a demonstration site for sustainable studies related to solar generation.