



SEWARD COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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College will explore bridge funding for Capital Campaign *\$2 million can establish flexibility with phases of construction process*

Seward County Community College is a step closer to starting two major projects in 2018 after trustees voted Monday night to explore bridge funding methods needed to break ground. Final concepts have been approved for the Sharp Champions Center and the Colvin Family Center for Allied Health, within the \$6 million funding goal originally set by the SCCC Foundation in its Capital Campaign. The vote reflects a commitment to collaboration, and a spirit of optimism.

“We’ve had several joint meetings over the past couple months that have moved us to the finalization of these concepts within the budget of \$6 million,” said SCCC President, Dr. Ken Trzaska. “It’s exciting to see the board’s openness to explore options for smoothing the process.”

Plans for the two facilities date back to 2013, when the Foundation began raising funds. The campaign has collected pledges for nearly \$4 million, with about half of that as cash in hand. Final costs of the project will include interior furnishings and finishing, as well as upkeep and maintenance.

“The good news is that we have \$2.2 million in the bank, and that we have about the same amount in pledges,” said Trzaska. “The bad news, is that the longer we wait on starting these projects, the more expensive the project becomes because of inflation, industry fluctuations, etc.” With major donors Gene and Jo Ann Sharp and the Colvin family keen to see real progress, Trzaska said, “the college board’s willingness to work in tandem with the Foundation has the power to move things to the next phase.”

Board trustee Dustin Ormiston, a certified public accountant, said that from a current budgetary standpoint, the college could provide \$2 million in bridge funding without additional tax revenue. Trzaska noted that the joint meetings have focused on budgetary responsibility, and the project will continue in that vein, aiming to minimize expenses.

“Our architects have already given close to \$60,000 in what amounts to a donation of services,” said Trzaska. “We also know that working on both projects simultaneously creates efficiencies that help us save on the overall cost of each.”

Following discussion, vice-chair Marvin Chance moved to explore financing options for \$2 million, and John Engel seconded his motion. The board voted unanimously to do so. A funding bridge will enable the committee to order construction documents from the architecture firm, Architect One, a four-month process. A 30- to 60-day bidding period for work on the job will follow, which means construction could begin in June or July of 2018. At its December meeting, the board will look at numbers on paper, and settle on a plan to put the projects in motion.

“This is a tremendous step forward, and one that creates optimism and momentum,” said Trzaska. “I’m excited to start planning a donor event so that everyone who has contributed, at any level, can see what is planned, and continue the collaborative energy.” Trzaska expressed appreciation to the members of the Foundation board, the SCCC Board of Trustees, as well as SCCC employees who have continued working on the project, “and of course, our major donors, the Sharps and the Colvins,” he said. “We appreciate the support, and the vision for the next 50 years at SCCC.”