



SEWARD COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Board approves start of construction for Sharp Family Champions Center *'It's time to step forward'*

The Seward County Community College Trustees threw out the first pitch on construction of the Sharp Family Champions Center with a unanimous vote to begin construction this spring.

"It is time we step forward with this project," said trustee and vice-president of the board Marvin Chance Jr. during the board's regular monthly meeting on March 4.

Trustee John Engel made a motion, with Chance seconding, to enter a contract with American Iron Construction, LLC for the full construction of phase one of the multi-sport practice and training facility. Approximate price will be just over \$2 million, the cash in hand received by the SCCC Foundation through fundraising efforts over more than a decade.

"We're really looking at a unique project here," said SCCC President Dr. Ken Trzaska. "As we all know, the scope and idea for this project has changed over the last 20 years, and it's time for us to get shovels in the ground."

Trustee Dustin Ormiston confirmed the project is contingent on the monetary transfer from the SCCC Foundation and legal counsel's approval of the contract.

"That is state law," he said. "We are required to have the dollars in hand."

Project specifications include the building itself with dimensions sufficient to enable indoor baseball and softball practice, fixtures (electrical, lighting), and furnishings and equipment (netting, turf, surface flooring, padded columns, batting cages, track system). A unique approach to positioning the building to take advantage of air currents will ensure the space cools and provides adequate circulation for athletes. The construction company produces the materials needed, including the artificial turf.

American Iron Construction's integrity and success on over 400 projects at colleges and universities has been verified, said Trzaska.

"Presidents from these institutions including Texas Tech University, Colorado Christian, Neosho County Community College, and Oklahoma Christian College, have verified the success of projects similar to ours," he said. "I did not hear one negative comment from anyone, only positive feedback. This will be a true turn-key concept, they will start moving dirt, and we will see a building completed in a six-month time frame."
"It's been a long road to get here," Trzaska said, "and it's time to get started."

Chance agreed, noting that additional phases will require further fundraising.

“I think our chances of getting support with that next \$500,000 will be better when people see we are putting shovels in the ground and beginning to build,” he said.

The Sharp Family Champions Center is so named in honor of lead donors and longtime friends of SCCC, Gene and Jo Ann Sharp of Liberal.

